

Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe (History Series, 42)

REVIEWS

other buildings in Rome, began to mushroom. Among the seminaries established at this time, St Sulpice was pre-eminent: more than 1,969 priests were educated there between 1642 and 1695. There was also a remarkable development of charities and confraternities and an expansion of free education. By 1673 only 16 out of 131 parishes were without a free school.

As the seventeenth century drew to a close the religious life of Paris was disturbed by a series of crises, the most important being the rise of Jansenism, which began as an essentially elitist movement and then filtered down into the ranks of the lower clergy under the ambiguous rule of Archbishop de Noailles. In the words of Voltaire: 'Il protégeait quelques jansénistes sans l'être et aimait peu les jésuites sans leur nuire et sans les craindre.' During the eighteenth century the ultramontanism of the Jesuits came under attack from the Gallican *curés* and their flocks. The crisis culminated in the suppression of the Jesuits in 1762 and the dismantling of their colleges. Between 1729 and 1789 Paris had four archbishops in succession whose differences of outlook and policy hampered pastoral work. At the same time the organs of diocesan government fell into disuse. Archbishop Beaumont did not carry out a single visitation during his long episcopate (1746–81). The Parisian clergy was in disarray when it had to face the challenge of the Revolution. Far from resisting it, many *curés* shared enthusiastically in the new liturgy: 'Dans les 60 districts de la capitale, les aumôniers bénissaient les drapeaux de la garde nationale en des discours célébrant les vertus d'une religion patriotique.' Then came the *bataille du serment* which split the clergy into two camps according to whether or not it accepted the oath of obedience imposed by the Assemblée Constituante. Yet the attempts made under the Terror and even later to dechristianise Paris failed to shake the loyalty of many Parisians to the old order. Thus, writes Blongeron, 'le culte clandestin trompe la mort dans des oratoires ex-constitutionnels ou des chapelles ci-devant réfractaires, dans des maisons particulières'.

This history of the diocese of Paris exemplifies the kind of large-scale historical enterprise that the French do particularly well. It adds worthily to a series that already covers nineteen dioceses. Though patchy, it contains some excellent sections, such as those on the Catholic Reformation and the Revolution. There are maps and a bibliography, but the usefulness to scholars is much diminished by the absence of footnotes and of an analytical index. When will French publishers realise that these are essential to any work of serious scholarship?

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Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe. By Janet L. Nelson. (History Series, 42.) Pp. xi + 412. London—Ronceverte: Hambledon Press, 1987. £25. 0 907628 59 1

These essays span the period from the seventh century to the eleventh. Although reflecting changes in their author's focus of interest over twenty years, the collection nevertheless has a large measure of unity and tells a coherent story.

The most conspicuous seam is the relationship of royal inauguration rituals to power. Dr Nelson sees the appearance of such rituals as owing little to Rome or Byzantium; rather, they are the product of the interaction in barbarian kingdoms between the needs and claims of the clerical elite and those of kings and peoples. Inauguration rituals became a means not only to the establishment of episcopal power, but also to the self-definition of a *gens*. They appear first in

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