

Repressive toleration:¹ the Huguenots in early eighteenth-century Dublin

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According to the historian Philippe Joutard, French Protestants have longer memories than any other religious group – he obviously has no experience of the religious cultures of Ireland, where, as Oliver MacDonagh observes, the past is always contemporary.² To illustrate his point, Joutard quotes a story from an article which appeared in *National Geographic* in 1978, written by the American writer, Carolyn Patterson, who retraced the journey of Robert Louis Stevenson through the Cévennes, a historic stronghold of French Protestantism. When Patterson came down from Mont Lozère, she was invited to a meal in the garden of a local woman whose property commanded a splendid view of the mountain. Gesturing towards the Lozère, her hostess's opening gambit was 'Battlegrounds in the war'.³ She was not referring to the French Resistance in World War II, but to the Camisards, the name for the Protestants who met the enforced Catholicism of Louis XIV's reign with armed resistance in the early eighteenth-century. Obviously, French Protestants have long memories, and the stories they remember serve to construct and give expression to their identity, or identities, as a religious minority in France.

The identity of all communities is grounded, among other things, in remembering and retelling founding events, that is, events which set them apart as a specific group to begin with. For example, the Reformation, the St Bartholomew massacre (1572), the Edict of Nantes (1598), and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685) spring to mind as typical founding events for French Protestantism. That is to say, each of these events is a watershed – as Yves Bizeul notes – marking a clear distinction between 'before' and 'after', and giving rise to new

1 I have borrowed this term from H. Marcuse, 'Repressive tolerance', in R.P. Wolff, B. Moore, H. Marcuse, *A critique of pure tolerance* (Boston, 1969), pp. 81–123. However, I use it descriptively to denote a situation where tolerance is proclaimed but applied in such a way as also to oppress those who are deemed to be the objects of toleration. I do not wish to imply any agreement with Marcuse's views. For a consideration of these, see A. Callinicos, 'Repressive toleration revisited: Mill, Marcuse, MacIntyre', in J. Horton and S. Mendus (ed.), *Aspects of toleration, philosophical studies* (London and New York, 1985), pp. 53–74. 2 See P. Joutard, 'Le Musée du Désert. La minorité réformée', in Nora (ed.), iii, p. 532; O. MacDonagh, *States of mind: a study of Anglo-Irish conflict 1780–1980* (London, 1983), pp. 1, 6–7, 9. 3 C.B. Patterson, 'Travels with a donkey 100 years later', *National Geographic*, 154/4 (1978), 535–61; Joutard, p. 533. R.L. Stevenson noted a similar attachment to the past, *Travels with a donkey in the Cévennes* (London, 1991. 1st ed. 1879), pp. 109–26.

forms of identity.⁴ But while the importance of these events, and other later ones, to the construction of the identities of French Protestants is recognised, sociologists and historians insist that they are not all of equal importance. In fact, through the complex processes of remembering and retelling, the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes has become *the* founding event of the French Reformed tradition, eclipsing all others, even the Reformation.⁵ Why is this the case? More than any other event in their history, the Revocation lends itself to the construction of a myth of origins capable of sustaining the struggle for survival as a distinctive minority. I want to dwell on this for a moment.

As the story in *National Geographic* suggests, focussing on the Revocation and its aftermath allows French Protestants to construct an 'identity-in-opposition', to borrow a term used by Alan Falconer to describe the formation of Irish identities.⁶ French Protestants have expressed their identity over against the other in a variety of ways, some of which are strikingly similar to Irish cultural attitudes. For example, in the early modern period, their intellectual leaders developed a theology of the faithful remnant struggling against the monolithic Roman Catholicism of France. And, more recently, they have presented the history of Protestantism in more general terms as the political struggle of a minority over against an oppressive hegemonic culture.⁷ Resistance, then, is one of the key aspects of this identity-in-opposition, and the revolt of the Camisards is but one episode in a long litany of refusal to conform to the dominant religion or culture. Another key aspect of their identity-in-opposition emerges as a consequence of this resistance. Their community is nurtured by a sense that it is descended from martyrs and victims who were prepared to pay the ultimate price for their difference. This found expression in the past as a 'victim-theology' (to use another of Alan Falconer's concepts), which presented the French Reformed community as a church 'under the cross', and identified it with the crucified Christ.⁸ And in our own time the attachment to a past of heroic martyrdom is kept alive by the Musée du Désert, the principal museum of French Protestantism (whose collections commemorate the persecutions of the Revocation era), where a very well attended commemorative ceremony is held every autumn. However, in the final analysis, French Protestants do not see themselves as victims but as survivors, because they identify with those who fled abroad, or went underground to preserve the integrity of their religious beliefs, and rarely, if ever, with those who conformed to Roman Catholicism. In other words, the Revocation is the perfect founding event because to remember it is to engage in a performative action that

4 Y. Bizeul, *L'identité protestante*, pp. 29–30; see Joutard, p. 556. 5 See Joutard, p. 544, and Bizeul, p. 74. 6 A. Falconer, 'Remembering', in A.D. Falconer and J. Liechty (ed.), *Reconciling memories* (Dublin, 1998), p.13. 7 For a fine example of this liberal French Protestant historiography, see E. Labrousse, 'Une foi, une loi, un roi?' *La Révocation de l'Édit de Nantes* (Paris, 1985), and for its place in twentieth-century French Protestantism, see Bizeul, pp. 50, 84–5. 8 Falconer, p. 13; on the victim christology of the Huguenots, see R. Whelan, 'Les Christ de Jacques Abbadie', in M.-C. Pitassi (ed.), *Le Christ entre orthodoxie et Lumières* (Genève, 1994), pp. 139–62.

transforms minority status into a kind of nobility, grounded on hard choices.⁹ So, while the Revocation founds the tragic story of a persecuted community, it can also be interpreted as an epic of heroic overcoming.¹⁰

As we might expect, historians of French Protestantism entertain, either wittingly or unwittingly, a somewhat ambivalent attitude to this mythic story of origins. For no matter how objective they strive to be, they cannot escape entirely from the place they themselves occupy in history, or from the origin myths which have formed their own identities. Inevitably, then, they end up both demythologising and remythologising at least some of these origin myths. For example, some historians explode the notion of the 'faithful remnant' by demonstrating that, at least in the sixteenth century, French Protestants also aspired to political and religious dominance.¹¹ Others insist that far from being innocent victims of oppression, the Protestants were not slow to resort to violence in pursuit of their goals. According to this view, French Protestants did not simply resist oppression, they also engaged in it.¹² This theme of resistance has been revisited by historians of the Revocation era who have conclusively demonstrated that far from being a community whose story is mainly one of heroic overcoming, the vast majority of Huguenots, on the contrary, conformed to Catholicism.¹³ Obviously, then, these critical appraisals serve to highlight neglected aspects of the history of French Protestantism, and to foster more objective interpretations. But this is not the whole story.

