

Both books reviewed here clearly “challenge the regional stereotype” by emphasizing the complexity and the radical possibilities of political life on the periphery. While scholars may disagree with the perspective portrayed in these volumes, they cannot help but be impressed by the commitment which all three scholars bring to their work and by the quality of their research.

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Ralp Gibson — *A Social History of French Catholicism, 1789-1914*. New York and London: Routledge, 1989. Pp. xiv, 322.

Gibson, an Australian with “atheistic tendencies” (ix), has written a superb book on French Catholicism in the nineteenth century. It is not that he has unearthed new ideas or methods, but that he surveys, analyzes and synthesizes the work and conclusions of other historians of religion. Further, he incorporates the findings from his own research on the diocese of Périgueux. He has created a thought-provoking book — part of a series called *Christianity and Society in the Modern World* under the general editorship of Hugh McLeod and Bob Scribner. Gibson is interested in patterns of religious behavior and is sympathetic to ordinary “people who struggled to give meaning to their own lives” (x). Gibson’s style is clear, direct and pleasant (and entertaining!). The modest size of the book means that Gibson is selective rather than comprehensive.

Gibson’s themes are the diversity and complex evolution of French Catholicism (270). He shows that the religious behavior of men and women varied according to region, age, gender and social class. He discounts the picture of a simple linear decline of French Catholicism by pointing to the beginning of change from Tridentine Catholicism to a new model of Catholicism.

The book is divided into nine chapters and is organized topically (and somewhat chronologically within the topic areas). Each chapter is carefully crafted with the definitions of terms (e.g. popular religion) where appropriate so as to be sure the reader will follow the chapter’s development. Summaries of the author’s main points end each chapter. The author carefully explains the theses of major historians and, then, provides his own insight. Thus, in discussing the uprising of the West during the French Revolution, Gibson agrees with Tackett that religion was the crucial factor of the revolt and disagrees with Tilly, Bois and Shutherland who emphasize socio-economic factors (49-51). The reader profits from the survey and the critical appraisal of major works on French Catholicism. All the while, Gibson shows the complexity of Catholicism; generalizations are nuanced.

In Chapter I (Catholicism under the *Ancien Régime*), Gibson explores the nature of religious practice in eighteenth-century France and deals with the concept of dechristianization. He questions the validity of evidence used to measure religious fervor (e.g. wills, clerical recruitment, rising illegitimacy), but he concludes: “Each element taken separately is subject to major problems of interpretation, but taken

together, they form an impressive body of evidence" (8). He cautions, however, that the so-called beginning of dechristianization (Vovelle, Chaunu) may indeed have been more a rejection of a particular model of Christianity (Tridentine Catholicism), as Jean Delumeau suggests, rather than a rejection of Christian belief (15).

Chapter 2 looks at the Revolution and its consequences for French Catholicism: the clash over the source of authority in the Church and the "end of quasi-universal practice" (54). Disagreeing with Tackett, Gibson argues that the incidence of clergy taking or refusing to take the oath to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy reflected rather than set the religious geography in France. He writes: "Most regional studies show a distribution of oath-taking very similar to that of pre-revolutionary indices of fervour — including vocations to the priesthood" (39-40). Without minimizing the importance of the cataclysmic events of the Revolution (and the enduring hostility between Catholics and republicans), Gibson suggests that more important than the Revolution in the long run was the gradual erosion of Tridentine Catholicism and the replacement of the God of fear with the God of love. (He discusses the factors which weakened and which strengthened religious practice in Chapter 8 — Dechristianization and rechristianization: from a God of fear to a God of love.) Gibson characterizes Tridentine Catholicism as "clerical, hostile 'to the world', moralizing and fear-based" (30).

