

*France: the revolt of
democratic Christianity
and the rise of public opinion*

This chapter focuses on the emergence of religious toleration in France and the degree to which it was brought about by broad politico-religious struggle rather than by the philosophes.¹ The discussion will, therefore, not provide the usual Enlightenment studies degree of focus upon the philosophes. Much of the research necessary for a revision of the role of the philosophes in France has been accumulating for several decades, but there has not yet been an attempt to bring together the various strands and integrate them into a critique of their role. Albeit slowly, from the mid 1960s a revision of the status of Pierre Bayle as a Calvinist fideist (discussed in earlier chapters) rather than an early philosophe has gradually gained acceptance.² Again rather slowly and mostly from the 1980s, there have been efforts to demonstrate that Christianity occupied a more important place in the development of the French Enlightenment than had hitherto been accepted.³ In particular there has been increased recognition of the role of Jansenism, especially in the landmark suppression of the Jesuits.⁴ Much of the tale I recount in this chapter is, therefore, already well-known and I am indebted to the research of a number of scholars (some of whom have already been cited in earlier chapters) including R. Barny, C. J. Betts, P. R. Campbell, A. Kors, P. J. Korshin, Elizabeth Labrousse, M. Linton, J. McManners, W. Rex, P. Riley, J. Shennan and D. Van Kley. I present here a synthesis of various scholarly contributions from the above authors. The conclusions I draw regarding the need for a thoroughgoing re-evaluation of the role of the philosophes in the development of central tenets of enlightened thought such as religious toleration are, however, my own.

Bourbons, Huguenots and Jansenists

Traditionally, France has been seen as one of the great examples of absolutist rule. Hence, comparison of its political life with England, where Parliament was challenging and limiting the monarchy in fundamental respects, has been understood as comparing the proverbial chalk with cheese. The consensus on the character of French absolutism, however, has now broken, and many now accept that the claims of French monarchs to absolute rule must be accepted within the same methodological framework applied to the rest of historical studies. That is to say their claims must be first and foremost accepted as claims rather than reality. In his *Myth of Absolutism* (1992), Nicholas Henshall has summed up much of the argument for a more limited view of the 'reach' of French absolutism.⁵ He demonstrates that the Bourbon monarchs were forced to patronize, negotiate and cajole their noble *parlements* into cooperation. Indeed, as Shennan conclusively demonstrated even in the 1960s, French monarchs at times faced the concerted defiance of the Parisian and provincial *parlements*, whose members understood themselves to be acting in the wider interests of the people of France.⁶ Absolutism was thus an aspiration rather than an achievement. The problem, however, is that this crucial understanding has not been assimilated into the assumptions and theoretical outlook of Enlightenment studies. This is in good part because the myth of absolutism has been a happy circumstance for a variety of outlooks. For pro-Bourbon thinkers the notion of absolutism can be seen as a confirmation of the power and grandeur of the dynasty. For the English political class from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century, the concept of French absolutist tyranny was a useful aid to various fundamental political projects often including the bolstering of British nationalism. Finally, for some historians of the Enlightenment, French absolutism was a useful negative contrast to the 'progressive' philosophes fighting the old regime. Of what relevance, however, is the question of absolutism to the study of religion in the Enlightenment? Any adequate answer to this deceptively simple question requires investigation on various levels. The level that is of most interest to this chapter, and arguably the most fundamental, is that of the unavoidable political conflict brought about by the simple struggle for religious liberty in eighteenth-century France, which is where our discussion will begin.

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France too had its presbyterians, the Calvinist Huguenots,⁷ whose Church naturally seemed to embody a polity in direct contrast with that of absolutism. Allied with the monarch, French orthodox Catholicism – the state Church and staunch advocate of the divine-right-to-rule theory – had an interest in ensuring that the Huguenot representative polity was not allowed to corrupt the Gallican (French Catholic) Church or the noble *parlements*. That fear was not groundless paranoia.

Although they were a minority and principally confined to the south, the Huguenots had from the beginning been implicitly political, and the result was the sixteenth-century Wars of Religion. At great cost in human and economic terms the Wars of Religion had resulted in Huguenot defeat, in which the integrity of the monarch's right to rule was protected but peace obtained via enshrining some restricted rights to Huguenot worship in the Edict of Nantes (1598). But from the beginning, the Edict was a means of control, and in any case was continually breached to the detriment of Huguenots. To imagine, then, that any French monarch aspiring to absolutist rule could altogether forget the potentially seditious political views of the Huguenots would be to imagine a shortsighted monarch. When the great mid-seventeenth-century crisis of revolt and rebellion across Europe subsided, it was (with the exception of England) mostly in favour of centralizing monarchical rule. Under such circumstances, it was only natural that a Bourbon monarch would want finally to remove the lingering problem of the Huguenot south. If Louis had been primarily motivated by his piety, it seems strange that he went ahead with the revocation of the Edict in 1685.⁸ At this time the Huguenots were unofficially proposing union with the Catholics, and the Assembly of the Clergy of France – the hierarchy of his own Church – was also discussing a conciliatory profession of faith.⁹ Seen from another viewpoint, 1685 was at the same time a very auspicious time to launch such a project, for in that year Catholic James II was installed on the English throne. As Labrousse has noted, it would be thus quite incorrect to view the Revocation as religious in inspiration, as the final thrust of the Counter-Reformation.¹⁰

The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes resulted in the most brutal military persecution, forcing the mass exodus of Huguenots from France.¹¹ Flight, however, was forbidden and punishable by a catalogue of horrors culminating in condemnation to galley slaving

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or execution. This inhuman attitude to emigration – partly in order to limit the economic cost of the loss of many enterprising and skilled citizens – was certainly too much for some Catholics. Even some officials charged with the responsibility of apprehending those who had attempted to flee connived to allow Huguenots to escape the country. It is most important, however, to remember that the Revocation of the Edict did not mark the beginning of renewed persecution. For two decades before 1685, Louis had been brutally persecuting the Huguenots, who continued to refuse to accept the right of the King to suspend their worship, as they again did in 1683.¹² Even though the Huguenots as a mass had remained explicitly faithful to the King, his propagandists and the Church persisted in depicting the Huguenots as a foreign body and thus an internal threat which had to be dealt with. The Huguenots were portrayed as enemies of Christ, subversive and republican, using the fact of their representative assemblies as evidence and linking them to the still alarming memory of the English Revolution in which Calvinists had played such a conspicuous role.

Their persecution, therefore, aroused relatively less overt sympathy than might have otherwise been the case. The Bourbon dynasty could at least initially, therefore, feel that it had successfully eradicated any potential political threat from the Huguenots. But, as Christians were just beginning to learn from hard experience, persecution rarely achieves its goals. Even though the persecution continued, the Huguenots slowly re-established their organization underground, and as the eighteenth century wore on and sentiment for toleration grew under the hammer of French Catholic infighting, the Huguenots became a thorn in the conscience of the nation. In the short term, the Revocation naturally produced anger in Protestants and more liberal Catholics and a greater degree of cynicism about the possibility of established Churches respecting individual belief. Most dramatically, the anger boiled over into insurrection in the Camisard Revolt (1702–4), which, although desperate and bloody, ultimately failed because of the lack of active sympathy for it amongst the majority of the Catholic population.

There is no doubt, as other historians have confirmed, that the Revocation and its aftermath did contribute towards anti-clericalism, for the Church was often viewed as more culpable for the inhuman reality of intolerance than the state. Formerly perfectly respectable citizens, between 2,000 and 3,000 Huguenots slaved on

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the galleys of France under Louis XIV and XV, under the most atrocious conditions and savage rule where death was cheap. These men, of course, were connected to French society by many ties. They had wives, daughters, sons, brothers, sisters; they often had Catholic relatives through inter-marriage; they had business, religious and social connections; which is to say that the experience of 3,000 men became the experience of many, many times more Huguenots and Catholics.

To note, therefore, as some have done, that the Huguenot question was shelved as a political question relatively soon after the Camisard Revolt is only to note that the Huguenots had in part been physically removed, their Church bloodily driven underground and any political influence they ever disposed of destroyed. This statement of the bare facts, however, has only a limited bearing on the question of whether the events of 1685–1709 had influence on subsequent politico-religious thought. For how can one measure the possible influence of such events when defence of the Huguenots or attacks upon Gallican and royal intolerance could only be made public at great risk? To defend the Huguenots publicly was to risk being accused of sympathy with the enemies of France, notably England. Thus, we might be able to say that the Huguenot issue was ‘shelved’ as a political question, but the influence of the persecutions on those already not well disposed towards the Gallican hierarchy and its relationship with the monarch is entirely another matter. So, while we can assert that no deist movement or indeed any tangible increase in ‘public’ deism resulted from humanitarian outrage at the treatment of the Huguenots, it does not mean those events were without influence inside France. It only means we cannot measure it to any significant extent.

Not all or even many of the philosophes at the time of the Revolution and Camisard Revolt greatly sympathized with the Huguenots, for we know that some such as Voltaire were staunchly anti-Huguenot and pro-absolutist. Those who did sympathize were hardly likely to go public about it, and anyone wishing to criticize Christian intolerance in public had need of a much less potentially dangerous topic than the Huguenots. Consequently, the philosophes cited the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Wars of Religion – or rather wars with a religious pretext – as the height of Christian barbarity. They wished to emphasize the religious nature of those wars in order to attack the ‘medievalism’ of the contempo-

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rary established Churches and governments. If the philosophes often used those earlier wars of religion as examples of the iniquity of religion rather than more contemporary events, it did not mean that more contemporary events – such as the Revocation – necessarily had less impact upon them. The philosophes of course wished to arouse the maximum impact in their readers, and the religious form of the Thirty Years War was, in polemical terms, material of the first order for their attempt to demonstrate the backward nature of the hierarchical Church. A critique of relatively distant times which most – privately, even some monarchs – could agree with was far less objectionable to the censor and ran less risk of state retribution than a similarly sharp critique of relatively recent or contemporary and therefore still sensitive issues such as the Revocation. Unsurprisingly, we know that even in the writings of those of the enlightened elite who condemned such events, the Revocation and its aftermath assumed a relatively low profile. Clearly, then, using the writings of the philosophes as simple mirrors with which to detect formative influences acting upon them is at least problematic.