Even the most objective Protestant historians of the French Reformed tradition tend to use an epic style when considering the oppression meted out to their fellow believers at the time of the Revocation.¹⁴ Epic modes appropriately render the horror of past events that must not be forgotten, facilitating their transmission through the generations, as Paul Ricoeur has argued.¹⁵ But they also structure the past as story, give it a meaning,¹⁶ and thereby feed into the construction of origin myths. Although an epic style is not usually used when writing about the intellectual history of the Huguenots, interpretations are voiced which imply a teleology of history and place the Huguenots in the vanguard of progress. Thus, historians often argue, broadly speaking, that there was a shift from obscurantism to Enlightenment in the *mentalités* of the Huguenots at the end of the

9 P. Connerton, *How societies remember* (Cambridge, 1989); and Bizeul, pp. 44–7. 10 I am influenced here by the notion of a 'poetics of history', developed by H. White, *Metahistory, the historical imagination in nineteenth-century Europe* (Baltimore and London, 1973), pp. 8–9.

11 The militarism of the Huguenots was an issue for French Protestant historiography from the early modern period, see R. Whelan, 'Images de la Réforme chez Pierre Bayle ou l'histoire d'une déception', *Revue de théologie et de philosophie* (Lausanne) 122 (1990), 85–107; for a twentieth-century assessment, see, É.G. Léonard, *Histoire générale du protestantisme* (Paris, 1988, 3 vol. 2nd edition), ii, pp. 94–96; for the views of English-speaking historians, see Holt, pp. 173–89; Knecht, pp. 55–60; Salmon, pp. 183–93. 12 See, for example, J. Garrisson, *L'Édit de Nantes et sa Révocation. Histoire d'une intolérance* (Paris, 1985), p. 71. 13 Labrousse, pp. 202–6. 14 Bizeul, p. 81. 15 Ricoeur, *Temps et récit*, iii, p. 342. 16 White, pp. 1–42.

seventeenth century.¹⁷ According to this view, French Protestants began to move away from intolerance, confessional preoccupations and dynastic attitudes, and to embrace instead the defence of toleration, the rights of the individual conscience, and the social contract as the basis of political power. And this view is right, up to a point. The attitudes of many Huguenots did develop in response to their changing social, religious, and political circumstances, but not as a whole, and not unequivocally. By generalising from individual instances, or highlighting some tendencies and not others, historians are helping to construct a myth of origins that links French Protestantism, at least indirectly, to liberty, Enlightenment, and modernity.¹⁸ Of course, this implicitly places the development of Huguenot *mentalités* within the framework of an epic of heroic overcoming – in this case – of intolerance, oppression, and obscurantism.

There is an Irish version of this myth, linking the French Protestant immigrants to the dawn of modernity in our own country that I have had the opportunity to consider on other occasions.¹⁹ This is the argument that the experience of being 'victims of persecution in their native country' led certain Huguenots, in early eighteenth-century Ireland, to challenge the politics of exclusion directed against Dissenters and Roman Catholics.²⁰ I myself have argued this in the past, although far more cagily than is usual. Arguments for toleration are certainly made by French refugee writers in Ireland. But, I pointed out, they are made within a worldview shaped by polarities between 'popery' and Protestantism, superstition and truth – not to mention a strong sense of election – which certainly colour their understanding of toleration in the Irish context. I was, however, roundly criticised for apparently seeking to explain away their 'liberal' views by appealing to 'hidden agendas'.²¹ But, as I now believe, my earlier interpretation was not nearly cagey enough, because both my critic and I were operating out of the origin myth that places the Huguenots on the side of progress. Intolerance and Penal legislation were indeed questioned by certain members of the Irish Huguenot Diaspora, but not unequivocally, as I hope to show. In fact, the terms and concepts used by some were not harbingers of modernity, but rather remained firmly rooted in the social consciousness of the *ancien régime*. To demonstrate this, I shall analyze in detail the two sermons on the subject of toleration preached in the 1720s by Gaspar Caillard, the minister of the French Reformed Church in Peter Street, and published in Dublin in 1728;

17 It is possible that the French language lends itself particularly to this kind of pithy saying, implying a teleology that may not always be intended. See for example the following title, which I myself had a hand in devising, M. Magdelaine, M.C. Pitassi, R. Whelan, A. McKenna (ed.), *De l'humanisme aux Lumières, Bayle et le protestantisme* (Paris and Oxford, 1996). 18 Bizeul, pp. 84–5. 19 R. Whelan, 'Persecution and toleration: the changing identities of Ireland's Huguenot refugees', *HSP* 27/1 (1998), 20–35. 20 J.-P. Pittion, 'The question of religious conformity and non-conformity in the Irish Refuge', in Caldicott, Gough, Pittion (ed.), p. 292, and the editors conclusion, p. 424. 21 See C.E.J. Caldicott, 'On short-term and long-term memory', and my reply, 'Remembering with integrity', *HSP* 27/2 (1999), 279–80, and 281–3.

a second edition appeared in Amsterdam ten years later.²² Quite apart from their subject matter, there are a number of reasons why these two sermons, and to a lesser extent the other sermons in the collection, are worthy of attention.