Chapters 3 and 4 comprise nearly a third of the book and deal with the clergy: secular and regular. Gibson discusses many aspects of secular clergy (e.g. hierarchy, seminary training, social and geographical origins, growth and decline of ordinations, standard of living, intellectual achievement and values). He continually relates his discussion to the essential components of Tridentine Catholicism and searches to understand how this model of behavior strong in 1850 was much weaker by 1905. In a later chapter, he explains: "It may well be...that it was the nature of the Catholic religion itself which determined, more than anything else, its success or failure" (241).

A key point was the change in social and class origins. *Ancien Régime* clergy were "disproportionately urban and bourgeois" (68). Nineteenth-century clergy came increasingly from the countryside — though the majority came from towns and the artisan class. This change in social origins helps explain the change in form and expression of religious behavior. As clerical recruitment became ruralized, popular religion became clericalized.

By using an extended definition of regular clergy, Gibson treats the spectacular growth of women religious orders (congrégations) and attributes their success to their being able to offer women: sociability, collective action and a chance for a career. Other topics on the regular clergy were their role in education and the hostility of the Third Republic towards them.

In Chapters 5, 6 and 7 (Popular religion; Religious practice: region, gender, and age; The Church and social class), Gibson examines the various factors (as indicated in the titles) which influenced religious behavior in nineteenth-century France. In addition, he argues persuasively that the Tridentine elements of Catholicism were responsible for the lessening of religious practice because they did not meet the needs of the time. For example, "the Church's attitude to sex was one of the major forces for dechristianization in the population as a whole" (224). Conversely, he notes the revival of Catholic practice as a result of the abandonment of the elements of the Tridentine model of Catholicism. An example is the introduction of a Ligourian (i.e. more tolerant) morality in confession.

Chapter 9 is a brief conclusion to the book in which he recapitulates his themes of religious diversity and complex evolution of Catholicism.

Gibson includes in his book some valuable aids to the study of nineteenth-century Catholicism: a bibliography of 100 titles, 30 pages of notes, six maps (e.g. French dioceses in 1860s and the Boulard map of Catholic practice post-World War II), and several charts (e.g. Easter Communion and Boulard's graph of ordinations to priesthood). A minor criticism I have is the absence of a list of tables included in the book, especially for Chapters 4 and 6.

As I have tried to indicate, Gibson provides much food for thought in this book. He covers a broad topic and indicates potential areas for research. For example, he points out that there are "only five available diocesan studies of recruitment of the regular clergy" (114) and acknowledges, "no work exists to show that Marian devotion appealed more to one sex than to the other" (153).

This book is a wonderful addition to the study of nineteenth-century French Catholicism. Gibson has a mastery of current historical research and clearly synthesizes and analyzes evidence on attitudes and behaviors of Catholic men and women.

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David W. Gutzke — *Protecting the Pub: Brewers and Publicans Against Temperance*. London: The Royal Historical Society, 1989.

The pub, the focus of this book, is, with the home and the parish, the oldest and most durable and one of the most beloved of British local institutions. During the Victorian and Edwardian periods, the era which Gutzke examines, the pub's very existence was threatened by temperance movement, an amalgam of Evangelical and utilitarian, puritan and melioristic currents. Temperance reformers blamed their failure to destroy the pub, or at least to diminish greatly the role it played, on the successful efforts of brewers and publicans, the hated "trade", to protect their investments. Gutzke's book is the latest and one of the most important contributions to a debate among historians about the validity of this assessment.

At least since 1936, when R.C.K. Ensor, in his volume of the *Oxford History of England (England 1870-1914)*, described "nearly every public-house in the United Kingdom" from 1871 to 1874 as "an active committee room for the conservative party" (21), historians have attempted to measure the political influence of the British liquor trade. Recently, detailed and perceptive studies of the temperance movement initiated by Brian Harrison's seminal *Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England, 1815-1872* (London, 1971); and continued in A.E. Dingle's *The Campaign for Prohibition in Victorian England* (New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1980); Lilian Shiman's *Crusade Against Drink in Victorian England* (New York, 1988); and articles in several journals (including this one) by David Fahey have introduced a revisionist interpretation of relations between British political parties, on the one hand, and