

treatment by the judicial system, circumvention of controls on the grain trade, and the milking of the resources of charitable institutions (the Monte di Pietà and hospitals) demonstrate that the Brescian councillor regarded political predominance as a personal and class patrimony.

Staying on top was no simple matter, however. Given Brescia's system of partible inheritance, noble families had to adopt complex strategies for the preservation of their patrimonies: restricted marriage, imposition of a *fideicommissum* on property, limited emancipation, and large, complex households. In keeping with recent historical writing, Ferraro illustrates the central role played by large and growing dowries (and other forms of women's property) in the redistribution or preservation of wealth. Dowries were also a significant factor in the formation of alliances between elite families, as affinal ties complemented other patron-client mechanisms in the construction of "support networks" (p. 143) necessary for social, economic, and political survival.

The charmed circle of councillors was not without its internal divisions. Disparities in wealth were great, and a small number of families (usually older, wealthier, and more prolific) held a disproportionate share of high offices. Armed factions, organized by the leading families, brought mayhem to the streets of Brescia. Disputes over dowries and patrimonial transmission constantly threatened to rend the fragile solidarity of lineages. Venetian efforts at pacification and prosecution were largely ineffectual: having adopted a policy of collaboration with local elites and having declined to impose a centralized administration, the capital had little leverage when those elites got out of line. Indeed, when the political monopoly of the Brescian ruling group was challenged by second-tier protesters in 1644 and 1645, Venice (after initial sympathy) had little choice but to reaffirm its own aristocratic model and support the old guard.

There are few surprises. Ferraro has corroborated patterns noted for other cities rather than offered revisionist theses of her own. However, the current demand that every book offer a bold rethinking of its field has led to the proliferation of dead ends. We are here well served by the addition of a solid case study, concerned with a major and overlooked site, which meshes neatly with a rapidly growing literature. Future synthesizers will find much in this book to draw upon. Generalists will benefit as well, since the clear and well-supported conclusions provide a useful overview of the societies subsumed in the Venetian territorial state.

James S. Grubb  
*University of Maryland Baltimore County*

Gregory Hanlon — *Confession and Community in Seventeenth Century France: Catholic and Protestant Coexistence in Aquitaine*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993. Pp. 312.

The late twentieth century has witnessed the revival of religious strife on a grand scale, provoking cries of alarm among many commentators. A few voices offer

materialistic explanations. They attempt to argue that apparently religious squabbles actually have roots in economic conflict. Some historians, meanwhile, have begun to suggest that sporadic religious strife might actually be an exception to long-established norms of peaceful coexistence, perhaps the result of national policies that exploit the religious devotion of a small number of zealots, or vice versa.

Gregory Hanlon's *Confession and Community in Seventeenth Century France* is an historian's attempt to show patterns of peaceful coexistence in early modern France during a period when religious intolerance and fratricide are commonly thought to have been prevalent. In the midst of the religious strife of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, he detects the existence of a "tolerance" that involved mutual interaction and the integration of competing groups into the fabric of daily social, political, and economic activity within a local community. Hanlon asks two main questions: whether such religious tolerance was widespread, and why France's Protestant minority was eventually reabsorbed despite the absence of overt persecution.

The rural village of Layrac, in Aquitaine, is the focus of Hanlon's history. South-western France is an obvious location for such a study because of its long history of religious disputes and because in many areas it retained an even balance between Catholic and Huguenot adherents, unlike northern France where the Huguenot population was dispersed and depleted by the religious wars of the sixteenth century.

The town of Layrac, Hanlon argues, was unexceptional in everything but the survival of its *jurades*, the records of its municipal assembly. Hanlon uses the *jurades* to illuminate for us the struggles of the townspeople to preserve the peace locally in the face of much pressure from the clergies of both confessions to promote religious factionalism. Members of the town's two branches of government, the *jurat* and the *consul*, were generally drawn from the upper classes, who had a particular interest in preserving the peace, partly for efficiency and partly out of class solidarity.

In his first four chapters, Hanlon attempts to prove that the townspeople showed signs of tolerance in their lack of inter-confessional conflict and in the sociability that was imposed by the demands of daily life in a small community. The second half of Hanlon's history looks at wider areas in concentric circles around Layrac, showing the integrative function of regalist and Catholic ideology. The study is primarily concerned with the period between 1560 and 1685: from the high noon of French Protestantism, when revolt seemed imminent, to the Edict of Fontainebleau which made Protestantism illegal.

After northern Huguenots were forced to retreat, Protestantism in France was largely represented by the Huguenots of the south, who made up a quarter of its population by 1600. Because so many Huguenots were middle-class or even noble, they were able to dominate municipal government in the southwest and imposed severe strictures upon Catholics, including making the celebration of mass illegal and expelling priests and monks. The Edict of Nantes in 1598 did not immediately establish inter-confessional peace. It required the intervention of Henri IV in 1603 to reinstate Catholics to the consular (executive) branch of municipal government in the southwest.