In early modern society, when newspapers were still in their infancy, and literacy was not widespread, oral communication, whether sacred or profane, had an importance which it later lost to the printed word. As Bernard Roussel has observed of sixteenth-century Geneva, teaching elders, that is, ministers, created and manipulated opinion, and inculcated convictions and precepts through repeated oratorical interaction with the faithful.²³ Preachers occupied an important place in a network of communication because the views they expressed in sermons reached a wide cross-section of society, and exposed at least the most attentive to the possibility of being influenced by what they heard. Unfortunately, there is no way of measuring that influence, but we may still study the printed sermon as the surviving record of an intellectual and social space where a religious identity is being elaborated. A further qualification is necessary, however, before we proceed. Unless sermons also survive in manuscript form, it is impossible to determine whether the printed version is a faithful record of the homily as it was preached and heard. Since there are, to my knowledge no extant manuscript sermons written by Caillard, we cannot be sure that the printed text expresses views that were developed in the hearing of the church-going public. The first edition of Caillard's *Sermons sur divers textes de l'Écriture sainte* was published in Dublin, however. Two aspects of that edition suggest that even if the oral and printed text were different, the sermons succeeded in touching some chord that we may hope to reconstruct, at least to some extent, by studying them.

The first edition of Caillard's sermons carries a list of 168 subscribers that has been studied by Máire Kennedy.²⁴ According to her findings, 150 of the subscribers have French names, which is a much higher proportion than on the extant lists for subsequent Huguenot publications in Dublin. The list in Caillard's volume includes the names of some prominent refugees who reached the upper levels of Dublin Corporation life,²⁵ and Huguenot army officers who represent nearly 30% of the total.²⁶ There is also a scattering of Trinity College Fellows and Church of Ireland clergy, most notably Francis Hutcheson.

22 G. Caillard, *Sermons sur divers textes de l'Écriture sainte* (Dublin, J. Smith and W. Bruce, 1728; Amsterdam, Henri du Sauzet, 1738); see M. Germaine, *Peter Street Cemetery. Non-conformist French Huguenot Church and cemetery, 'French Peters', Dublin, 1711-1879* ([Dublin, 1999]). 23 B. Roussel, 'Prédication et histoire des religions', *BSHPF* 134 (1988), p. 663. 24 M. Kennedy, 'Huguenot Book Buyers in Dublin before 1750', in R. Whelan, P. Coffey, V. Costello, P. Ewles-Bergeron, J. Hill, M. Kennedy, J. McKee, J. Powell, R. Vigne, 'Report of the Round Table: the current state of research on the Huguenots and Ireland, held at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, 17 May 1999', *HSP* 27/3 (2000) pp. 419-21. 25 I owe this information to my colleague Dr J. Hill of the Department of History, NUI Maynooth, who has written a definitive study of Dublin political life in the eighteenth century, *From patriots to unionists. Dublin civic politics and Irish Protestant patriotism, 1660-1840* (Oxford, 1997). 26 Kennedy, p. 421.

Subscription lists are commonplace and do not indicate that the author's views were either read or shared by those who subscribed to the publication. But, as Máire Kennedy notes, these lists are not random since the subscribers tended to be linked in one or more ways, and their financial contribution indicates 'a level of support for an author's work and where that support was concentrated'.²⁷ If we remember that Gaspar Caillard arrived in Ireland from Holland only in the latter half of 1720, the list points to a high degree of social assimilation to Protestant circles in Ireland, and possibly also to their ideology, as I hope to show. The second aspect of the Dublin and Amsterdam editions worthy of comment is the certificate of approval, issued by a group of French clergy in the Irish Diaspora, which is mentioned at the beginning of the volume. The approbation certifies the orthodoxy of Caillard's sermons, declaring that they contain nothing contrary to Scripture. Again, this does not prove that any individual member of the French clergy in Ireland shared his views. Nonetheless, certificates of orthodoxy do not merely protect, they also express, a pre-existent ideological consensus. It is at least possible, then, that the views developed in the two sermons on toleration were shared, to some degree at least, by the clerical élite in the Irish Diaspora, and by those whom they influenced.

On first reading, Caillard's sermons seem to lend themselves to the view that the Huguenots contributed unequivocally to the development of modernity, because there is a striking congruence between the ideas promoted in his first sermon and the arguments for toleration developed in the continental French Enlightenment. There are three main arguments in both instances: the argument from prudence, the argument from rationality, and the argument from morality.²⁸ Like many another thinker in the early modern period, Caillard expresses the prudential argument negatively. He asserts that the consequences of intolerance are worse than the consequences of toleration, because intolerance results in the breakdown of society. In his view, once the legitimacy of enforcing a set of beliefs is accepted, 'that would put an end to civil peace and the security of all human beings. Citizens would have to arm themselves against fellow citizens who differ from them in religion'.²⁹ Toleration, in this argument, is a requirement of prudence, it is needed to preserve public order. However, the prudential argument is unsatisfactory in as much as it makes intolerance merely imprudent and reduces toleration to political expedience, but it fails to explain why intolerance is wrong.³⁰ And Caillard is clearly concerned to prove that intolerance is more than a question of inexpediency by arguing that it is also irrational.

Again Caillard develops his argument – that toleration is a requirement of rationality – negatively. In fact, he establishes the irrationality of intolerance by

27 Kennedy, p. 420. 28 S. Mendus and D. Edwards (ed.), *On toleration* (Oxford, 1987), p. 3; J. de Viguierie, 'La tolérance à l'ère des Lumières', in *La tolérance* (Paris, 1986), pp. 43–55. 29 G. Caillard, 'Sermon contre l'intolérance', *Sermons*, i, pp. 18. 30 I am drawing here on Mendus and Edwards (ed.), p. 5; and P.P. Nicholson, 'Toleration as a moral ideal', in Horton and Mendus (ed.), *Aspects of toleration*, p. 164.

arguing that coercive means are unfitted to religious ends. He does this, in the first place, by asserting that questions of belief are decided by the individual conscience, which he presents as a separate, interior sphere, answerable to God alone.³¹ Caillard is a rationalist, which is a commonplace position among Huguenots of his generation. He holds that people are converted and brought to an understanding of the truth of the Gospel by acts of persuasion and instruction that present clear and convincing evidence and proofs to their minds and thereby sway their consciences or 'hearts'. Such acts are the vehicles of divine grace, which 'accompanies' them, but does not overrule them.³² This understanding of conscience and belief prepares the ground for a second and related argument, which Caillard shares with Locke, namely that there is a causal gap between coercion and belief.³³ Caillard does not question the efficacy of coercive means, on the contrary. He acknowledges that coercion can induce people to accept anything, even the very opposite of what they hold to be true.³⁴ What he does dispute is the efficacy of coercion in bringing about the desired effect, that is, in making individuals change their minds, and accept as true what they previously held to be false. In fact, he argues that religious belief is immune to coercion, since belief results from inner persuasion not brute force: 'no power on earth can stop me from believing what appears true to me'.³⁵ Thus, coercion is inefficient, which implies that it is irrational to use it to induce belief, or bring about religious conformity. As Caillard expresses it: 'you are sinning against the most evident principles of reason'.³⁶

