

irrelevant are the difference between Left and Right. If he does not embrace wholeheartedly Gérard Noiriel's thesis on the republican origins of Vichy, he does insist on the proximity between the world of Vichy and the values of many resisters, which eased the transfer of allegiance from one to the other.

Nord's book provides a selective view of the period, devoted to the small circles of the elite and, quite logically, he is therefore interested in the places where this elite was educated, and his account privileges the role of institutions like Sciences Po and the École nationale d'administration (ENA) that the Left hoped might take on the prestige of the former.

This synthesis is based on research that ranges across the period from 1930 to 1960 and will be of most value to nonspecialists. It highlights those crucial questions of continuity and rupture that figured so centrally in the approach of Professor René Rémond during his long years of teaching history at Sciences Po. However, this approach paid scant regard to social history, to questions of gender, and to the study of consumerism and publicity that have come to replace the former focus on the ambiguous attitudes of an elite. Instead, we now seek a wider understanding of the social and political process that seeks to address the larger questions that influence the choice of government, and the support for this or that policy. To understand the past and our present, we need something richer than an account of the group of technocrats described here.

Danièle Voldman

Centre d'Histoire Sociale Paris

Magda Teter, *Sinners on Trial: Jews and Sacrilege after the Reformation*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011. Pp. 358. \$39.95 (ISBN: 978-0-674-05297-0).

doi:10.1017/S0738248012000508

Magda Teter's *Sinners on Trial: Jews and Sacrilege after the Reformation* aims to discuss the trials for sacrilege that took place in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries. The book gives detailed account of several cases, in which Christians or Jews were charged with stealing, mishandling, or abusing Christian ritual objects. Particular attention is given to the charge of the Host desecration, whereby the Jews were accused of performing rituals defiling the consecrated wafer. The charge, first launched in Western Europe in the Middle Ages, did not appear in Poland-Lithuania until the sixteenth century. Teter persuasively shows that its appearance in the Commonwealth was spurred not so much

by anti-Judaism, as it was by the “Catholic-Protestant conflict, changing conditions of ecclesiastical authority and jurisdiction, and competition in the economic marketplace” (2). Thus, the accusation against the Jews in the event sought to provide “arguments” against the Protestant critique of the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation. Various miraculous occurrences (such as the Host’s bleeding) accompanying, according to the accusers, its desecration by the Jews, were meant to offer “proof” of the real presence of Jesus’ body in the Eucharistic wafer. A great merit of Teter’s work consists in placing the accusation of sacrilege within the context of the history of Poland and the history of religious controversies in early-modern Europe.

Teter’s comparative perspective is as rare as it is welcomed. However, the execution of her project begs several hard questions. Are the dozen or so cases meticulously analyzed by Teter all the cases pertinent to the subject of her study? If not, on what basis were they selected? If the book is meant to offer an overview of the charges of sacrilege in Poland-Lithuania, why is there no discussion of a single case from Lithuania? (Teter’s focus only on Polish cases is particularly puzzling, given that the records of the Lithuanian Royal Tribunal are fully extant, whereas most of the records of its Polish counterpart are lost). Is it possible to formulate generalizations about religious controversies in Poland-Lithuania without even mentioning Eastern Christianity? (Roughly 40% of the Commonwealth’s population was either Greek-Orthodox or Greek-Catholic; the Jews and Protestants together constituted no more than 20%). Is it proper to treat cases from the mid-sixteenth and the late eighteenth centuries as responding to the same stimuli, ignoring the changes in legal and political systems that took place during the span of 200 years?

Teter’s main argument is that Poland’s legislation purporting to protect religious freedoms backfired terribly: “[t]he legal reform of the mid-sixteenth century that was intended to decrease the influence of the Church on the state resulted in a close entanglement of secular courts in religious matters. . . . By the seventeenth century, the secular courts were deciding what was sacred and what was not” (7). “The Polish law prohibiting the use of the secular arm in enforcing Church laws . . . was intended to shield religious dissenters from the authority of the Catholic Church’s courts, but it effectively turned the religious sins. . . into ‘crimes’” (64). Interesting as it is, this argument is, in my opinion, deeply flawed. First, in contrast to what Teter claims, “the legal reform of the mid-sixteenth century” *was not* “intended to decrease the influence of the Church on the state.” (I am not aware of any law avowing such intentions prior to the modern period). Rather, it was intended to safeguard basic freedoms *within* the religious sphere and to separate recognized religious denominations from those who were considered heretics by both Catholics and Protestants. Second, the law’s restrictions on the enforcement of ecclesiastical verdicts by the state were always limited. The case in point

was the enforcement of bans of excommunication by the Commonwealth's authorities. Such enforcement took place both before and after the Reformation and was by no means restricted to the excommunications issued by the Catholic Church: both Protestant consistories and rabbinic *batei din* routinely called on the secular arm to enforce their bans and collaborated with local authorities in apprehending and punishing the excommunicated. Finally, and most importantly, Teter's assumption that the dichotomies of the "church" and the "state," "sin" and "crime," and the "secular" and "religious" were evident and clearly delineated in the early modern period is, at best, highly dubious, and it might be outright anachronistic. Teter believes that, for example, heresy, desecration of religious objects, or blasphemy are, in themselves purely religious matters; "sins," which after the Reformation were hijacked by secular authorities or wrongly subsumed under the rubric of criminal law. Yet, in most of the cases discussed in her book, neither the accusers *nor* the accused shared this belief. For the pre-modern consciousness, *all* "criminals" were sinners in the first place. Most of the "heretics" and "sacrilegers" discussed by Teter denied the specific allegations raised against them. Virtually none denied that heresy or sacrileges in themselves were in fact simultaneously "sins" and "crimes."

Pawel Maciejko

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Clifford Ando, *Law, Language, and Empire in the Roman Tradition*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011. Pp. 184. \$49.95 cloth (ISBN 978-0-812-24354-3); \$49.95 ebook (ISBN 978-0-812-20488-9).

doi:10.1017/S073824801200051X

The subject of Clifford Ando's work is the Roman empire and the forces that held it together. In *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2000) he looked at ideology; in *The Matter of the Gods* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2008) he looked at religion; and now, in his third monograph, he looks at law. Ando has approached each subject as a chapter in the history of ideas, with a sharply rationalist bent. In one of his most acute insights, he argued that polytheistic religion was to be seen not as a matter of mute ritual as contrasted with Christian inner faith—which he showed is itself a Christianizing perspective—but as a matter of knowledge. With respect to law, Ando is interested in "not what Romans thought, but how they thought"