Thus the ‘shelving’ of the Huguenot question, that is to say its lack of influence, will seem to be compounded by the relative lack of public polemics on the issue. Such authorial prudence was of course hardly uncommon in Europe. We need only look at the late-eighteenth-century Italian peninsula, for instance, where philosophes usually avoided the question of the Church. Similarly in England, Dissenters continually railed at the Anglican Church but rarely named it explicitly and so seemed to damn all Churches. There is, then, good reason to approach many of the polemical works of the philosophes with some caution if one is interested in the influences bearing upon the formation of their thought. It is reasonable, surely, to assert that contemporary politico-religious reality played a prominent role in determining the outlook of the philosophes. As a consequence, it is difficult to escape the recognition that historians should devote considerable attention to the greatest politico-religious division within eighteenth-century France, that within the Gallican Church between Jansenists¹³ and orthodox Catholicism. Until the Revolution, the Bourbons, their governments and the Gallican prelate made repeated attempts to crush Jansenist dissent in the Church.

The *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* and Bourbon miscalculation

It is striking that the similarity between Calvinism and Jansenism is so seldom remarked upon. Jansenists wished to return the Church to its primitive, Augustinian purity, rescuing it from its medieval corruptions and reforming it. Most importantly, they usually felt they did not need official sanction to carry out God's work and were prepared to defy actively the hierarchy of Church and state. It was not surprising, therefore, that the Archbishop of Paris observed that the King 'wants no conventicles;¹⁴ a headless body is always dangerous in a state'. For Louis XIV the Jansenists were 'a sect inimical to all lordship'.¹⁵ From the English Civil Wars, above all, Louis had learnt that episcopacy and monarchy stood or fell together.

The thought of Cornelius Jansen (1585–1638) had already been condemned by Pope Innocent X in 1653. Notwithstanding this, Jansenists persisted and became involved in a bitter controversy with the elite defenders of Roman orthodoxy, the Jesuits. It was clear by the early eighteenth century that the papal denunciations and victimizations – reinforced in 1705 by the Bull *Vineam Domini* – had been ineffective and that the number of adherents to the ascetic-reforming tenor of Jansenism was growing rather than diminishing. This was only too evident to Louis XIV, and rather too near to home, in the form of the staunchly Jansenist abbey at Port Royal in Paris. With the Huguenot cause also still visible and rumbling on sporadically in the form of the Camisard Revolt (which, although suppressed in 1704, stubbornly refused to be finally quelled until 1710), Louis's patience evidently came to an end in 1709. In that year he ordered the physical eradication of Port Royal (which he had already sentenced to slow death since 1679 by the prohibition of a new intake). The abbey was demolished, its inmates divided and transported to other unsympathetic houses, its graves emptied and the land ploughed to remove all traces of its existence. This sparked a train of events that, over the next fifty or so years, produced bitter divisions and frontal assaults on royal and Roman 'despotism'. On one side were the episcopate, King and government, and on the other Jansenists, popular support and the *Parlement* of Paris and other provincial *parlements*. What interests us here is how the views of reforming clergy and their supporters effectively became politicized, and evolved into an anti-absolutist

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reforming ideology, which at times shaded into enlightened thought.

Louis's police knew that there was a market for Jansenist books and they battled against it at the frontiers, yet they had not understood the extent of the continued support for Jansenist ideas. Jansenist controversy broke out again in Paris in 1710, and Louis, exasperated, requested yet another Bull from the Pope condemning and prohibiting Jansenist views. If any single action of Louis's can be isolated as decisive in the final erosion of Bourbon prestige and the turning of public opinion against Church and state, his request for a Bull from the Pope and the reaction to it is without comparison. As we will see, with some justification, it has been said that the resultant Bull and the reaction it provoked was a spur to the politicization of Diderot and other philosophes.¹⁶

In 1713 Pope Clement XI issued the Bull *Unigenitus*, which condemned as heretical all the main elements of Jansenist thought. Amongst the propositions condemned were those recommending the reading of the scriptures, those promoting more active participation in Church affairs by the laity, those which implied that the Church existed independently of its hierarchy, and those claiming that the coercive stifling of dissent was illegitimate and unjust. The conflict over the imposition of *Unigenitus* was to reveal just how deep were the divisions within the state and Gallican Church, and how the title of absolutist monarch has so misled posterity. The *Parlement* of Paris was a bastion of aristocratic privilege against royal pretensions. That *Parlement*, in fact, had jurisdiction over a large part of France centred around the capital, and the prospect of deepening royal control over the religious life of the country was viewed by it with great concern. Its members understood only too well the political implications of such a state-inspired religious gag (*Unigenitus*), as did some of the members of regional *parlements*: the suppression of religious dissent could be utilized as a disguise for the oppression of those opposed to the monarchy on other issues.

In a country in which an Estates General (i.e. a body comprising representatives from the Three Estates: clergy, nobility and lower orders) had not been called for about a hundred years, the *Parlement* of Paris had gradually become a symbol of resistance to royal absolutist tendencies. So, despite the fact that the *Parlement* was aristocratic in nature, without any other effective political voice, the lower echelons of society were at times ready to follow its

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lead in defying Louis's perceived authoritarianism and excessive fiscal demands. The *Parlement* of Paris could not, therefore, be ignored, suspended, dispersed or otherwise persecuted without potentially great political risk. Hence Louis exerted as much pressure as possible in order to coerce the *Parlement* into acquiescence to his wishes, and only reluctantly applied more forceful means. But the implications of *Unigenitus* constituted an issue on which the *Parlement* would not lightly yield its power to officially register – that is to say legitimize – royal decrees. Not surprisingly, the *Parlement* of Paris, despite loud threats from the King, refused to register the Bull until it was accepted by the Gallican episcopate. In the event, the final acceptance of *Unigenitus* by the episcopate was the outcome of only a partial meeting of prelates, for even amongst the bishops themselves there were some who did not feel able to give their assent to the Bull. Naturally, the *Parlement* declared that meeting insufficient to legitimize the Bull. The scale of the uproar against *Unigenitus* can be partly estimated by the fact that debates on *Unigenitus* reduced the University of Sorbonne to chaos and some 200 books and pamphlets were written against it in 1714 alone.

For sympathizers of the Jansenist cause, the French state and its Church were now more closely identified with the tyranny of Rome. Even worse, perhaps, the Archbishop of Paris forbade the publication of the *Unigenitus* within his diocese. In 1715 Louis died as he was planning to force acceptance of the Bull upon reluctant clergy. There is little doubt, as McManners has recently noted, that for Louis, Jansenism was a republican party inside the state Church. Yet it has been estimated that the imposition of *Unigenitus* upon France only served to create a million more Jansenists.¹⁷ But it would be inadequate to leave the latter statement as it stands. The political nature of the *Unigenitus* dispute ensured that Jansenism was not only broadly identified as a doctrine of salvation and resistance to Rome. By 1715 it had already become a politico-religious ideology and hence France had acquired an enduring party of resistance to the Crown's pretensions. Unsurprisingly, then, if Louis had been unpopular before *Unigenitus*, he was certainly more so afterwards. On his death there were celebratory bonfires in the streets of Paris, and the Jesuits – the staunch allies of Rome and the declared opponents of Jansenism – were universally condemned by what was effectively an anti-Jesuit coalition.

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After the death of the King, many clergy who had formerly accepted *Unigenitus* recanted, including some bishops and the University of Sorbonne. Anti-*Unigenitus* publications continued to roll off the presses, reaching a thousand titles by 1730. In 1718 the Archbishop of Paris, Noailles, made his appeal against *Unigenitus* public and 10,000 copies of it were sold and many more supported his appeal. In 1718 three-quarters of the Parisian clergy rallied publicly against *Unigenitus*.¹⁸ The movement brought into being by the royal imposition of *Unigenitus* peaked in 1719–20, but struggle against the Bull continued, providing core elements of Jansenist politico-religious ideology for ensuing decades.

The next important phase of development of Jansenism from spiritual rebellion to political ideology came in 1727–28. Again, the spur to change was traditional in form – intra-confessional conflict – which has led to it being ignored by many historians searching for a more modern-looking challenge to the old regime. But, of course, it is not the origin of a tale that counts, but its telling and its reception. In 1727 a Jansenist bishop, Jean Soanen, was suspended and exiled to a remote abbey for issuing a pastoral letter denouncing *Unigenitus*. This came on top of other suspensions and exiles of lesser clergy, for the government continued to be determined in its resolve to whittle down the anti-*Unigenitus* movement by steady persecution of individuals. Soanen's case was distinguished by the publication in Paris of a legal brief denying the legality of his treatment. In itself this is not so remarkable. But, crucially, we know that the brief – *The Consultation of the Fifty* – was signed by fifty advocates of the Parisian *Parlement* and orchestrated by other members. As far as can be presently determined, this was the first time that the leadership of the Jansenist cause was concentrated in the hands of laymen, and it demonstrates a significant Jansenist presence in the *Parlement* of Paris prior to the 1730s. This circumstance thus marks Jansenism's maturation from a spiritual movement to a political ideology in which the Doctrine of Grace, which supposedly formed the heart of Jansenism, took a very second place to struggle against royal tyranny. In the words of McManners, from this point it became quite usual to become a Jansenist without any real interest in the Doctrine of Grace.¹⁹

In purely religious opposition, then, the Jansenist movement actively encouraged resistance to Roman tyranny in the Church and a more personal approach to religion via individual study of the

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Bible, which was actively discouraged by orthodox Catholics. In *political* opposition, in the struggle to embrace greater religious freedom in Bourbon France, the Jansenist-led *parlements* fought against what Jansenists themselves termed tyrannical rule.²⁰ There are many avenues by which historians can discount potential similarities, but, in terms of the catalysts to intellectual change, the parallel of the French Jansenist conflict with the transformation of seventeenth-century English dissenting struggle into the Whig political outlook is too compelling to dismiss easily.