The arguments from prudence and even rationality (or irrationality) are instrumental and pragmatic; they do not establish a positive case for toleration as an intrinsic or moral good.³⁷ Caillard is concerned to ground toleration in ethics, however, and he does this, as we have come to expect, by a partly negative argument: that intolerance is intrinsically bad. If coercion can change people's behaviour, but not their beliefs, as he has demonstrated, then, he maintains, imposing penalties on dissidents will only end up filling the churches with hypocrites. Intolerance breeds 'lies and imposture, which are vices God abhors above all things', and brings about the damnation, rather than the salvation of its victims.³⁸ So, in his view, oppressing people to make them change their minds brings about a morally abhorrent situation, which can only indicate that enforced conformity is wrong. But he also presents toleration positively, as morally right, by grounding it on a principle of respect of persons.³⁹ In a passage that is worth quoting for its defence of individualism, Caillard expresses the view that humans are essentially autonomous, self-determining beings.

31 Caillard, i, pp. 16, 17. 32 Caillard, i, pp. 10, 12-14, 32, 56. 33 I am applying to Caillard's views terminology developed by J. Horton and S. Mendus (ed.), *John Locke, A Letter concerning toleration*, in *focus* (London and New York, 1991), p. 103. 34 Caillard, i, p. 17. 35 Caillard, i, p. 17. 36 See Horton and Mendus (ed.), *John Locke*, pp. 7, and 104; Caillard, i, p. 17. 37 I am influenced here by Susan Mendus (ed.), *Justifying toleration, conceptual and historical perspectives* (Cambridge, 1988), Introduction, pp. 1-19; and by Nicholson, pp. 158-73. 38 Caillard, i, pp. 24-5. 39 On this, see N. Dent, 'Rousseau and

Everyone feels and everyone agrees that individuals should be allowed to see with their own eyes and to make their own choices in things that concern them alone and nobody else whatsoever. Pursuing the kind of life that I consider suits me the best is undoubtedly my responsibility. Nobody thinks he has the right to inflict a penalty on me if I chose one profession rather than another. I am free to dispose of what is mine, without people getting the idea that they can interfere with my plans. Is it only in religion, then, that I am to give up my freedom in order to follow blindly the whim and will of others?⁴⁰

The question is rhetorical, of course. Caillard seems to place an absolute value on the human right to self-determination; he maintains that, in matters of conscience, such a right is bounded by God alone. Earthly powers must therefore respect a person's right to self-determination whether in life choices or religious preferences.⁴¹ Toleration is construed here, as Susan Mendus suggests more generally in the case of arguments from autonomy, as 'something that may be claimed as an entitlement, since it is this alone which displays due and proper respect for persons in all their diversity'.⁴² For Caillard, then, toleration is a requirement of morality, a position which is further reinforced by his statement that it is also congruent with the Gospel: 'the Gospel exudes only gentleness, forbearance, and toleration'.⁴³ At this point in the sermon, toleration is no longer merely an instrumental good, it is also a moral and religious ideal.

These are stirring views to find expression in eighteenth-century Dublin, and Caillard was not alone in expressing them, as we shall see. The only limitation on toleration, mentioned in this first sermon, is the concept of harm, and it is a common enough limitation in what might be broadly defined as the liberal tradition.⁴⁴ It is, of course, a problematic concept, but I shall return to that later. Suffice it to say, for the moment, that Caillard argues for a society where actions, practices and beliefs, which are not harmful, should be tolerated. He was not the first to make this kind of argument. In fact, the biblical text he chose for his sermon, Luke 14.23 (one of the final verses to the parable of the wedding banquet, containing the much abused phrase 'compel them to come in') points to an intertextuality with an earlier defence of toleration. Pierre Bayle's *Commentaire philosophique*, which focussed on the same biblical verse, is a passionate denunciation of intolerance, written and published in the aftermath of the Revocation.⁴⁵ The recent experience of the persecution of the Huguenots inspired Bayle

respect for others', in Mendus (ed.), pp. 115–35. ⁴⁰ Caillard, i, p. 15. ⁴¹ Caillard, i, p. 16. ⁴² Mendus (ed.), p. 5. ⁴³ Caillard, i, p. 25. ⁴⁴ Caillard, i, p. 27; J. Horton, 'Toleration, morality and harm', in Horton and Mendus (ed.), *Aspects of toleration*, pp. 113–35. ⁴⁵ P. Bayle, *Commentaire philosophique sur ces paroles de Jésus-Christ 'Contrains-les d'entrer; où l'on prouve par plusieurs raisons démonstratives qu'il n'y a rien de plus abominable que de faire des conversions par la contrainte, et l'apologie que S. Augustin a faite des persécutions' (1686)*. A modern edition of the first two parts of this seminal work was published recently, *De la tolérance, commentaire philosophique*, ed. J.M. Gros (Paris, 1992), see the Introduction, pp. 7–41.

to forego the kinds of limitations that Locke imposed on toleration in his *Epistola*.⁴⁶ In fact, Bayle argues for a general toleration. He wanted to extend rights of equal coexistence not only to Roman Catholics and atheists – two categories of people excluded by Locke – but also to Jews and Muslims, who were the despised other of early modern Europe, and to any other dissenters from the prevailing orthodoxy.⁴⁷ So, both the conceptual framework of Caillard's views, and the intertextuality with Bayle – which would not have been lost on an eighteenth-century public – do indeed appear to place the Dublin minister in the vanguard of what is often called the early Enlightenment.

