

Jeffrey D. Burson. *The Rise and Fall of Theological Enlightenment: Jean-Marin de Prades and Ideological Polarization in Eighteenth-Century France*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010. Pp. 520. Cloth, \$55.00; ISBN 978-0-268-02220-4.

The intellectual, political, and religious upheavals of eighteenth-century France swept up individuals into maelstroms that carried them to fame or destroyed their lives. Such was the case with an otherwise little known theology student named Jean-Martin de Prades. Jeffrey Burson explores the controversy and political intrigue surrounding Prades' thesis, presented to the Sorbonne, as a telling event in the battle for the Gallican Church during the Enlightenment.

Burson, assistant professor of history at Macon State College, uses the Prades episode to demonstrate the conflicts between various intellectual parties struggling for control of French religious and philosophical thought. Burson argues that French Jesuits had created a synthesis of the ideas of Locke and Malebranche—a synthesis Burson calls the “Theological Enlightenment.” An ongoing struggle arose involving the Jansenists, the Jesuit synthesis, and the emerging Radical Enlightenment. Prades' thesis, intended as a first effort in the creation of an apologetic in defense of the Church in the face of Enlightenment philosophy, became a point of conflict over the role of the Sorbonne and its faculty within that struggle. Prades fell victim to the politics of the theological and political parties involved in the debates.

Burson's study uses Prades and his thesis in much the same way: as a symbol of the controversy. This book does an excellent job of introducing and analyzing the position of each group and the larger sociopolitical context. While on the surface about the Prades affair, this book is an overview of the intellectual turmoil that was mid-eighteenth-century France. Burson has studied the primary documents and recreates the events and their context with meticulous detail.

The book is presented in three parts. The first part surveys the religious and intellectual movements of the first half of the century and the development of the Theological Enlightenment. Part two describes the milieu of higher education in Paris at mid-century—both the structure of higher education and the politics of the period. The final part examines Prades' thesis in detail and the unfolding of the events leading to its condemnation.

For Burson, the Prades affair signals the collapse of the Theological Enlightenment in France, the end of the political autonomy of the Sorbonne, and left France polarized between the secular Enlightenment and a conservative Counter-Enlightenment. Burson's work reflects careful examination of the archival evidence, a thorough familiarity with the scholarly analysis of the relevant material preceding his study, a comprehensive presentation of the evidence, and a well-structured argument.

This volume would serve well as a secondary or recommended text in a graduate-level course. The detailed nature of the subject matter, the complexity of the information presented, and the writing style are too advanced for undergraduates but

should fit well into a graduate-level seminar. Because of the rich overview provided of the larger context, this book is an excellent resource for research projects involving the French Church, the Enlightenment, the political circumstances of pre-Revolutionary France, and eighteenth-century higher education. Instructors will be able to mine the book for numerous details and illustrations for course use.

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Christopher R. Leahey. *Whitewashing War: Historical Myth, Corporate Textbooks, and Possibilities for Democratic Education.* New York: Teachers College Press, 2010. Pp. 160. Paperback, \$22.95; ISBN 978-0-8077-5004-5.

No one who reads this study will have any difficulty identifying its thesis. The reader discovers it at the outset of the book and the author sustains it constantly to the end. In fact, Leahey presents his conclusion at the very beginning, giving the appearance of both a polemical and one-sided investigation. *Whitewashing War* asserts that public social studies education in American schools is influenced and controlled by forces such as the government, the military, the industrial establishment, and the media. Through federal action, military involvement, textbook sanitization, and media omissions the effort is to indoctrinate students with patriotism and loyalty, thus insuring a passive, obedient response. While this point of view is not without merit, in its ideological presentation it savors too much of a dictum rather than a matter for discussion.

Leahey develops this idea by keying in on a number of recent incidents. First is the 1995 exhibit at the Smithsonian that dealt with the dropping of the atomic bomb. Many in the government, military, and press condemned it as giving too much weight to Japanese suffering and, as a result, the exhibit was largely modified. The second was the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, which, Leahey argues, came from an event that was provoked by the Johnson administration to justify the Vietnam War. Lastly, he cites the Tet offensive, which, he argues, was really the consequence of military incompetence and the way in which the My Lai massacre was hidden and explained away.

There is some truth in what the author has to say, but his conclusion, based primarily on American or world history textbooks, that public classrooms are places where students get inculcated and indoctrinated with patriotism, goes too far. For, as Leahey notes, but only in the last chapter and appendix, there are other components of the classroom experience that elucidate and supplement the text. For example, some teachers can utilize their skills to add breadth to the text and modify its positions. Some educators might become, or be forced to become, lapdogs of the text. But most can discriminate, for instance, by eliminating sections of the text that are not necessary or germane. In addition, the instructor can guide students through the text, use questions