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978-0-521-46592-2 - Christianity and Revolutionary Europe, 1750–1830

Nigel Aston

Frontmatter

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## Christianity and revolutionary Europe, 1750–1830

*Christianity and revolutionary Europe, 1750–1830* provides a comprehensive and accessible summary of the role of the Churches during this turbulent period in European history. How did the Churches survive the political and intellectual challenges posed by the French Revolution, despite institutional upheaval and the widespread questioning of dogma and tradition? Nigel Aston answers this question by drawing on three decades of research, and argues that pre-revolutionary Christianity had a vitality and resilience that should not be underestimated. Aston takes the story forward to 1830, dealing with both the immediate aftermath of the Revolution and its longer-term impact, and offering comprehensive guidance to the complicated strands of change and continuity. The text is supported by illuminating illustrations, and a glossary of unfamiliar terms gives further help to the student reader. It will be of key interest to all those following courses on religious history and the French Revolution.

NIGEL ASTON is a Lecturer in Early Modern History at the University of Leicester. His most recent book is *Religion and Revolution in France, 1780–1804* (2000).

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*University of Leicester*



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**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521465922](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521465922)

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First published 2002, 2011

Second Edition 2012

Reprinted 2013

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress cataloguing in publication data*

Aston, Nigel.

Christianity and revolutionary Europe, 1750–1830 / Nigel Aston.

p. cm. – (New approaches to European history; 25)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 46027 1 – ISBN 0 521 46592 3 (pbk.)

1. Europe – Church history – 18th century. 2. Church and state – History – 18th century. 3. Europe – Church history – 19th century. 4. Church and state – History – 19th century. 5. France – History – Revolution, 1789–1799 – Religious aspects – Christianity. I. Title. II. Series.

BR735 .A77 2002 274'.07 – dc21 2002067618

ISBN 978-0-521-46027-9 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-46592-2 Paperback

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For  
Ian Beckett and Larry Butler:  
resilient in adversity

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## Preface

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Writing this book has forced me to think out the convergences and cleavages of the religious world on either side of the French Revolution in a way which I might not otherwise have done. So I am very grateful to Professor Tim Blanning for giving me the opportunity to do so by asking me to contribute to this series and trust that he feels his confidence has not been misplaced. Without question, this final version of the text has benefited appreciably from his constructive comments on the chapters as they have been written. The co-founder of the *New Approaches to European History* series, Professor Bob Scribner, was also encouraging in the first stages of writing and read over the first chapter. His tragically early death prevented me, like other historians, from having the benefits of his insight thereafter. I also much indebted to Sheridan Gilley and John McManners, who have unflinchingly read over the entire text and made innumerable suggestions for improvement. I hope that they, too, consider that the final version indicates that I have been listening beneficially to their good counsel. Jeremy Black and Brendan Simms have also commented helpfully on several sections of the book, while, among historian friends, Matthew Cragoe and Peter Nockles have provided particular support as the enterprise has proceeded. Above all, I am grateful to the innumerable historians, living and dead, whose scholarship is the indispensable foundation of this book. If it succeeds in distilling the fruits of their labours to a wider audience then I shall count myself richly repaid.

At Cambridge University Press I am unreservedly obliged to Richard Fisher, Elizabeth Howard and Sophie Read. Their patience in waiting for the manuscript to reach the Edinburgh Building appeared to have no limits. The British Academy, the University of Luton and the Open University all made available financial assistance that offset research costs and other expenses involved in the writing and the completion of the book. Archivists and librarians, especially at the British Library and Bibliothèque Nationale de France, were unfailingly courteous. Katy Cooper was my alert and patient copy editor. My thanks to them, and

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to my wife, Caroline Aston, who, once again, tolerated the absence of the author with forbearance, good humour, advice and encouragement. The book was completed against a background of the impending closure of the History Department at Luton and the dispersal of a fine team of six colleagues. It is wholly appropriate that it should be dedicated to two of the most doughty of them.