But this interpretation is only possible if we neglect to take account of the immediate socio-political context that gave rise to Caillard's sermon in the first place. A marginal note indicates that he preached on the subject of toleration to mark a particular ceremonial occasion: the Peter Street congregation had met on 5 November 1723, as had many Dublin Protestants, to commemorate the Gunpowder Plot.⁴⁸ It is common knowledge that the Gunpowder Plot was mounted in 1605 by a group of Roman Catholics, in an attempt to bring down the government of king James I; thirty-six barrels of gunpowder were hidden in the basement of the House of Lords in London, and were to be set off by the Catholic adventurer, Guy Fawkes. The plot was discovered on the 4 November, and the conspirators were arrested, tortured, and executed. It became the custom in Protestant cathedrals and churches throughout Britain to mark God's miraculous deliverance of church and state with an annual commemoration on 5 November. The Irish Parliament enacted commemoration of the Gunpowder Plot after the Restoration, in 1666; by the 1690s those who participated in the ritual were exclusively Protestant, and, by 1704, exclusively Anglican, we are told.⁴⁹ Like so many of the ceremonial commemorations in the ritual calendar of Protestantism in the early modern period, remembering the Gunpowder Plot was one of the many ways in which Protestants kept grievances alive that helped to mark out their own identity over against that of others.⁵⁰ Indeed, 'the generality of Protestants preferred [...] to celebrate what separated them from their Catholic neighbours and tenants', as Toby Barnard has remarked.⁵¹ It is tempting, to imagine that Caillard, recently arrived from the Continent, entered the pulpit, intent on challenging a political and religious consensus that defined itself by anti-popery. Tempting, but naive.

In reality, Caillard reminds the Peter Street congregation at intervals throughout the sermon that the intolerance he is denouncing is that of the Roman

46 J. Locke, *A letter concerning toleration*, in Horton and Mendus (ed.), *John Locke*, pp. 45–7; S.L. Jenkinson, 'Two concepts of tolerance: or why Bayle is not Locke', *Journal of political philosophy* 4 (1996), pp. 302–21. 47 Bayle, *Commentaire philosophique*, pp. 271–82. 48 Caillard, i, p. 28. 49 Cressy, pp. 141–2; see also, T.C. Barnard, 'The uses of 23 October 1641 and Irish Protestant celebrations', *EHR* 106 (1991), p. 914; J. Kelly, '“The glorious and immortal memory”: commemoration and Protestant identity in Ireland 1660–1800', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 94C (1994), 25–52. 50 I am influenced here by M. Santer, 'The reconciliation of memories', in Falconer and Liechty (ed.), p. 31. 51 Barnard, p. 919.

Catholic Church. He invokes the Inquisition, the use of fire and sword, and the treatment of heretics as proof of the violence used by Catholics to propagate their religious views.⁵² The Reformed tradition, in his view, provides a stark contrast to this intolerance, since it is a communion characterised by gentleness, charity, and toleration.⁵³ The polarity expressed here marks this sermon out as an exercise in Protestant mythologising, which, far from challenging the *status quo*, is determined to reinforce it.⁵⁴ This is all the more obvious when a second instance of intertextuality present in the sermon is noted. Caillard quotes from a sermon preached by John Tillotson before the English House of Commons to mark the Gunpowder Plot on 5 November 1678, a sermon that is driven by anti-Catholic sentiments, which Caillard obviously shares.⁵⁵ For he collapses the founding events and ritual grievances of the immigrant community, the Huguenots, into those of its hosts, the Protestant political nation. In summing up, he alludes to both the St Bartholomew Massacre, and the Gunpowder Plot, urging the congregation to keep these memories alive as active reminders of the dangers of Roman Catholicism. Indeed, he closes with a pair of rhetorical questions that would inevitably revitalise in the minds of the congregation the demonising of Catholicism as the barbarous other:

And as for you, my brothers, have you not witnessed or been subjected yourselves to the furious excesses of popish cruelty? Do you need anything else to inspire you with righteous horror towards such an anti-Christian church and its barbarous spirit, which it conceals under the guise of zeal?⁵⁶

Caillard is harnessing the Huguenots' recent experience of persecution to the annual commemoration of the Gunpowder Plot. Both sets of memories, which belong to disparate origin myths, are combined by him to create a shared consciousness, wherein 'popery' appears as the embodiment of evil and serves to unite immigrant and host in a political culture defined by its anti-Catholicism.

There is, however, a potentially unstable relationship between Caillard's views on toleration, and his incorporation of the historic grievances of immigrant and host into an identity defined by opposition to Catholicism. Because, despite the pointed anti-Catholic thrust of his sermon, the views he expresses seem to call for general toleration based on the principle, among others, of respect of persons. Irish Catholics and Dissenters might be forgiven, then, for interpreting Caillard's

52 Caillard, i, pp. 2, 3, 15. 53 Caillard, i, p. 29. 54 See R.D. Tumbleson, *Catholicism in the English Protestant imagination. Nationalism, religion, and literature* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 11, 12, 13. Although the Irish context is rather different, many of the observations concerning anti-Catholicism are applicable to attitudes prevalent in Ireland in this period. 55 The quote is in Caillard, i, p. 21, and is adduced to prove the barbarous and cruel spirit of Roman Catholicism. Caillard is quoting from Jean Barbeyrac's translation of the sermons: J. Tillotson, *Sermons sur diverses matieres importantes* (Amsterdam, 1716–22. 5 vol.); 'Sermon xix. 'De l'incompatibilité d'un zèle cruel et vindicatif, avec l'esprit et le but de l'Evangile. Lc ix. 55–6', iii, pp. 1–32. 56 Caillard, i, p. 29.

sermon, had they heard or read it, as paving the way for them to lay claim to toleration as an entitlement that was congruent with morality and rationality, not to mention prudence. These apparent implications of his views may have given rise to negative comment and even unease within the community of Huguenot immigrants because he preached a second sermon, some time later,⁵⁷ in order to establish the limits of toleration. He was concerned that he might be interpreted as recommending 'an unconstrained relativism',⁵⁸ or as he expresses it at the beginning of the sermon, 'that our argument against intolerance had the potential to promote religious indifference, thereby sowing confusion in church and state'.⁵⁹ So, in this second sermon, Caillard simultaneously defends both his earlier concept of toleration and the necessity of imposing civil restrictions on atheists, Roman Catholics, and other dissenting minorities. The task was not an easy one. He could not appear to confer a retrospective legitimacy either on the civil penalties imposed on the French Protestants or on the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Consequently, in this second sermon, he attempts to tease out the problematical relationship between the state, the church, and the individual conscience.