Taking the Jansenist movement in a more political direction also meant relying more heavily on lay support. In turn, this meant that the public should not be allowed to lose sight of the issues. It is at this point (1728) that ‘one of the most effective and well-organized underground propaganda sheets of all time’ emerged in the form of the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*.²¹ This publication, condemned as reactionary by almost all philosophes (with the part exception of Rousseau), rapidly established itself as a reliable journal of record and promoter of sharp polemic far beyond the ranks of ecclesiastical Jansenism. Its authors were never identified nor its presses ever silenced until it ceased publication in 1803. Its political integrity as a mouthpiece against tyranny provoked an intense loyalty of readership. It has been described ‘as far from being an elementary broadsheet for the naive: a masterly vehicle for propaganda’.²² The problem with assessing the political importance of the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* has been much to do with its title, which has led many historians to dismiss or underrate its importance simply on account of the ostensible failure of the journal’s titular form and pious tenor to embody secular progressivity.

As Doyle has succinctly put it, with a prestigious lay leadership²³ and the advent of the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, ‘defeating Jansenism was no longer simply a question of Bullying parish priests or other clergy’.²⁴ The advocates who had written the *Consultation of the Fifty* took the lead by writing briefs for those priests who were determined to appeal against the imposition of *Unigenitus*. The term ‘brief’ here is the appropriate description for their writings simply because then legal arguments against *Unigenitus* were dominant. By 1730 these arguments even began to challenge the foundations of royal absolute authority by declaring that laws were based on a *contract between governors and governed*. Ministers quickly attempted to suppress such appeals, but

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that only enraged the corps of advocates and the *Parlement* and a full-scale strike of the bar was declared in 1732. By 1727 Paris had already become a Jansenist stronghold, and, according to one contemporary, the Jansenists were supported by most of the bourgeoisie and the poor. By 1731 the same observer considered that about 75 per cent of the rank and file of the Parisian police were to be counted as Jansenist supporters.²⁵ What proportion of that figure were fully Jansenist in theological terms is a secondary, if not irrelevant, question. The central point here is that the King's policy of repression and persecution had aroused hostility to the government far beyond purely religious circles, and political and religious Jansenism were now virtually inseparable. As now at least partly recognized by some writers,²⁶ public opinion, spearheaded by the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, constituted a radical opposition to royal absolutism hitherto unseen in the heart of urban France.

But how can we mention social contract theory without thinking of Rousseau's *Du contrat social* (1762)? It would of course be an unfounded assertion to claim that political Jansenism prefigured Rousseau's political thinking. It would, however, be just as unfounded to argue that Rousseau's ideas were wholly original. Contract theory had been present in European thought in one form or another since the Middle Ages. What helped make contract theory notable in the eighteenth century was that the political conceptions of Bourbon kings became more obstinately absolutist in nature just as resistance to royal aspirations was becoming more widespread and stubborn. Thus what was in essence an old idea, but one now linked to widespread active resistance to absolutism, could seem shocking in 1730s Paris and appear to the opponents of despotism as the obvious and major ideological choice available to them. With respect to Rousseau and his enlightened contemporaries, then, we can say that had not one of them advanced something like his *Du contrat social*, we should be very surprised indeed (on Rousseau and his General Will see below). So, to sum up, a religious dispute engendered or facilitated a political alliance between nobles, bourgeoisie, artisans, the poor and the clergy. Public opinion in Paris had rarely, if ever, been so powerful. Noble *Parlement* members and the poorest social layers, usually in unsympathetic relationship, now found themselves in staunch unison against the greater enemy. The idea, then, that exclusively top-down models of intellectual influence and discrete categories of religious, political

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and philosophical thought can be used to understand eighteenth-century Europe is not a tenable one.

Now we must talk of miracles and convulsions. In the late 1720s there were reports of miracle cures of the pious in the parishes of Jansenist priests. These miraculous events – including convulsions and speaking in tongues – continued, with some level of popular acclaim, into the 1730s. In any truly popular movement, there will inevitably be a variety of forms of expression of its hopes and beliefs. It would have been unthinkable that the more pious Jansenists would not express some traditional elements of Catholic religiosity, even though Jansenists usually combatted what they regarded as excessive superstition. Indeed, even some more religiously orientated Jansenists thought the miraculous ‘cures’ to be an embarrassment. Scholarly modernity hunters have of course also recoiled with distaste at these events and have turned their heads elsewhere for the roots of modernity. Those who look for pure revolutions, movements or trends, however, will of course never find them. Most historians have also wished to forget the fact that, for instance, Sir Isaac Newton had to be dissuaded by his friend John Locke from going to view the miracles of the French (Huguenot) Prophets in England. Perhaps the most disappointing aspect of the ‘embarrassment’ caused by such Christian ‘enthusiasm’ is that some academics have seemingly failed to notice the implications of the fact that the convulsion meetings in Paris were suppressed by the state in 1732. The context here is crucial. The popular miracles were part of a much larger political protest arising from *Unigenitus* which, in the autumn of 1731, was approaching a level at which the ‘public life of the capital, and with it the mainsprings of political authority in the entire kingdom’, would be reduced to chaos.²⁷

For our purposes, it does not matter whether the King, ministers, *Parlement* members or the authors of the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* believed in the authenticity of the cures or not. The important point is that they all understood the political dimension of the events. We know that the editors of the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* could not risk outright condemnation of the miraculous events even if they felt they ought to do so. It would be far safer, in terms of the popular dynamics of the movement, to turn the events against the King’s tame prelacy by demanding that the Archbishop of Paris begin procedures for the authentication of the miracles. When he refused to do so, and instead condemned the

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cult, we are given just a glimpse of the active and fascinating psychological symbiosis of popular politics and religion: his refusal led to a dramatic rise in the number of reported cures. Thus modern historians have often failed to realize that the ‘embarrassment’ of the miraculous cures was, in effect and above all, a political embarrassment for the government. As one placard read after pilgrims had been turned away from one famous miracle site by a huge show of force: ‘God Take Note, By Royal Command, Miracles In This Place Banned’. Even after 1732, attacks on Jansenist convulsionaries could excite great outrage. In 1736 such attacks by the government excited a storm of pamphlets. In this manner miracles were brought to the aid of anticlericalism (directed principally at the episcopate) and anti-despotism, which, in those years, were difficult to tease apart. Quite unsurprisingly, therefore, in that period French Jansenists made parallels between Louis’s religious persecution and that of the English kings.²⁸ For them the fact that one king was Catholic and the other Protestant was of little account. The notion of divorcing powerful anticlerical movements from traditional piety, it seems, is not a helpful one within Enlightenment studies.

The uncertainties of the regency period and the mass support given to Jansenists in the 1720s made any general attempt to enforce *Unigenitus* potentially very dangerous. But in the 1730s zealous orthodox clerics took the initiative and began a determined campaign of sacrament refusal to those accused of Jansenism. Although the refusal of sacraments was already an established weapon in the orthodox battle against Jansenism, in the politico-religious hothouse that was eighteenth-century Paris many less religious Jansenists viewed it as one more facet of heartless Bourbon despotism. The denial of one sacrament, however, that of extreme unction, was unmatched in its psychological ferocity: denial of this, the last sacrament, meant that a sinner died unabsolved of sin, so putting into jeopardy his or her participation in final Salvation. The evocation (the removal to a higher court) of an appeal to *Parlement* against this perceived abuse of spiritual power was one of the important issues contributing to the judicial crisis of 1731–32. As we shall see, it has been claimed, with some justification, that the ‘roots of later Parisian anticlericalism’ are to be found in the bitterness and events brought about by the refusal of sacraments, especially in the 1750s.²⁹ In accounts of Enlightenment thought, the bitterly volatile

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mood of Parisians in, for instance, the years 1749–50 is usually not deemed worthy of mention. Yet it seems to me a profound mystery how the French Enlightenment can be understood without some comprehension of the political condition of what was then France's political and intellectual fulcrum.

In the year following December 1749, there were at least thirty riots in Paris. It has been said that these were the result of overzealous police activity. It has also been conjectured how far they were connected to each other. Pending more research, it seems we cannot provide a full answer. But this should not lead us to dismiss the value of these occurrences in charting intellectual change. The principal point is that the riots were directed against what was perceived to be a despotic establishment. Even if the riots served to briefly divorce *Parlement* from the lower orders, such an advanced condition of political alienation helps us understand how continued religious 'tyranny' could serve to politicize religion, for the response to religious tyranny was certainly a feature of the build-up to the riots.

The revolt of the 1750s

Beginning in 1749, there began in Paris a renewed and more concerted campaign of sacrament refusal. Suspected Jansenists were refused the last rites unless they could prove their orthodoxy by producing a certificate, a *billet de confession*. This was a certificate signed by the priest to whom they had last confessed. The first victim, Charles Coffin (1676–1749), college principal and rector of the university, thus died unshriven. The result was a political disaster for the Church and government, for the government was widely understood as a staunch supporter of the unjust and oppressive actions of the orthodox Church. Four thousand attended Charles Coffin's funeral, which was, in effect, a demonstration against the polity of the Church and the state and, moreover, against a Church leadership known at that time to be defending its great wealth against taxation. After the occurrence of other cases and the inevitable involvement of the *Parlement* in their defence, in late 1751 there began a judicial strike against the government's refusal to heed *Parlement's* appeals which was more unanimous and determined than that of 1732. Even when *Parlement* was forced to resume its functions by direct royal orders, it was showered with appeals

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against the refusal of sacraments. It is at this point that we reach a watershed in the development of opposition to Bourbon oppression, in good part a result of the confidence given to *Parlement* from the fact that it received unprecedented support from its provincial counterparts. Parisian Jansenism was thus the political lever which awoke unheard of confidence and unity in the opposition against the Bourbon dream of absolutist rule.