## Date list

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- 1750 Upper Consistory established in Prussia
- 1753 Concordat signed between Spain and Benedict XIV
- 1753 Paris *parlement* issues a long remonstrance against clerical power in France
- 1755 Silence imposed by the Crown in dispute between the Gallican Church and the Paris *parlement*
- Lisbon earthquake
- 1761 Mary of the Immaculate Conception officially declared patronness of Spain
- Hontheim publishes *On the Condition of the Church and the Legitimate Power of the Roman Pontiff*
- 1768 Campomanes coauthored one of the great Spanish regalist tracts of the century, the *Juicio Imparcial*
- 1772 Feathers Tavern petition rejected in Parliament
- 1773 *Dominus ac redemptor* issued
- 1774 Quebec Act privileges Roman Catholicism in British Canada
- 1778 Catholic Relief Act passed for England
- Gottfried Lessing's writings censored in Brunswick
- 1780 Gordon Riots in London
- 1782 Catholics allowed right to worship in Ireland
- 1783 Joseph II reorganises diocesan boundaries in the Habsburg Empire
- 1784 Samuel Seabury consecrated as first Anglican bishop in the United States by (nonjuring) Scottish bishops
- 1786 'Mutinous' Riksdag in Sweden
- Cardinal Rohan disgraced in the Diamond Necklace affair
- Synod of Pistoia in Tuscany
- 'Punctuation' of Ems
- Don gratuit* increased in France
- 1787 First Anglican bishop for Canada (Nova Scotia) consecrated by Archbishop Moore of Canterbury
- Edict on non-Catholics passed in France

## xii Date list

- Archbishop Loménie de Brienne named principal minister of France  
Bishop Richard Woodward of Cloyne initiated a pamphlet controversy over the security of the ‘Protestant Ascendancy’ in Ireland
- 1788 Declaration of Potsdam published by Frederick William II of Prussia  
Revolt of the *curés* in France
- 1789 Estates-General and junction of the 3 Orders  
Abolition of annates and suspension of the tithe in France  
Sephardic Jews granted toleration by the National Assembly
- 1790 Failure of Dom Gerle’s motion to have Catholicism declared France’s national religion  
Civil Constitution of the Clergy passed  
Regular clergy largely disbanded in France  
*Bagarre* at Nîmes
- 1791 Oath imposed to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy  
First bishops of the Constitutional Church consecrated  
Civil Constitution of the Clergy condemned by Pius VI  
Ashkenazim Jews granted toleration by the National Assembly
- 1792 Roman Catholic Relief Act passed in England  
Roman Catholic Relief Act passed in Ireland  
Toleration for former nonjuring Scottish Episcopalians sanctioned
- 1793 September Massacres in France include scores of clergymen  
Second Roman Catholic Relief Act passed in Ireland  
Outbreak of the Vendée  
Dechristianisation begins in France
- 1794 Papal Bull *Auctorem fidei* condemns *Richerism*  
Robespierre sponsors the cult of the Supreme Being  
First meeting of Grégoire’s ‘United Bishops’
- 1795 Law of 3 *Ventôse* in France restores freedom of worship  
Maynooth College opened in Ireland
- 1796 Kilhamite secession in English Methodism  
Papal Brief *Pastoralis Sollicitudo*
- 1797 First national council of the Constitutional Church in France
- 1798 Irish Rebellion  
Second ‘Reign of Terror’ in France  
Proscription of the Belgian Catholic clergy after the failure of the peasant uprising  
French troops under Bertier occupy Rome – Pius VI exiled

- 1799 Death of Pius VI  
*Sanfedisti* led by Cardinal Ruffo in the kingdom of Naples  
 Schleiermacher's lectures on religion (*Reden über die Religion*) were first published
- 1800 Election of Pius VII
- 1801 Act of Union unites Britain and Ireland and creates the United Churches of England and Ireland  
 Concord between France and the Vatican
- 1802 Gallican Articles unilaterally imposed by First Consul Bonaparte on the Church  
 Chateaubriand publishes the *Génie du Christianisme*
- 1803 Abolition of all the German ecclesiastical electorates
- 1804 Coronation of Napoleon in Notre-Dame Cathedral  
 F. J. W. von Schelling publishes his *Philosophy and Religion*
- 1806 Dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire  
 G. W. F. Hegel publishes *The Phenomenology of the Spirit*
- 1807 Occupation of the papal states by a French army
- 1808 Napoleon invades Spain
- 1809 Pius VII removed from Rome
- 1811 Formation of the Primitive Methodists
- 1812 Concordat 'of Fontainbleau'
- 1813 Unitarians given formal right to freedom of worship in England
- 1813–14 German 'War of Liberation'
- 1814 Pius VII released from imprisonment  
 Jesuits were universally restored by the Bull *Sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarum*
- 1817 New Concordat in France  
 Frederick William III creates a united Protestant state Church for Prussia
- 1821 Greek War of Independence begins
- 1825 Jubilee Year in Rome
- 1828 Test and Corporation Acts repealed in Britain
- 1829 Catholic emancipation finally conceded in Britain and Ireland  
 Election of Pius VIII