He accepts as self-evident the notion that each state is a sovereign entity, proclaiming that all peoples have the right to found communities and adopt the form of government best suited to their needs. A state, so founded, has the right to promulgate its own laws, and the purpose of these laws, in his view, is twofold. They must first and foremost promote 'the interests of the glory of God' and, 'the interests of religion',⁶⁰ and not merely safeguard the temporal advantages of the community. But, of course, such laws as are passed must also guarantee the security, peace and happiness of 'the corporate body, and in so far as possible, every individual member'.⁶¹ The qualification is important, as we shall see, since it enables Caillard to place significant limitations, in the name of the sovereign community, on the individual's right to self-determination in confessional matters (for which he had argued in the first sermon). For the moment, however, he designates the religion, which the laws are designed to promote, as 'religion in general',⁶² presumably indicating those common beliefs – for example, in the existence of God, or in retributive divine justice – that many thought necessary to social stability and the public good.⁶³ Such an understanding places constraints both on rulers and on subjects.

Since the sovereign power always has a duty to rule in order to promote the glory of God above all else, laws may not be passed that contravene divine law which, Caillard believes, is revealed not only in Scripture, but also in natural law and to the individual conscience.⁶⁴ The actions of the sovereign power and the

57 The second sermon, also on Luke 14.23, is not dated, but opens with the remark that Caillard preached a sermon on this text 'some time ago, now'. 58 I borrow this phrase from M. Walzer, *On toleration* (New Haven and London, 1997), p. 5. 59 Caillard, i, p. 33. 60 Caillard, i, p. 38. 61 Caillard, i, pp. 34–6. 62 Caillard, i, pp. 40, 42. 63 See Jenkinson, p. 306. 64 Caillard, i, p. 37.

positive law are, therefore, in his view, to be judged against this higher law and the principles of natural justice it enshrines. It follows that while the people are obliged to obey the sovereign power and the positive laws, their obedience must never require them to act against the higher law, which takes precedence over all others. In fact, Caillard reiterates his view that people can never be constrained by law either to believe the opposite of what their consciences tell them is true, or to relinquish their freedom to embrace religious difference.⁶⁵ As a matter of principle, however, he again places one important limitation on religious freedom: 'provided only that there is nothing in such religious diversity that would tend to destroy religion in general or harm the social body as a whole'.⁶⁶ This prohibition of anything harmful to the sovereign state, as Caillard has defined it, sits uneasily with his defence of the human right to self-determination, and of conscience as a separate sphere, which he has again marked out here as areas of life where the state cannot intervene. In the divided society of early modern Ireland, or in divided societies in general, can there be a neutral definition of what is harmful? And if not, can the concept of harm provide a reliable criterion for establishing what should or should not be tolerated?⁶⁷ If it cannot, should it be disregarded or resisted as an infringement of the right to self-determination? It is interesting to note that such questions do not arise in Caillard's sermon. Nor does he say what the individual or community may do if the civil magistrate attempts to prescribe in matters of conscience or against the principles of the higher law. He simply denounces the injustice of any such measures: 'a law that seeks to deprive individuals of the privilege of following the light and prompting of their consciences is unjust, and contrary to the law of God'.⁶⁸ There are reasons, as we shall see, for his reticence.

From religion in general, and the obligations it imposes on ruler and ruled alike, Caillard moves to the relationship between church and state, which he defines in Erastian terms. He accepts the early modern notion of *cuius regio eius religio*, investing sovereigns with the power to designate the form of belief they think 'purest and best' as the official religion, and enshrine it in a national church.⁶⁹ He also makes them responsible for the oversight of ecclesiastical affairs, granting them the right to create educational establishments to form the young and to train the professors, teachers, and ministers necessary to run the churches, schools and colleges. He authorises them to intervene where necessary to ensure that the clergy are fulfilling their duties, to deprive them of their functions if they are not, and to convoke a general assembly of the church to settle matters peaceably if doctrinal disagreements arise.⁷⁰ Surprisingly, Caillard also

65 Caillard, i, p. 40. 66 Caillard, i, p. 40. 67 I am influenced here by Horton, 'Toleration, morality and harm', p. 116, 132. 68 Caillard, i, p. 40. 69 Caillard, i, pp. 46, 42. The notion that the religion of the sovereign should also be the religion of the people (*cuius regio eius religio*) was widely accepted in post-Reformation Europe. Caillard uses the notion of the rights of the erring conscience, popularised by Bayle, to defend the right of sovereigns to designate their own belief system as the official religion, even if that belief system is false. They are answerable for their beliefs, he argues, only to God. 70 Caillard, i, pp. 44-6.

grants sovereigns the right to bestow prerogatives on members of the national church – while denying them to ‘others’, that is, dissenters – and empowers them to proceed against ‘false religions’ in order to protect the ‘true religion’.⁷¹ He does place four restrictions on this last power, however, insisting that sovereigns may neither impose corporal punishment on dissenters for their beliefs, nor civil disabilities to bring about their conversion to the established church. With one eye on the Edict of Nantes, he also maintains that legal penalties may not be applied if they violate the terms of any formal treaty previously passed into law. Finally, he invokes the concept of harm once again to limit the use of penalties to cases where individuals or groups are a danger to the state.⁷² Such restrictions are obviously designed to try to accommodate the rights and obligations of both the secular power and the individual conscience. But it is nonetheless difficult to see how Caillard’s position differs from that of Gallican Catholics, like Richelieu and Bossuet, who also believed that the submission of church and clergy to the secular power was essential to the processes of orderly government.⁷³ In fact, his position differs from theirs only in the unstated assumption that the sovereign and the national religion are Protestant.