In spring 1752, when the Archbishop of Paris refused to recognize the jurisdiction of *Parlement* in appeals against the refusal of sacraments, *Parlement* took the unprecedented unilateral action of impounding the bishop's temporalities and forbidding parish priests to withhold sacraments. It published this prohibition, posted it up all over Paris, and sold an amazing 10,000 copies. Many bought copies of the prohibition to frame for displaying at home and work, and in turn it prompted a hail of pamphlets supporting *Parlement's* case. As the Marquis d'Argenson wrote, '[t]here now reigns in Paris a fermentation almost unparalleled since the civil wars ... our amiable prince – once so well loved – is hated, and the government scorned: all this presages baleful happenings to come'.³⁰

In early 1753, by means of evocations and threats, the King managed to override *Parlement*. But the mood of Paris, as indicated by *Parlement's* response, was determined and confident, for how could Paris be governed without the allegiance of its people and its judiciary? Without *Parlement* there was no judicial process, and without that how could the King 'authenticate' new taxes? Thus, in reply, *Parlement* sent new remonstrances to the King. Constituting a propaganda coup of central importance, these so-called Grand Remonstrances were also sold to the public, 20,000 being sold in just a few days. The dramatic sales figures (even more dramatic when multiple readership for each is calculated) reflected the radical contents. The Grand Remonstrances catalogued the crimes of the episcopate against the people and the Crown and claimed an 'exalted role' for the *Parlement* in the preservation of the King's realm.³¹ As McManners has explained, the document defined authority 'to exclude arbitrary power'. Even in court and army circles royal policy met with disapproval, and some officers even refused 'distasteful' orders.³²

Not surprisingly, the King refused to receive such an indictment of his rule, and it was this that prompted *Parlement* to publish the Grand Remonstrances and go on strike. In turn, Louis exiled

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Parlement and replaced it with his own tame judicial chamber. Louis's government was in a very difficult situation, embroiled in dispute which threatened to further inflame Paris and provincial centres and one which it was almost impossible to win without concessions. To sum up, astonishingly – from the perspective of traditional Enlightenment studies – royal and governmental authority was publicly challenged by its own *parlements*, and with mass support, all united by Jansenist politico-religious ideology. Why had Louis exiled *Parlement*? He had no choice but to remove the spectacle of public defiance of royal authority from Paris. Why did he not simply arrest its members and so decisively end their defiance? Simply because the political condition of Paris was too unstable. He did not dare risk further inflaming an already very serious situation in which the legitimacy of the government had already been reduced to a dangerously low level. As ever in financial difficulties, his own newly created tame judicial chamber could not provide the requisite legitimacy to raise new taxes. To calm the situation and resume normal judicial business, the *Parlement* had to be recalled with some form of words to disguise the weakness of the government in the face of the Jansenist challenge.

Parlement was thus recalled with ambiguity and an avoidance of the original issues, which in the circumstances was all but a royal capitulation. In another tacit retreat, this was followed with a royal decree of silence on *Unigenitus*. This form of settlement allowed Louis to save face by continuing his refusal to receive the Grand Remonstrances. But the strength of the Jansenist challenge was more than anything evident in the fact that Louis invited *Parlement* to deal with any breaches of the decree of silence on the issue of *Unigenitus*. This decision was a turning point of the greatest magnitude: *Parlement* now had an opening through which it could assert its authority in the government of the Church, something supposedly unthinkable in an absolutist regime. Those who persisted in trying to refuse sacraments now faced exile or would be forced into resignation. *Parlement* quickly made its new authority felt when orthodox clergy, with the support of the Archbishop of Paris, continued to refuse the last sacraments to suspected Jansenists. In response, amongst other actions, *Parlement* brought about the exile of one of Louis's most staunch and powerful defenders, the Archbishop of Paris himself. In 1755 the last rites were refused to Lady Drummond, the wife of the Duke of York. Quick to respond, the

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Parisian magistrates even waived the monopoly rights of *curés* in their parishes, allowing Jansenist or more liberal priests to administer sacraments. It is true that the Jesuits were still the greatest hate figures of the day and extra police protection was provided for Jesuit houses, but by this time orthodox clergy were in general so universally reviled that 'priests no longer dared to walk the streets in clerical dress'.³³ Some priests were indeed attacked, and if a priest refused the last rites and news spread to the street, ugly crowd scenes could result, in which priests were at considerable physical risk.

It is difficult to believe that, in examining these events, it is possible to adhere to the myth about French absolutism. Clearly, at least, there was a great deal of difference between royal and governmental rhetoric on the absolutist power of the King and actual reality. Indeed, in these years the *parlements* of France (although we must remember that some provinces did not have *parlements*) asserted themselves as representatives and defenders of France. In the Remonstrances of 1755, for example, it was stated that 'the *Parlement* of Paris and ... the other *parlements* form a single body and are only different divisions of the royal *Parlement*', and the *parlements* of Rouen, Rennes, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Metz, Grenoble and Aix all concurred. As Shennan has expressed it, 'this idea of a united magistracy implied less a royal court than a nation-wide institution with positive powers of its own, virtually independent in the exercise of them'.³⁴ In a practical manner, therefore, the *parlements* were struggling for some form, albeit limited, of representative government. This desire was, of course, reflected in their writings. It is apparent, for example, from the title of perhaps the most sophisticated treatise on the historic rights of the nobility to share in government by Louis Adrien Le Paige (1712–1802), *Lettres historiques sur les fonctions essentielles du Parlement; sur les droits des pairs, et sur les loix fondamentales du royaume* (1754). In these years other Jansenists wrote in a similar vein. In various pamphlets Claude Mey and Gabrielle Maultrout did not deny the authority of the King. If, however, the King could not be trusted to rule justly and within the law, they claimed that his own subjects and their institutions must be able to do so for him. As Doyle has expressed it, this meant that the *parlements* 'were elevated beyond their traditional role of defenders of the Gallican liberties, into the voice of the nation; and Jansenism can be seen as one of the sources of the idea

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of representative government in France, fully three decades before it came to fruition'.³⁵

Aristocratic in outlook, it could be said that the *parlements*, in putting forward demands for representative government, were fighting for their own traditional corner, the role of nobility in government. There is no doubt, however, that in the context of eighteenth-century Bourbon France, such ideas were radical indeed and not solely on account of their subject matter. They were seen as dangerously radical because Paris (and many other urban centres) was dominated by political Jansenists, and thus the arguments of such works as the *Lettres historiques* were understood as the form of words which in the practical world united dangerously large sections of the nobility, many clergy, the bourgeoisie and the poor against royal tyranny. It only adds to the fascination of Enlightenment Europe when we note that this was a situation peculiar to France. In England the House of Commons was understood to be a legitimate brake on royal aspirations, yet in the Italian peninsula royal absolutism was usually seen by the enlightened and many more as a progressive political form against theocracy and quasi-feudal noble tendencies. Given this diversity of political forms and circumstances within Enlightenment Europe, we cannot, obviously, condemn French philosophes such as Voltaire as non-enlightened for their support of absolutism. But by the same token, neither can we easily categorize as entirely non-enlightened the many intellectuals who saw the *parlements* as the voice of political and religious progress against old regime despotism.

For the King and episcopate, *Parlement's* defiance and the declarations of its rights to represent the nation were of course seen as dangerous invitations to challenge the political status quo of France and orthodox Catholicism. From its own point of view, *Parlement* was asserting what it saw as its right to save France from despotism and reassert its noble political and material rights. From the point of view of the lower orders, *Parlement* was leading the struggle against royal tyranny for representative government on behalf of those less able to defend themselves. From the point of view of the philosophes, the Church – the abettor of superstition and ignorance – was tearing itself apart and in the process travelling some of the road the philosophes would have liked to travel had they the forces and organizational strength. We already know that historical reality is multi-layered, and as we shall see below, for some modern histo-

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rians an unexpected layer fulfilled important elements of what is usually regarded as the programme of the philosophes. Far from detracting from the Enlightenment, this admission helps us to come to terms with the dilemmas and opportunities which confronted the enlightened, and in so doing we can enrich our understanding of how the Enlightenment was experienced by its participants.

That the nobility could lead a challenge to royal power in a religious form, and in so doing draw the lower orders behind it, was of course nothing new in early modern Europe. This had been one feature of the Reformation, as competing princes often fought under the banner of religion, of which the Huguenot revolt was an important example. The great difference, however, was that the Jansenist conflict erupted at the heart of urban France in which print culture was burgeoning and major discontent with Bourbon rule existed in both the upper and lower orders.

To resume our account: again, despite the noble nature of *Parlement*, the advocates of Paris became more influential as opponents of despotism and champions of Jansenism than the Jansenist clergy themselves and rivalling even the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*. As bystanders to these events, enlightened figures such as Voltaire could only observe and draw the obvious lesson: the struggle between defenders and attackers of old regime tyranny seemed to be entering a decisive phase; without intervention the philosophes would remain isolated. Hence it was in the 1750s, when the noise of battle was audible over most of France, that Voltaire launched his polemic against the infamy of the Church. We can also suggest that as the *billet de confession* conflict encompassed the greatest political conflict of those years, part of the infamy Voltaire had in mind at that time was that of the *billet de confession*. More pertinent, however, was that the enormous impact of the *billet de confession* conflict politicized religion as never before. Crucially, the explicit anticlericalism of the confrontation gave philosophes such as Voltaire the opportunity – that is to say the audience – for a much wider offensive against the Church. These were, in terms of the history of Church and state, remarkable times. As had been effectively happening in England since 1689, the confessional state was buckling under the weight of its own opprobrium and lack of relevance to politico-religious reality. The problem for the Bourbons was that, whether they liked it or not, the concept of the confessional state in France was more intimately linked to general political legitimation

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than in England. This meant that serious defeat for the regime in religious matters constituted a potentially grave threat in matters of state, and could not but signal the weakness of the regime and presage further political challenge. When that challenge came in 1756, it came from Jansenist lawyers in the form of a direct political challenge to the foundations of absolutism. In that year they prompted a federation of *parlements* and called upon France's princes and peers for support.