Huguenots continued to control local government in Layrac until early in the seventeenth century. During a period of Huguenot rebellion in southwestern France in 1618 to 1622, Protestants were made ineligible for the consulate by order of the Crown in 1622. Catholic leaders of Layrac attempted to maintain good relations with Protestants in spite of the new rules. They did not cease to provide municipal funds for the payment of the Protestant schoolmaster or expel Protestants from auxiliary roles in the town. The arrival of a new curé in 1627 galvanized Catholic extremists, but famine and plague in the area between 1628 and 1631 drew attention away from religious squabbles.

Layrac and its environs then experienced a difficult period in which the Crown's fiscal demands grew steadily while they became more difficult to fulfil. Catholic leaders in Layrac began to petition the Crown to reinstate Huguenots in consular government, but were unsuccessful until 1645. The Fronde rebellions brought further hardships. In 1653 plague broke out in the Layrac region and greatly reduced Huguenot numbers. Afterwards, Catholics became the dominant group in the region. Hanlon depicts a period of rapid decline for Protestants, culminating in the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685.

Hanlon opposes the tendency of many historians to over-simplify the complicated political and religious quarrels of the seventeenth century. He points out that Huguenots should not be associated exclusively with the struggle for local autonomy; Calvinists were as likely to favour the Crown and the nation as to support regional independence. Calvinism was in itself an integrative movement. Similarly, it would be a mistake to identify Catholics at the regional level solely with royal absolutism, as Catholics were also capable of defending municipal interests in the face of royal incursions. Hanlon portrays a record of relationships between Catholics and Protestants continually threatened and continually renewed in the face of pressure from the Crown for integration and from religious zealots for implacable intolerance.

The shifting allegiances of local groups in southwestern France were dictated by the vagaries of Crown policy, which in turn was shaped by its attempts to find the most effective means of national control. In the end, co-operation was imposed in Layrac by practical considerations, particularly in the collecting of taxes, which was impossible without the efforts of both the Catholic and Protestant elites. Paradoxically, although the Crown attempted to deny Huguenot rights after 1622, its fiscal requirements made Huguenot participation in tax-collecting essential: without it, Catholics could not effectively assess Huguenot property or meet royal demands for money. Thus Crown policy made inter-confessional co-operation necessary.

Sociability also required a certain level of tolerance between Protestants and Catholics. Hanlon shows how the region's elites continued to attend religious festivals together, drink together, and even intermarry. Zealots of both confessions opposed such fraternizing, but were able to do little to stop it. Even the town militia might include both Huguenots and Catholics, a sign that most local people were not gravely concerned by the need for security against neighbours of opposing faith.

Finally, the existence of such sociability suggests that coexistence was also made possible by a degree of religious indifference among the people of the region. Many people converted to Calvinism initially because their friends and neighbours had

done so. Those with stronger convictions regarding doctrine found that, after a time, Catholic reforms began to catch up to Protestant ones. Many people simply did not care very much about the doctrinal differences between the two faiths, Hanlon argues. It was thanks to this indifference that the people of Aquitaine were able to shift their allegiances with apparently minimal anguish. The direction of their shifts depended on any number of factors: Crown policy, marriage, the faith of the majority. The Crown eventually decided that harmony in France could best be preserved by Catholic uniformity, and so Protestantism came to be associated with rebellion. This, Hanlon argues, was the real reason why French Protestantism lost most of its vigour and many adherents by the end of the seventeenth century, even without overt persecution at the local level.

Was this tolerance? Hanlon is careful to point out that the tolerance of the Midi in the seventeenth century was not an idealistic but a practical choice for many communities. Tolerance in the modern sense of *respect de la différence* would be an anachronistic term to describe their modes of co-operation. The people of early modern France did not consciously seek out tolerance in an attempt to achieve peace or justice; nor did they believe that tolerance as such was a virtue. They learned tolerance through their need for co-operation. One problem with Hanlon's thesis is that religious strife was in fact so persistent during the period he studies. His argument that such strife was the result of Crown policy and the efforts of a small number of powerful religious leaders, rather than widespread inter-confessional hatred, is convincing, however. In that way, Hanlon's history affords us some hope for a resolution of today's religious quarrels.

Lise Legault  
University of Ottawa

John Landers — *Death and the Metropolis: Studies in the Demographic History of London 1670–1830*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993. Pp. xxiii, 408.

In this book John Landers argues for the reintegration of mortality studies into social and economic history. To this end, he develops an explanatory model incorporating social and economic factors to account for mortality levels in London during the eighteenth century. He believes that London's very high mortality rates during this period resulted largely from its extraordinarily high potential for the spread of infectious diseases.

In the metropolitan centres populations were large enough to act as perennial reservoirs of infections, being characterised ... by a high level of both retention and, given their crowded populations and poor sanitation, conduction. (p. 29)

He hypothesizes, as well, that mortality rates among infants, children, and immigrants should be disproportionately high and that there should not be huge fluctuations in London's death rate. He argues that the extent to which London's housing