So much becomes clear when Caillard reflects on the implications of his position for those he designates as ‘heretics’, ‘false religionists’, or the ‘erring’.⁷⁴ He is concerned to outline what action, if any, should be taken by the state against three categories of people, as he defines them, who are not members of the national church. The first are those whose religion or beliefs authorise crime and wrongdoing; the second, those who hold certain principles that could contribute to the ‘destruction of government’; and the third, ‘heretics’ whose errors pose no threat to society. Caillard believes that while sovereigns have a duty to apply the strictest penalties to people who fall into the first two categories they must extend toleration to those in the third.⁷⁵ The detail of the argument reveals just how potentially intolerant this makes the state. Caillard’s first category embraces not only thieves and brigands, but also blasphemers and atheists, and his second, Roman Catholics. While blasphemers and atheists may hold heterodox views in private, Caillard’s belief that religion is vital to the public good means that if they try to spread those views they are endangering the stability of the state and become subject to the penalties of the law.⁷⁶ As for the Catholics, Caillard rehashes the anti-papist commonplaces of the day. He reminds his public that Catholics are a potential fifth column within the state whose allegiance to a foreign power makes them refuse to take oaths of fidelity and inspires in them a commitment to overturn the government when the opportunity arises.⁷⁷ In his view, then, Roman Catholicism does not ‘exactly fall within the case for toleration’,⁷⁸ but, if already established in a country, it must be allowed to continue to

71 Caillard, i, pp. 46, 42. 72 Caillard, i, pp. 52–3. 73 See Jenkinson, p. 306. 74 Caillard, i, pp. 47, 51, 56. 75 Caillard, i, pp. 48–9. 76 Caillard, i, p. 50. 77 Caillard, i, pp. 48–9, 51; see also C.D.A. Leighton, *Catholicism in a Protestant kingdom: a study of the Irish ancien régime* (London, 1994), p. 102. 78 Caillard, i, p. 51.

exist, albeit subject to restrictions. The 'heretics' (dissenters from national orthodoxy) in Caillard's third category are – surprisingly – also subject to restrictions, which are designed to limit their expansion and restrict their access to public office.⁷⁹ What this means, of course, is that while dissenters, Catholics and atheists enjoy freedom of conscience they do not enjoy equal rights of coexistence or self-expression with believers affiliated to the national church. They are tolerated in the negative sense of being exempted from conformity, but not in the positive sense of being granted an equal right to self-determination.

It must by now be patently obvious that the apparently 'progressive' or 'modern' elements in Caillard's defence of toleration are so encrusted in limitations as to deprive them of any real power to persuade his public to embrace an idea of toleration as a basic human right. But was that the purpose of the sermons in the first place? It is not just the ceremonial occasion on which he preached, but also the very contents of the sermons that indicate another concern altogether. To put it succinctly, he appears to be delineating the nature of toleration within a single-faith society, where the single faith is Protestantism, and where those who dissent from it may be exempted from conformity on grounds of conscience.⁸⁰ Furthermore, his outline of the single-faith society so resembles the religious hierarchy and divisions of eighteenth-century Ireland as to be indistinguishable from them. It is legitimate to argue, then, that Caillard not only accepts the ideology of the confessional state,⁸¹ but also promotes both it and the restrictions it brought to bear on those who did not belong to the national church, whether atheist, Catholic or Dissenter. While other commentators may take exception to this interpretation,⁸² it is, in my opinion, the only one that fits the evidence considered as a whole, rather than as a series of propositions extrapolated from their social and historical context. That is not to say, however, that Caillard's defence and promotion of the status quo in Ireland does not give pause for thought. On the contrary, the problematical category of harm had been invoked in the would-be single-faith society of Gallican France to justify the restrictions imposed on the Huguenots, who were also perceived as a danger to national security.⁸³ Why, it may be asked, did Caillard accept and defend the appropriateness of the confessional state when he belonged to a community who had been so recently victimised by a similar ideology? And why did he receive such support from prominent members of that community, among whom were first-generation refugees who had lost everything in their flight from France?

The answer to these questions brings us closer to understanding the political and religious consciousness of the Huguenots in early eighteenth-century Ireland. Their acceptance of the ideology of the confessional state was the result of their socialisation not by the Revocation only, but also, and perhaps even more

79 Caillard, i. pp. 52–3. 80 I am influenced here by Jenkinson, p. 303. 81 On this, see Leighton, pp. 7–18. 82 See Caldicott, 'On short-term and long-term memory', p. 280. 83 B. Dompnier, *Le venin de l'hérésie. Image du protestantisme et combat catholique au XVII^e siècle* (Paris, 1985), pp. 62–5, 82–7.

importantly, by the regime of the Edict of Nantes. The Edict brought open confessional conflict to an end without, however, altering either the mentality of the religious majority or the character of France's major institutions, which remained committed to uniformity. It was also an act of royal absolutism that bound the minority to the good pleasure of the king, on whom they depended for survival as a distinct minority. In fact, the Edict institutionalised the confessional state, made religious dissent a matter of sufferance, and guaranteed that political and social respectability were tied to membership of the dominant religion.⁸⁴ Unable to conform to the religious orthodoxy of their country, the Huguenots experienced a conflict of identity that they sought to resolve by developing an exaggerated loyalty to the Crown. But their protestations and acts of loyalty could never make up for their religious particularism, which became increasingly 'un-French' under the absolutist monarchy of Louis XIV.⁸⁵ However, when they removed to Ireland, this conflict between religious and political identity could be resolved, at least at one level.

After the Glorious Revolution, the Huguenots were in the happier position of sharing the king's religion, although admittedly their Reformed tradition made them in some respects unacceptable to the Anglican minority in Ireland. Nonetheless, the part they had played in the Williamite campaign meant that their commitment to the Protestant interest was unquestionable. In a very important way, then, coming to Ireland enabled the Huguenots to resolve the conflict between political loyalty and religious particularism that they had experienced in France. It did this by giving them access to the hierarchy and distribution of privilege which, in both their native France and their adopted homeland, was tied to confessional affiliation. When they settled in Ireland, the Huguenots who conformed to the established church were able to trade up their minority status by transforming it into membership of the social élite.⁸⁶ Those who, like Caillard, did not conform (preferring their own Reformed tradition to the alien rites of Anglicanism),⁸⁷ seem to have adopted, nonetheless, the confessional ideology of their hosts, and to have observed religiously its political liturgies of commemoration. These ceremonies, which were obviously not confined to Anglicans, 'were based on and gave expression to, a mythic and patriotic sense of national identity' and helped to form and disseminate 'a distinctly Protestant culture', as David Cressy has argued.⁸⁸ So, while the non-conforming

84 My interpretation of the Edict of Nantes as an institutionalisation of intolerance is similar to that of the editors of the following volume and the authors of many of the essays within it, see Grandjean and Roussel (ed.), *Coexister dans l'intolérance*. **85** The sense that their religious belief was being interpreted as an essentially 'un-French' attitude explains, I believe, the insistence that Protestants are, in fact, 'bons Français' in the pamphlet warfare surrounding the Revocation, see, for example, P. Jurieu, *La politique du clergé de France* (1st ed. 1681) (La Haye, 1682), pp. 8, 126, 158; see also the essay by O. Millet in this volume. **86** I am influenced here by Leighton, p. 92. **87** On this, see R. Whelan, 'Sanctified by the Word: the Huguenots and Anglican Liturgy', in K. Herlihy (ed.), *Propagating the word of Irish Dissent, 1650-1800* (Dublin and Portland, 1998), pp. 74-94. **88** Cressy, pp. xi, xii.