The next high point of Jansenist struggle was undoubtedly that against the Jesuits. Yet the suppression of the Jesuits has been considered one of the great ideological measures of the Enlightenment. For Jansenists, the Jesuits – ultra orthodox and only responsible to the Pope himself – were the casuistical abettors of Roman and French tyranny. For the philosophes, too, the Jesuits were arch-enemies, and they felt that the suppression of the *Encyclopédie* in 1752 and 1758 was Jesuit-inspired. Not surprisingly, in these years of growing antipathy to state and Church, numbers of anti-Jesuit publications emerged from the milieu of the *parlements* and even clerics of the University of Paris attacked the Jesuits. They were widely accused of acting only on behalf of Rome and in their own interests, and consequently against the interests of the monarchy, the nation and true Christianity. In 1760, upon its release all over France, one anti-Jesuit manifesto sold 12,000 copies.³⁶ One of the most significant Jansenist anti-Jesuit publications of this period was Christophe Coudrette and Louis Adrien Le Paige's four-volume *Histoire general de la naissance et des progress de la compagnie de Jésus en France* (1761). Notions of 'nation' should also cause us to consider the role of broad politico-religious struggle in the formation of nationalism. As we shall see in Chapter 6, it can hardly be denied that politico-religious struggle was decisive in bringing about a massive widening of the public sphere in England and France. Yet, as Van Horn Melton has observed, 'the rise of the public sphere can no more be separated from the origins of nationalism than it can be divorced from the development of capitalism'.³⁷

Popular victory against the Jesuits and the call for toleration

Following the expulsion of the Jesuits from Portugal in 1759 and the call by the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* for the abolition of the Jesuits, French Jansenists felt confident enough to contemplate a

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struggle for their suppression in France. In response to a financial scandal, in which the Jesuits were under attack by the court of Marseille, the Jesuits took the fateful decision to appeal to the *Parlement* of Paris. This was presumably in the hope of royal intervention. The appeal, of course, failed, and did so in the most spectacular and politically significant manner. By 1761 the authority of the Crown on this issue was ‘manifestly crumbling’³⁸ and, as in Paris, some provincial *parlements* began closing Jesuit houses. Louis, in an attempt to rescue the situation, proposed reforms of the Jesuits. But his proposals were too limited for *Parlement* and too radical for Rome, and in any case only ensured that provincial *parlements*, whether they wanted to or not, were forced to debate and decide where they stood on the issue. In 1762 the *Parlement* of Paris promulgated its definitive decree abolishing the Jesuit order. The political importance of these events cannot easily be overestimated. Major unilateral intervention in the government of the King’s Church was unheard of and politically very ominous indeed, for the King had, in practice, literally lost control of part of his state machine.

The leading Jansenist Le Paige used a network of provincial contacts to spur other *parlements* into action and by the end of 1763 all but three *parlements* had condemned the Jesuits in similar terms. Louis had to fight for his political credibility or concede, but to attempt to reverse the closures risked a political storm from which he and his government may not have emerged. By November 1764, by royal declaration, the Jesuit order had ceased to exist in most of France. Such a signal victory over the Jesuits, famed for their education of the European elite and dedication to maintaining Roman orthodoxy, could hardly be ignored by the philosophes. It was inconceivable that they could silently ignore the victory; something had to be said. This was the momentous context in which d’Alembert claimed the suppression of the Jesuit order as a victory for the influence of the philosophic spirit, that is to say the thought of the Enlightenment. In his *Sur la destruction des Jésuites en France*, he characterized the Jansenists as intolerant supporters of superstition who hated the Jesuits only on account of an obscure and fanatical theological wrangle. Yet he could hardly have been ignorant of the great popular politico-religious struggles that finally gave sufficient power to the *parlements* to unilaterally suppress the Jesuit order.

That, under the circumstances, d’Alembert’s claim for the role

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of the philosophes was outrageous, few historians would deny, and his hatred of Jansenists is evident in his correspondence with Voltaire. But to stop there is potentially to miss an important point. D'Alembert and other philosophes were of course well aware of the politico-religious nature of the wide forces which brought about the downfall of the Jesuits. The animosity of the philosophes to the Church in general, and their recognition that the Church would never be a determined ally in the fight for enlightenment, prevented them from taking a leading role beside Jansenists in the struggle to terminate the Jesuit order. Although there were certainly good grounds for being pessimistic about the willingness of the Church to struggle systematically for enlightenment, it can be justifiably argued that the philosophes significantly underestimated the potential for sections of Christianity to embrace elements of enlightened thought. But two things are for sure: the Jansenist victory over the Jesuits was stunning and of great political importance; and the very weakness of the philosophes – their lack of numbers, cohesion and consequently social and political presence – made it essential that enlightened thought claimed a place in that victory. In such upheavals the alternatives – silence, or a pat on the back for Jansenism (which they would never have performed in public) – were not acceptable: to avoid eclipse on this most central of Enlightenment issues, the philosophes had to claim their place in the sun.

It is hardly a coincidence, therefore, that in 1762 – the same year as the Parisian *Parlement's* decree against the Jesuits – Voltaire launched his campaign against the injustice visited upon the Calas family by the *Parlement* of Toulouse. The father of the Calas family, unjustly accused of murdering his son because of his engagement to a Catholic, was broken on the wheel. There can be no doubt that Voltaire's propaganda campaign and his lobbying of influential contacts performed an important role in the rehabilitation of the memory of Calas in 1763 and placed the blame squarely on religious intolerance. The struggle against religious intolerance was of course the very context of the wide struggle for the suppression of the Jesuits. To put it plainly, Voltaire could hardly fail to attract significant support for his campaign: as we shall see below, we know that Jansenists too were against the continued persecution of the Huguenots. Voltaire would thus have been very shortsighted indeed if he had not then continued to intervene in such an unprecedented circumstance of Church and state. For, in 1762–63, who

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knew where the new do-it-yourself reform movement within Church and state might lead? Not surprisingly, then, his *Traité sur la tolérance* appeared in 1764. Again, in order to avoid the danger of being outflanked by religion itself, a public intervention for the philosophic spirit was required even if it was planned to restrict the sale of the *Traité* to the elite only.

Daniel Mornet, in his *Les Origines intellectuelles de la Révolution Française*, has termed this moment of intervention by the philosophes the beginning of the philosophes' exploitation of the victory over the Jesuits.³⁹ As a consequence of the suppression of the Jesuits, in subsequent years the philosophes were able to gain a wider audience for their ideas and demands. This was an unprecedented period in which the animosity of public opinion and that of the *parlements* to the government allowed more radical opinion to be broached publicly with less risk attached. Thus public opinion and the diffusion and acceptance of elite intellectual writings went in tandem, or more aptly, in symbiosis. If, of course, historians wish to take (or mistake) the headlines of history for reality, then Voltaire's *Traité sur la tolérance* could be portrayed as creating public opinion. From another point of view, the *Traité* – which was aimed only at a tiny elite and was not given wide public release – was a reflection, a response to new conditions, rather than an initiator of them. The plan was to keep the work out of the booksellers' hands and to distribute it directly to well-placed ministers and magistrates as well as to a few discreet friends. It was only natural that, once the victory over the Jesuits had been digested and seen to be without repercussions, liberal public thought turned to continuing instances of brutal Church–state intolerance and the plight of the Huguenots. As McManners has put it, 'the force of public opinion [was] repudiating the past'.⁴⁰ From this perspective, any attempt to write the history of the Enlightenment solely from the viewpoint of active radical thought and a passive receptive public will produce potentially serious distortions.

The philosophes were generals without troops. Yet the nature of the historical record and the ideological position from which it has been traditionally viewed has meant that most accounts of the Enlightenment focus on the views of the generals, and overlook or minimize the significance of the broader ideological battles against the old regimes. It is rather strange to track how far the philosophes influenced practical government and to conclude – as all have – that

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they had very little impact on government, yet pass over the momentous Jansenist suppression of the Jesuits as a mere sign of the enlightened times. The Jansenist victory over the Jesuits in France was decisive in the final papal suppression of the Jesuit order. Yet to exclude the philosophes from this general picture would be equally mistaken, for that victory provided them with an unexpected weakening of orthodoxy and, in practical terms, a widened ideological terrain in which to propagate their own ideas. The destruction of the Jesuits marked the peak of Jansenist influence and organizational strength. Nevertheless, in the following years, Jansenists were still active in the struggle against religious oppression, if a little less visibly so than hitherto. Yet, for d'Alembert and other philosophes, Jansenists remained backward religious fanatics, and the philosophes continued to underestimate the possibility of Catholic tolerance.

We know that, famously, the philosophes wrote in favour of toleration. But the fact that, from the mid-century, they were essentially commentators on the outside of a broad *de facto* or organic tendency towards religious toleration cannot be disguised.⁴¹ Indeed, Campbell has noted in his *Power and Politics in Old Régime France* (1996) that, by the accession of Louis XVI (1754), the idea that citizenship conferred the right to religious toleration had gained ground amongst the reading public.⁴² There is a very big difference between the actual unfolding of events and the claims and treatises of progressives. Thus, for instance, we ought to be cautious of claims that there was a 'sea-change' in the mid eighteenth century towards toleration, when even many members of the Catholic clergy endorsed demands for toleration.⁴³ This 'sea-change' was very likely a reflection of earlier, more fundamental processes. But, nevertheless, broad tendencies and elite writings cannot be separated without serious damage to the integrity of intellectual history: they were facets of the same politico-religious reality and we cannot possibly comprehend the philosophes if we effectively decontextualize them. History might be multi-layered, but is always interconnected and interactive. Thus the philosophes were at the same time part of the process of change and, within elite progressive circles, an organic reflection of it.

