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# The Theology of the Huguenot Refuge:

From the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes  
to the Edict of Versailles

Edited by  
Martin I. Klauber



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*The Theology of the Huguenot Refuge*  
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To my mother  
**Virginia E. Klauber,**  
for imparting to me a love of history



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## Introduction

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*Martin I. Klauber*

The generations of French Protestants who maintained their faith following the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685) provided a rich theological tradition that has received relatively little scholarly attention. While seminal studies of the dispersion of Huguenots abound, this book serves as an attempt to place the distinctive theological ideas of the period in historical context. This book is divided into two sections. The first focuses initially on the historical events leading up to the Revocation and then looks at the various responses to it in the decades leading up to the Edict of Toleration that Louis XVI signed in 1787. The second section includes essays on some of the more significant French Reformed theologians of the era who were forced to flee the country following the Revocation. Major topics of concern had changed somewhat from the previous generations when the definition of the true church, the doctrine of universal grace, and the nature of the Eucharist dominated theological debate. In the post-Revocation era, eschatological concerns, the problem of Nicodemism, and more political matters, such as the degree of allegiance owed to a king who had legally outlawed the Reformed faith in France, dominated discussion.

The scholars who have contributed to this volume are some of the best-known in the field. For decades, Richard A. Muller has been the leading American historian of post-Reformation Reformed thought and has pointed to significant areas of continuity between the Reformation and post-Reformation period. His four-volume *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics* remains the classic series on the theology of the

era.<sup>1</sup> Most of his work has focused on the earlier era of Reformed orthodoxy, but his essay in this book looks at David Martin, a refugee minister at Utrecht, who has received relatively little scholarly attention. Martin was involved in some controversies of biblical interpretation, defending the validity of the Johannine Comma against the famed Oratorian priest, Richard Simon, whose *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* (1678) and *Histoire critique du texte du Nouveau Testament* (1689) were some of the most significant early works on biblical criticism. Martin also advocated the concept of the double meaning of prophetic texts, defending the christological interpretation of Psalm 110.

This collection also includes contributions from prominent European scholars. R. Jane McKee from the University of Ulster, an expert of the Huguenot diaspora and the work of Parisian pastor Charles Drelincourt, has written an important essay detailing the extent of Huguenot migration from France before and after the Revocation. Pauline Duley-Haour, professor at the Lycée Pierre-Gilles de Gennes-ENCPB in Paris, received her doctorate from the École Pratique des Hautes Études and has an extensive publication record that includes an important book on the so-called Huguenot Church of the Desert and the networks among exiled Protestants of the refuge, with a focus on Antoine Court.<sup>2</sup> Her essay in this volume details the development and practices of the Protestants in southern France between the Revocation and the French Revolution.

Jeannine Olson of Rhode Island College begins this volume with an essay on the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685), the catastrophic event for the Huguenots that set into motion the French Protestant diaspora and the rebellion in southern France. W. Gregory Monahan, recently retired from Eastern Oregon University, has written the first major book in English on the war of the Camisards and has contributed an essay on that topic to this volume.<sup>3</sup> Marjan Blok, who holds a PhD from the University of Amsterdam, recently retired as chancellor of the prestigious St. John's International School in

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1. Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca. 1725*, 4 vols. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003).

2. Pauline Duley-Haour, *Désert et Refuge: Sociohistoire d'une internationale Huguenote* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2017).

3. W. Gregory Monahan, *Let God Arise: The War and Rebellion of the Camisards* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

Belgium. Her chapter in this book traces the events leading up to the Edict of Toleration of 1787.

With the historical events that dominated this period thus highlighted, the rest of the chapters focus on individual theologians of the diaspora. Brian E. Strayer, professor of history at Andrews University in Michigan, contributed the chapter on Claude Brousson. He has completed extensive research on Brousson, who risked everything to aid the clandestine Reformed assemblies following the Revocation and in 1698 paid for his practice of passive resistance with his life.<sup>4</sup> John Roney of Sacred Heart University, who has written an important critical work on the nineteenth-century French historian Henri Merle d'Aubigné<sup>5</sup> and done extensive research on the history of the Netherlands and Ireland, has contributed the essay on Jacques Abbadie. Born in the Béarn area in the Pyrenees region, which had been part of the Kingdom of Navarre, Abbadie was educated in France at Saumur and eventually was awarded the position of Dean of Killaloe in Ireland after the Glorious Revolution of 1688.