Huguenots may have been excluded from the structures of preferment associated with the national church, they were included in its ideological framework and social network, as the list of subscribers to Caillard's sermons indicates. If they failed to question the ideology of the confessional state and its hierarchy of privilege, it was, then, because their own newly acquired acceptance within that social order depended on the exclusion of the Catholic majority. But they also failed to question it because, quite simply, they believed in it. They brought with them to Ireland a fear of Catholicism that had been revitalised by their recent experiences and was reinforced by the anti-papist attitudes of the times. Surrounded by a majority population whom they did not understand, whether culturally or linguistically, and whom they profoundly distrusted (with notable individual exceptions), they invested their hopes of survival, as a once persecuted minority, in the politics of exclusion that guaranteed their existence as a social élite.⁸⁹

One final question remains. Is Caillard arguing in bad faith when he seemingly defends the absolute right to self-determination in one sermon, only to restrict it severely in a second? It is possible to answer this question only by situating his views in the wider social context of his time. Arguments for toleration were not unusual in early eighteenth-century Dublin. For example, on 23 October 1725, bishop Edward Synge, the younger, preached a sermon on toleration, based on the text 'compelle intrare' from Luke's Gospel, before the members of the House of Commons to commemorate the 1641 rebellion.⁹⁰ His views are surprisingly similar to those advanced by Caillard two years earlier. He is critical of restrictions on freedom of conscience and freedom of worship while at the same time accepting the legitimacy of certain civil restrictions designed to preserve the security of the state.⁹¹ And, like Caillard, he invokes the category of harm to justify the application of these restrictions to Roman Catholics, whose 'doctrines [...] are really dangerous to all, but especially to Protestant governments'.⁹² The anti-popery shared by the two preachers reveals the problematical nature of the category of harm, which does not enable people to discriminate between moral (or political) danger and mere prejudice.⁹³ And their use of this category resolutely situates their conception of toleration, for all its apparently 'modern' resonances, within the early modern ideological and social paradigm of the confessional state.⁹⁴ Caillard was not arguing in bad faith. The ideological consensus between his views, those of Gallican Catholics, and the positions elaborated by prominent Irish Protestants indicates that he was using the concepts and terms present not only in Ireland, but also in all

89 See Leighton, p. 47. 90 E. Synge, *The case of toleration consider'd with respect both to religion and civil government* (Dublin, 1725). 91 See M.-L. Legg (ed.), *The Synge letters. Bishop Edward Synge to his daughter Alicia, Roscommon to Dublin, 1746-1752* (Dublin, 1996), pp. xi-xiii; see Barnard, pp. 902-3, and Leighton, pp. 98-102. 92 Synge, p. 41. 93 See Horton, 'Toleration, morality and harm', p. 114. 94 I am drawing here on Jenkinson, pp. 318-19.

ancien régime societies in early modern Europe.⁹⁵ The critique of those concepts, and the hierarchy of privilege and exclusion they enabled, came later in the century, but it was Bayle, not Caillard, who contributed to the rational scrutiny we associate with the Enlightenment. The views of the Huguenot who preached in Dublin to commemorate the Gunpowder Plot on 5 November 1723 were too equivocal, too potentially illiberal and too rooted in the confessional ideology of his time to bring about the paradigm shift that marks the emergence of modernity.

We should not leave Caillard's sermons, however, without reflecting briefly on their wider implications for commemoration and identity, both then and now. In early modern Ireland, calendrical commemoration of landmark dates, such as the Gunpowder Plot, clearly function as *lieux de mémoire* where a distinctively Protestant consciousness was elaborated and disseminated.⁹⁶ For Huguenot refugees, like Caillard, these occasions also function as laboratories of memory where they work out who they have become both in the light of what they had been and in the new context of exile. Their new identity is a complex fusion of volatile and not always compatible elements. The St Bartholomew Massacre and the Revocation do function as dangerous memories motivating a critique of what the refugees thought of as 'popery', but they do not actually stimulate a generalised critique of repressive or discriminatory regimes. They do not do so because the refugees were obviously comfortable with rites of commemoration that served to include them in a Protestant in-group by defining others as an out-group who had to be excluded because they were seen as a threat to state (or in-group) security. Their easy adoption of these rites of exclusion expresses a consciousness shaped and inspired not just by the dangerous memories of their history but also by the social hierarchy and religious politics of the regime of the Edict of Nantes with its negative understanding and repressive practice of toleration. This more complex understanding of the forces that helped to mould the *mentalités* of the Huguenot refugees challenges the exclusive insistence of twentieth-century French Protestants on the importance of the Revocation for their group identity. As I hope I have shown, commemorating other contested landmark dates, such as the Edict of Nantes, enables us to recover at least something of the richer contours of history, memory and identity.

⁹⁵ The application of the concept *ancien régime* to Ireland is not uncontroversial; it does, however, provide a way of understanding the ideological consensus between Huguenot immigrants and their Protestant hosts in Ireland. I am, of course, influenced by Leighton's cogent development of this notion in the context of eighteenth-century Ireland. ⁹⁶ For the concept of *lieux de mémoire*, see chapter 1 above, pp. 24–5.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

- C.E.J. Caldicott, H. Gough, J.-P. Pittion (ed.), *The Huguenots and Ireland: anatomy of an emigration* (Dublin, 1987)
- C.D.A. Leighton, *Catholicism in a Protestant kingdom: a study of the Irish ancien régime* (London, 1994)
- M. Walzer, *On toleration* (New Haven and London, 1997)