We know that even before the mid-century, the proscription of Protestantism was not always adhered to. In the army, for instance, in order to keep recruitment at acceptable levels, Protestantism was

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officially accepted. Tolerance was also evident in civil society. Huguenots were not always strictly excluded from public office as the law dictated; in many places their expertise could not be dispensed with.⁴⁴ The years 1744–45 saw the last effort to ensure that disabling laws against Huguenots were properly enforced. As they did not officially exist, Huguenot cemeteries were illegal, yet often unofficially tolerated, and even some *intendants* (regional governors) refused to enforce orders for the brutal persecution of those attending outlawed religious assemblies. Indeed, as early as 1715 a government circular complained with some justification that the laws against Protestants were not being enforced on the ground. Worse still for the Bourbon efforts to eradicate the Huguenots, peaceful tolerance was evident in some mixed Catholic–Protestant communities. Unsurprisingly, the historical record rarely gives us proof that these Catholics actively denounced intolerance, for this sentiment was still contrary to French law. But from the bare facts we know that they were at times certainly defying the laws of the land. There is no doubt that many Catholics did approve or at least accept state–Church intolerance, but there were many more who did not, many of whom had lived close to or within Huguenot communities for generations and had long accepted toleration as a way of Christian life.

As the mid-century approached, intolerant persecuting bishops were fewer in number and, if anything, Catholics were less inclined to accept or favour persecution. We know that, for instance, in one area in the 1750s Catholics and their *curés* combined to protect their Calvinist neighbours. Within the French Catholic Church in the same years there also arose a sharp debate on the issue of intolerance. Significantly, those writers defending the toleration of the Huguenots included Jansenists, who even opined that the Reformed religion was more conducive to good moral conduct than Catholicism⁴⁵ – something the philosophes echoed. The 1750s saw several liberal Catholic and Jansenist pro-toleration publications, including those of Abbé Yvon, J. Ripert de Monclar and Abbé Quesnel.⁴⁶ Perhaps most notably, in 1758 the Jansenists Maulrot and Tailhé published their *Questions sur la tolérance chrétienne* (printed again two years later as *Essai sur le tolérance chrétienne*), in which they denounced the persecution of Protestants. As O'Brien has illustrated, there were important components of Jansenist Church thinking which militated against intolerance. These included their model of

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Church polity, which ‘was drawn from the early church of the New Testament and the Fathers, which in principle and in practice seemed less given to summoning the state’s power than the contemporary church’. Jansenists were of course still Catholics, so voicing solidarity with Protestants had not always come naturally. It was experience of decades of struggle against orthodox intolerance of Jansenism that overcame such reluctance, especially ‘the notorious attempt ... to pursue Jansenists on their deathbed by means of the *billet de confession*’.⁴⁷

In November 1748 Montesquieu’s *Esprit des lois* appeared and Jansenists and the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* were hostile to much of it, so much so that Montesquieu felt forced to defend himself publicly. The editor of the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* (at that time, Fontaine de la Roche) and most other Jansenists considered the *Esprit des lois* a thinly disguised antichristian writing in support of natural religion. We know, however, that Jansenist thought on toleration was by this time well developed, for the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* quoted substantial parts of the *Esprit des lois*’s chapters on religious tolerance, and they were not shy to berate the author for his limited conception of toleration. Montesquieu had argued (*Esprit des lois*, bk 24, ch. 5) that the Protestant religion suited a republic better than a monarchy and thus should not be permitted in France. Maulrot and Tailhé replied by citing the rather obvious example of the Catholic Republic of Venice.

Although preceded by other philo-Jansenist tracts arguing for greater toleration, the appearance of Maulrot and Tailhé’s *Questions sur la tolérance* caused some sensation. It was the first obviously learned pro-toleration Jansenist tract which commanded wide support amongst Jansenists and the general public, and was consequently soon placed on the papal index of prohibited books. As O’Brien has commented, it was ‘an important step towards a modern idea of tolerance ... the first significant attempt by eighteenth-century Jansenist authors to establish a Christian rationale for civil tolerance’.⁴⁸ Their arguments were based in part on the need to respect the personal relationship of the individual with God, but also – in enlightened fashion – incorporated natural law and political pragmatism. Maulrot and Tailhé brought a variety of thinkers to their aid, including Bayle and even Montesquieu. The Jansenist debate on toleration, then, should be seen as the eventual reaction to the intractable religious reality of France: no matter what was

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done, the Huguenots were a permanent, integrated and often respected section of French life. As we now know, thankfully, in the long term (and despite politically inspired lapses) social integration tends towards toleration.

In the early 1760s with the defeat of the staunchly intolerant Jesuits and the hatred of an intolerant Church by large numbers of Jansenists and sympathizers, many in government circles knew that something had to be done. With the recent and very disturbing evidence of how Church and state could be rocked by determined religious opposition, to continue persecution as if it were still 1685 was to court potential disaster. Yet this realization did not mean that intolerance could be abandoned easily. The Crown knew that to concede an element of plurality in a supposedly absolutist state was to invite further representational demands. The episcopate, too, was certainly not going to agree to pluralism within the Church. But, nevertheless, it was clear something would have to be done.

It is at this point that historians often experience difficulty. How will we ever know the precise logic of governments and hierarchies at such moments? It is, of course, a simple fact that many delicate decisions and the grounds for them were not deemed suitable for the ears of the public and indeed of many servants of the Crown or hierarchy. The 'real' tale, in terms of the written record, is often not recorded. Thus it is quite problematic to argue that historical accounts can always avoid informed speculation outside the historical record. We can say, then, on the basis of the facts, that the forces for inertia in the French Church and state of the 1760s were at least a degree greater than those for radical change. But it is most unlikely that many of those who saw change as inimical to their interests were not sharply aware of the desirability of some easing of the situation, even if only to stave off temporarily the likelihood of future change.

We do know, however, that in 1766 the papal nuncio in France sent a report to Rome emphasizing the difficult situation that Calvinists faced. Their own marriage ceremonies were not recognized by the Church and they would never have undertaken a heretical Catholic marriage ceremony. For the Gallican Church, then, Protestants faced a choice of celibacy or concubinage. The nuncio added that this was a situation which had to be dealt with and could not be avoided by reaffirming the official French line that the Huguenots did not exist. But the nuncio's letter does not reveal the full

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extent of the apprehension of the French state on the question of religion, for we know that other, wider discussions took place in France.⁴⁹ In 1767 the royal councilor Gilbert de Voisins recommended reinstating some of the civil and religious rights of which the Huguenots had been deprived for so long: civil marriage, the right to entrance to most professions, and the right to the presence of their own pastors for discrete worship. It is indicative that, in the same year, the Sorbonne suffered intense ridicule for its condemnation of arguments for toleration.

If there were many in state and Church who now feared for the future of an intolerant regime, there were many who feared the religious and political consequences of conceding toleration, perhaps none more so than the King himself. Thus, although the debate on reform continued, two decades were to elapse before reform proposals were decreed and implemented. But, as we have seen, reality and law do not always coincide. The crushing defeat of Church and state in the unilateral action of the *parlements* to abolish the Jesuit order had naturally brought about a profound change in the confidence of some *parlements* to defy official policy and initiate religious liberalization. Yet unilateral action remained a very risky option indeed, for, if the government thought it propitious, it could still adopt a hard line against disobedient *parlements*. In 1763 a new archbishop came to the see of Toulouse, Archbishop Brienne, who favoured toleration. The arrival of Brienne – and perhaps also the memory of the shame of the Calas case – eventually persuaded the *Parlement* to overcome its fears of unilateral action and it decisively turned towards toleration in 1769.⁵⁰ Perhaps the most important point here is that what was happening in Toulouse was happening in many places.

By the beginning of the reign of Louis XVI (1774), the groundswell towards effective – if not always legal – toleration meant that almost everywhere Huguenots found themselves living side by side with Catholics in greater harmony and with fewer disadvantages. Indeed, some Protestant families, the Masson family for instance, were so prosperous that the government and others paid them deference. It was true that brutal persecution undoubtedly initiated by Catholic clerics still occurred in a few places. It is also indisputable that the emerging general toleration could not have possibly come about without the agreement or at least acquiescence of many of the Catholic parish clergy. How far it was agree-

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ment or resignation to a *de facto* situation is difficult to judge. Unsurprisingly, persecuting bishops were certainly becoming less numerous. Nevertheless, hard-line prelates in the Assemblies of the Clergy called continually – up until the 1787 Royal Edict of Toleration – for the government’s enforcement of the laws against Huguenots.⁵¹ But the Assemblies had little power to change reality, for the government had little stomach for an escalation of political alienation which would have certainly been the result of any renewed persecution.