The editor of this volume has contributed chapters on three significant theologians of the dispersion, all of whom settled in the Netherlands and served in the pastorate of the same Walloon church in Rotterdam: Jacques Basnage, Pierre Jurieu, and Daniel de Superville. Jurieu is the most well known of the three based on his voluminous writings, especially on what he believed was the impending reestablishment of the Reformed churches in France and his application of biblical apocalyptic literature to current events. Jurieu also engaged in a long-standing feud with Pierre Bayle, who devoted extensive sections of his *Dictionnaire historique* to ridicule Jurieu. Basnage is best known for his multivolume *Histoire des juifs* (1706), but the essay in this book takes a look at his *Lettres pastorales* (1698), written to his former parishioners who remained behind in France after the Revocation. Superville was a superb preacher whose sermons were aimed primarily at caring for his congregation in exile but also could be read by the former members of his church in Loudun, France.

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4. Brian E. Strayer, *The Bellicose Dove: Claude Brousson and Protestant Resistance to Louis XIV, 1647–1698* (Brighton, England: Sussex Academic Press, 2003).

5. John B. Roney, *The Inside of History: Jean Henri Merle d'Aubigné and Romantic Historiography* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1996).

Otto Selles, professor of French at Calvin College, wrote his dissertation at the Sorbonne on Antoine Court and the concept of tolerance in early eighteenth-century France.<sup>6</sup> In this volume, he presents a short biographical sketch of Court and adds an important new translation of Court's first sermon. Michael A. G. Haykin is a well-known historian from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. He has a wide range of research interests from patristics to the English Baptists and French Reformed thought. His chapter on Jacques Saurin shows how he served as a transitional figure between traditional Calvinism and a more enlightened form of orthodoxy.

As with the vast majority of multiauthor collections of essays, the conundrum has been which material to include and which to exclude. Pierre Bayle, as one of the most dominant figures of the era, was really more of a philosopher than a theologian but still could have been included. However, the goal of this volume is to present fresh interpretations of prominent theologians who are not too well known to contemporary audiences. Scholars such as Jonathan Israel on Bayle's true religious beliefs,<sup>7</sup> Hubert Bost in his critical biography of Bayle,<sup>8</sup> Mara van der Lugt on the conflict between Bayle and Jurieu in the *Dictionnaire historique*,<sup>9</sup> and Todd Ryan on Bayle's use of Cartesianism<sup>10</sup> have recently explored many aspects of Bayle's life and thought. Furthermore, while no specific essay has been devoted to Bayle, his name and influence appear throughout the volume, especially in the chapter on his nemesis, Pierre Jurieu.

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6. Otto Selles, "Antoine Court et l'idée de tolerance au xviiiè siècle: Le patriote français et impartial" (PhD diss., University of Paris, 1994).

7. Jonathan Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650–1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). See his more recent *Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man, 1670–1752* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); *Democratic Enlightenment: Philosophy, Revolution, and Human Rights, 1750–1790* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); and *A Revolution of the Mind: Radical Enlightenment and the Intellectual Origins of Modern Democracy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2011).

8. Hubert Bost, *Pierre Bayle* (Paris: Fayard, 2006).

9. Mara van der Lugt, *Bayle, Jurieu and the Dictionnaire Historique et Critique* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

10. Todd Ryan, *Pierre Bayle's Cartesian Metaphysics: Rediscovering Early Modern Philosophy* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

Others who could have been part of this study include Pierre Allix, of the celebrated Reformed church at Charenton, who pastored in London after the Revocation and eventually was awarded a canonry at Salisbury Cathedral. Another key figure was Elie Benoist, who fled France and served as a pastor at the Walloon church at Delft and wrote the important *Histoire de l'Édit de Nantes* (1693–1695). Paul Rabaut (1718–1794) was a pastor in Nîmes who worked tirelessly to improve conditions for Protestants overall and especially for those held prisoner in Constance Tower. His son, Paul Rabaut Saint-Étienne (1743–1793), who served as a Reformed pastor and as a deputy to the Third Estate of the Estates General, is discussed in the chapter on the Edict of Toleration. He opposed the trial of Louis XVI and paid for it with his life as a victim of the guillotine. These figures, among others, are worthy of study and provide fodder for further research.