Another illustration of how the reality of effective widespread toleration was imposing itself is provided by the circumstances in which Amelot, a government minister determined to ingratiate himself at court by enforcing the laws against the Huguenots, quickly abandoned his plans. Within a few months of taking office, he realized the extent of *de facto* toleration and the impossibility of turning the clock backwards and consequently abandoned his plans. The interesting thing here is that on this issue Amelot heeded the advice of the military commander of Languedoc, the Comte de Périgord, who was pro-toleration. On the advice of Périgord, he sent orders to all the intendants to leave the persecuting legislation unenforced and endorsed an agreement Périgord had made to tolerate Desert (unofficial Protestant) marriages. Neither government ministers nor military commanders could overturn the weight of reality. The call for the legalization of Protestant marriages was now almost universal. Thus the philosophe Condorcet’s call for legalization in 1779 can hardly be seen as a radical proposal, especially given the fact that even Albert, the Lieutenant-General of the Paris Police, was pro-toleration. Already, in 1776, in his *Un projet d’édit de tolérance*, Albert had argued in favour of the legalization of Protestant marriages. After the victory against the Jesuits, broadly Jansenist issues had occupied less space on the agenda of the *Parlement* of Paris. Jansenist members nevertheless remained active in the demand for toleration, arguing, as Robert de Saint-Vincent did in 1787, that ‘those who destroyed Port-Royal ... are the same people who were ardent prosecutors of Protestants’.⁵²

The final decline of the absolutist dream

Despite the victory over the Jesuits, for Jansenists the essence of the Church–state problem remained. The absolutist governmental out-

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look of the Bourbons still required control of the Church, and the *parlements* reduced to obedience. In the struggle against the Jesuits, the *parlements* had at times acted as a quasi-national *parlement*. It was thus unthinkable that the King would not ultimately attempt to reverse the Jansenist victories. In 1770 a royal edict was published that attempted to achieve just that, and deny the right of *parlements* to refuse their consent to royal declarations and edicts.

It is inconceivable that the King did not expect the *Parlement* of Paris to react vigorously to the edict, for, after the victories of the previous decades, its members felt confident of their own powers and their wide support. *Parlement* naturally refused to sign away its hard-won gains and suspended routine judicial business. The chancellor, René de Maupeou, responded by exiling the *Parlement* and hastily replacing it with new compliant recruits. This was such a radical step that it naturally provoked resistance from the other courts of Paris and provincial *parlements*, against which the government also acted. For the government, however, such a revolution was a risky business indeed, increasing alienation from the government and so threatening increased destabilization. Accordingly, the new King Louis XVI restored the old *parlements* in 1774. It was too late, however, to undo the damage done. Under the goad of the so-called Maupeou Revolution, the political or judicial Jansenism of the 1750s and 1760s completed its transition from a politico-religious cause into what could seem, and justifiably be described as, a much more secular one: the Patriot movement. This movement had as its primary goal the defence of the French public against royal despotism and was to play a leading role in the build-up to the French Revolution. The result of the Maupeou Revolution was a great wave of protest, in which there was a war of pamphlets or ‘antichancellor writings’ between the Patriots and the government. At least 500 works appealed to the nation against the ‘despotism’ of the government, and began to set the terminological stakes for the eventual outbreak of Revolution in the next decade. Some philosophes did of course intervene in the resistance to the Maupeou Revolution.⁵³ It remains the case, however, that their voice in the anti-Maupeou camp cannot be described as pivotal; Voltaire, for instance, supported the Maupeou Revolution.

There is abundant evidence that the Patriots were formed from the leadership of the Jansenist struggles of the 1750s and 1760s. Indeed, the ‘conspicuous role of Jansenism at all levels of the patriot

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movement strongly suggests that the movement ... spread by means of the same clandestine channels of communication originally set up for the dissemination of Jansenist ephemeral literature, in particular the weekly *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*'.⁵⁴ This was of course a task which the philosophes could never have accomplished, partly on account of their tiny numbers. It was impossible more so because, on such a direct political issue rather than general philosophical goals, their often elite backgrounds prevented any easy consensus. In the final instance, considerable sections of the elite of France naturally saw the Bourbons as the source of legitimate political power and social order. From whichever angle the situation is viewed, it remains the fact that those philosophes who did support the Patriots were mostly bystanders or peripheral supporters of a movement rather than its leaders.

From the overtly political nature of the Patriot movement, at first glance it might seem as if the Jansenist movement was losing itself in politics and that, as France went into the critical decades of the 1770s and 1780s, religion was ceasing to play such a fundamental role in the political life of the country. This is, however, to misunderstand the politico-religious content of the Maupeou Revolution and the desire of the government to attempt to minimize religious controversy by stealth. The Crown's main ally in its struggle with *Parlement* was of course its orthodox, pro-Rome clergy, and it remained so until the Revolution erupted. Indeed, we know that 'the clerical councilors for Maupeou's new *Parlement* of Paris had been recruited by none other than the anti-Jansenist Archbishop of Paris'. An alliance is always a case of compromise, and the orthodox clergy were above all still committed to stamping out or cowing Jansenism within the Church. The Maupeou Revolution was thus also the 'the green light to resume the sacramental harassment of appellants of *Unigenitus*', which the old *parlements* had effectively prohibited.⁵⁵ This is partly why a high proportion of the Patriot anti-Maupeou pamphlets were written by Jansenists. The subsequent cases of sacramental and other types of anti-Jansenist harassment also prompted the sharp intervention of the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*. The pages of that journal, as McManners has succinctly put it, were 'directed towards popular consciousness'. It was the only newspaper, in fact, in which the masses did not appear as criminals or as credulous non-entities; rather 'the people were the repositories of the truth on which Rome, the Church and the

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Monarchy were forever seeking to trample'.⁵⁶

At this point, therefore, as elsewhere in the century, it would be quite misleading to attempt to draw a neat dividing line between the enlightened and Jansenists. In particular, as Kley has put it, the

necessity of appealing to the broadest possible constituency forced Jansenists further to secularize their sectarian constitutionalism: to reconceptualize, for example, the magistrates' venal offices in terms of the natural right of property, and their representative role in the language of natural law... In one of his pamphlets [*Le Parlement justifi, par l'impératrice de Russie*], the Jansenist André Blonde even quoted from that boldest of the century's atheistic statements, Baron d'Holbach's *Nature's System*.⁵⁷

We have noted that Rousseau's *Du contrat social* (1762) was little known before 1789. But the process of bringing about a wider awareness of the notion of the General Will as a component of contract theory began in Jansenist literature and polemic long before the Revolution, and before 1762 and the publication of the *Contrat social*. The differences between Rousseauism and Jansenism cannot, of course, be glossed over. It is nevertheless true that, as Roger Barny has emphasized, the Jansenist–Patriot milieu produced the first sizeable and appreciative audience for the *Contrat social*.⁵⁸ It is also important to note that some of the pamphlets of the pre-Revolutionary crisis sympathetic to *Parlement's* appeal for an Estates General in 1787–88 were in fact reprints of Patriot pamphlets which had first appeared in 1771. In his popular *Catéchisme du citoyen* (1775), for example, the Jansenist Guillaume-Joseph Saige 'began with a clarion enunciation of Rousseauian principles'. He argued that sovereign power was to be found only in the General Will; from this position, the logical step was to appeal for an Estates General, as in fact his *Catéchisme* did. These arguments were also found in the learned *Maximes du droit public françois* (1775) of Maultrot and Mey, who also argued for an immediate convocation of an Estates General.⁵⁹ So, as Doyle has put it, 'Jansenists were amongst the first to call for genuinely representative institutions, elected assemblies which would spell the end of absolute monarchy'.⁶⁰

That what amounted to a hybrid of Jansenist and Rousseauian constitutionalism (the *Maximes du droit public françois*) appeared was, in some respects, hardly surprising. It is well known that Rousseau himself experienced a Jansenist phase (see his *Confes-*

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sions, 1772), although by the 1760s, at least, Rousseau was contemptuous of Jansenists as fanatical subverters of his own vision of Christianity. In his *The General Will Before Rousseau* (1986), Patrick Riley has shown that the concept of the General Will was common in Jansenist literature considerably before the publication of Rousseau's *Contrat social*. Of course a theory of the General Will can be expressed in various terms, and it would be unfounded (and rather naive) to argue that Rousseau's concept of the General Will had been present in the thought of earlier writers coming to the subject from various religious and ideological directions. Nevertheless, as Riley illustrates, concepts of the General Will had some currency long before Rousseau in the thought of several writers including Blaise Pascal (1623–62), Nicholas Malebranche (1638–1715), Pierre Bayle, Bossuet, Fontenelle and Montesquieu. The central point, however, is that Riley's book is a study of the transformation of the idea of the General Will from a religious one (the General Will of God to save all men) into a political one (the General Will of the citizen to place the common good of society over and above himself).

The limitation of Riley's work, however, is that it remains too abstract, too much at the level of the march of theory. If, however, we put Rousseau's 1762 *Du contrat social* in its context – i.e. the practical general will (majority public support for Jansenists against the government) – then the date and the content of Rousseau's work become more explicable. As a concluding remark, therefore, we can say that those who have demonstrated that Rousseau's *Du contrat social* had little currency before the Revolution are in danger of missing the point. For the real question should be: in the great Jansenist-*parlementaire* struggles against the government from the 1750s to the 1780s, how much influence did the concept of their General Will against perceived governmental tyranny have? There can be little doubt that the popular, general appeal to the Estates General as the arbiter of social justice over and above the judgement of the King doomed the concept of absolute rule in France, and was the key in the downfall of the Bourbon regime. Yet, as we have seen, there is a substantial body of evidence to demonstrate that the idea of a General Will expressed through French *parlements* had been a growing concept in the popular movement against clerical and government tyranny since the 1750s. The single most important point with relation to the years prior to the Revolution is that lower

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clergy, some intellectuals, a section of the elite (*parlements*) and large numbers, if not the majority, of the urban poor formed an active tradition in which the generation and transmission of its ideas was the very same thing as the exercise of its collective social force.

It should hardly need stating that it is impossible to discern the activity of any deist movement in these events – or indeed any evidence indicating that the phenomenon of the Enlightenment, as it has been traditionally conceived, led to the French Revolution. Unfortunately for the modernity hunters, the great Church–state conflicts of eighteenth-century France were fought out in a more or less traditional manner with one Christian faction pitted against another in alliance with particular lay constituencies. But *Parlement's* conflict with the King had, of course, its limits. After the celebrations occasioned by the death of Louis XV and the consequent downfall of Maupeou had subsided, the potential political significance of the enormously wide Patriot movement was not lost on the *parlements*. The wave of radicalism unleashed by the Maupeou Revolution had sharply reminded the noble membership of the *parlements* that they still had a significant stake in the status quo. With Maupeou now gone, and fearing for their social position, many in the *parlements* felt obliged to think the hitherto unthinkable and ally with the episcopate in order to ensure social order, which naturally entailed an end to much of their more radical outlook. In these circumstances, most Jansenists naturally abandoned their illusions in the *parlementary* leadership, and many welcomed the opportunity of 1789 to bring about a new Church and state.

Notes

- 1 On toleration in France see, for instance, M. Linton, 'Citizenship and Religious Toleration in France', in O. Grell and R. Porter (eds), *Toleration in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); C. H. O'Brien, 'Jansenists on Civil Toleration in Mid-18th-Century France', *Theologische Zeitschrift*, 37 (1981); G. Adams, *The Huguenots and French Opinion 1685–1787. The Enlightenment Debate on Toleration* (Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1991).
- 2 See, for instance, W. Rex, *Essays on Pierre Bayle and Religious Controversy* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1965); E. Labrousse, *Pierre Bayle* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1983; 1st edn 1963); E. Labrousse, 'Reading Pierre Bayle in Paris', in A. C. Kors and P. J. Korshin (eds), *Anticipations of the Enlightenment in England, France and Germany* (Philadelphia: Philadel-

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- phia University Press, 1987); K. Sandberg, *At the Crossroads of Faith and Reason. An Essay on Pierre Bayle* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1966); on Bayle and toleration see J. Laursen, 'Baylean Liberalism: Tolerance Requires Nontolerance', in J. Laursen and C. Nederman (eds), *Beyond the Persecuting Society* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998).
- 3 See, for instance, R. Barny, *Prélude idéologique à la Révolution Française: Le Rousseauisme avant 1789* (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1985); C. J. Betts, *Early Deism in France. From the So-Called 'Déistes' of Lyon (1564) to Voltaire's 'Lettres philosophiques' (1734)* (The Hague, Boston and Lancaster: Martinus Nijhoff, 1984); P. R. Campbell, *Power and Politics in Old Régime France, 1720–1745* (London: Routledge, 1996); A. C. Kors, *Atheism in France, 1650–1729. Vol. 1: The Orthodox Sources of Disbelief* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990); Kors and Korshin (eds), *Anticipations of the Enlightenment*; M. Linton, 'The Unvirtuous King? Clerical Rhetoric on the French Monarchy, 1760–1774', *History of European Ideas*, 25 (1999); J. McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France* (2 vols, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).
 - 4 One early and almost lone voice in the reassessment of the role of Jansenism in the suppression of the Jesuits was D. Mornet, *Les Origines intellectuelles de la Révolution Française 1715–1787* (6th edn, Paris: Armand Colin, 1967; 1st edn 1933). See also, for instance, O'Brien, 'Jansenists on Civil Toleration'; P. Riley, *The General Will Before Rousseau. The Transformation of the Divine into the Civic* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986); J. Shennan, *The Parlement of Paris* (Stroud: Sutton Press, 1998); D. Van Kley, *The Jansenists and the Expulsion of the Jesuits from France 1757–1765* (London: Yale University Press, 1975); D. Van Kley, *The Damiens Affair and the Unraveling of the Ancien Régime* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984); D. Van Kley, 'Pierre Nicole, Jansenism, and the Morality of Enlightened Self-Interest', in Kors and Korshin (eds), *Anticipations of the Enlightenment*; D. Van Kley, *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution. From Calvin to the Civil Constitution, 1560–1791* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996). On Jansenism's roots in the community and its politico-religious opposition to the King and the Roman orthodoxy see D. Garrioch, *The Formation of the Parisian Bourgeoisie 1690–1830* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1996), Part One, 'The Jansenist Years'. For those studying Jansenism for the first time, William Doyle's *Jansenism. Catholic Resistance to Authority from the Reformation to the French Revolution* (London: Macmillan, 2000) provides an accessible summary of the field. Some writers, however, have been more grudging in their acceptance of the importance of Jansenist politico-religious struggle. B. Stone, *The Genesis of the French Revolution. A Global-Historical Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 82–3, for instance, whilst acknowledging the work of Dale Van Kley, refers to Jansenism as a 'battle of the past' rather than an 'issue of the future' and subsumes it under the title 'socio-political challenge'.
 - 5 N. Henshall, *The Myth of Absolutism* (London: Longman, 1992).
 - 6 Shennan, *The Parlement of Paris*.
 - 7 On the Huguenots and public opinion see, for example, Adams, *The Huguenots and French Opinion*.
 - 8 On the Edict of Nantes and its Revocation see, for instance, R. M. Golden (ed.),

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- The Huguenot Connection. The Edict of Nantes, its Revocation, and Early Migration to South Carolina* (Dordrecht, Boston and Lancaster: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1988).
- 9 McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, vol. 2, p. 569.
 - 10 Labrousse, *Pierre Bayle*, pp. 7, 9–10.
 - 11 On the Huguenot diaspora see, for instance, G. C. Gibbs, 'The Reception of the Huguenots in England', in O. P. Grell, J. I. Israel and N. Tyacke (eds), *From Persecution to Toleration. The Glorious Revolution and Religion in England* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991).
 - 12 McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, vol. 2, pp. 586, 569.
 - 13 On French Jansenism, in addition to the works of O'Brien, Van Kley and Shennan cited above, see also C.-L. Maire, *De la cause de Dieu à cause de la nation. Les Jansénistes au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Galliard, 1998); M. Cottret, *Jansénismes et Lumières. Pour un autre XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1998); L. Hamon, *Du Jansénisme à la laïcité et les origines de la déchristianisation* (Paris: Editions de la Maison des Sciences de L'Homme, 1987).
 - 14 Conventicles: independent Huguenot congregations.
 - 15 Doyle, *Jansenism*, pp. 30, 39.
 - 16 Van Kley, *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution*, p. 248.
 - 17 McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, vol. 2, pp. 364, 377.
 - 18 Doyle, *Jansenism*, pp. 50–1.
 - 19 McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, vol. 2, p. 428.
 - 20 On the *Parlement* of Paris and Jansenism see also J. Swann, *Politics and the Parlement of Paris under Louis XV, 1754–1774* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
 - 21 On the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* see, for example, D. A. Coward, 'The Fortunes of a Newspaper: The *Nouvelles Ecclésiastiques*, 1728–180', *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 4 (1981).
 - 22 McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, vol. 2, pp. 424, 426.
 - 23 On the development of Jansenist leadership by laymen see, for instance, D. A. Bell, *Lawyers and Citizens. The Making of a Political Elite in Old Regime France* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).
 - 24 Doyle, *Jansenism*, p. 55.
 - 25 McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, vol. 2, p. 433.
 - 26 On public opinion in France, in addition to the works of Baker, Echeverria and Chartier cited in Chapter 2, see also K. Baker, 'Politics and Public Opinion under the Old Regime: Some Reflections', in J. Censer and J. Popkin (eds), *Press and Politics in Pre-Revolutionary France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), reprinted as 'Public Opinion as Political Invention', in K. Baker, *Inventing the French Revolution. Essays on French Political Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); and Part III ('Conceptions of the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century France') of C. Adams, J. Censer and L. Graham (eds), *Visions and Revisions of Eighteenth-Century France* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997).

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- 27 Doyle, *Jansenism*, p. 57.
- 28 McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, vol. 2, p. 461.
- 29 Doyle, *Jansenism*, p. 62.
- 30 Quoted in McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, vol. 2, p. 496.
- 31 Doyle, *Jansenism*, p. 63.
- 32 McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, vol. 2, pp. 500–1.
- 33 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 502.
- 34 Quoted in Shennan, *The Parlement of Paris*, p. 311. For a similar assessment see also Van Kley, *The Damians Affair*.
- 35 Doyle, *Jansenism*, pp. 66–7.
- 36 McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, vol. 2, p. 536.
- 37 J. Van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 274.
- 38 McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, vol. 2, pp. 536, 554.
- 39 Mornet, *Les Origines intellectuelles de la Révolution Française*, see Part III, 'L'Exploitation de la victoire' and the conclusion.
- 40 McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, vol. 2, p. 620.
- 41 As early as 1960 D. Bien, in *The Calas Affair* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1960), argued that the Calas affair was an aberration in an otherwise already relatively tolerant atmosphere.
- 42 Campbell, *Power and Politics in Old Régime France*, pp. 170–1.
- 43 Linton, 'Citizenship and Religious Toleration in France', p. 168.
- 44 McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, vol. 2, p. 601.
- 45 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 617, 623–4, 672.
- 46 Abbé Yvon, *Liberté de conscience, resserrée dans bornes légitimes* (London, 1754); J. Ripert de Monclar and Abbé Quesnel, *Mémoire théologique et politique au sujet des mariages clandestins des Protestants de France* (1755–56).
- 47 O'Brien, 'Jansenists on Civil Toleration', pp. 72–3.
- 48 *Ibid.*, p. 78.
- 49 For more on those discussions see McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, vol. 2, pp. 616–17.
- 50 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 619.
- 51 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 648–50.
- 52 *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 651–2; Saint-Vincent quoted on p. 655.
- 53 Van Kley, *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution*, p. 252.
- 54 *Ibid.*, p. 272.
- 55 *Ibid.*, pp. 275–6.
- 56 McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, vol. 2, p. 675.
- 57 Van Kley, *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution*, p. 268.
- 58 See Barny, *Prélude idéologique a la Revolution Française*.
- 59 Van Kley, *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution*, pp. 258, 294.
- 60 Doyle, *Jansenism*, p. 82.