radio broadcasts had at the time they were given or when he suggests that Attlee's government was committed to dismantling the British Empire (which, other than India, it was not, having schemes for colonial economic development). But such blemishes are very few. In addition to being a physicist, Farmelo is an accomplished historian.

Churchill's Bomb is an outstanding work on international politics and the history of science. It offers fresh insights into Anglo-American relations in the early nuclear age as well as into the career of Winston Churchill. It deserves a wide audience.

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Le roi, la cour, l'État: De la Renaissance à l'absolutisme. By *Nicolas Le Roux*. Collection Époques.
Seyssel: Éditions Champ Vallon, 2013. Pp. 400. €29.00 (cloth).

In eighteen chapters on a great variety of topics, Nicolas Le Roux brings up to date studies of the transformative impact of the French Religious Wars on royal government. In part, he offers a traditional chronicle of facts and events. But his *Le roi, la cour, l'État: De la Renaissance à l'absolutisme* also fully recognizes that political thought and human experiences evolve in tandem. As all who study the period know, the direction of change started with the Valois kings in desperate struggles to maintain the legitimacy of their crowns and ended with Bourbon kings whose divine right was broadly acknowledged and could maintain the appearance, if not the practice, of absolute power. With well-chosen and generous quotations from primary sources (including memoirs, correspondences, state papers, tracts, engravings, and royal spectacles), Le Roux follows the movement from the king acting as the head of a multifaceted *respublic* to his claim to be the embodiment of the sovereign state. This movement is revealed in a series of topical histories, which are a pleasure to read, and is seen as part of "a micro-history of the State" (362). A brief summary illustrates the broadness of his study.

In chapters 1–6, Le Roux gives an overview, in "The Politics of the Court," of the royal court's transformation from a household for the king to a central place for governance of the kingdom. From 1559, Catherine de' Medici patronized (at enormous expense) nobles, poets, and major thinkers, encouraging them to innovate, both in actions and in symbols, ways of imagining the person of the king and forms of etiquette in the presence of the king. Court life as theater extended into urban and religious spectacles. The king acted as the unifier of the kingdom, and nobles and others played roles to model politically correct behavior. The image of a king in dialogue with the kingdom's social and political sectors sustained the king's person and his legitimacy, and royal Neoplatonic apologists, such as Louis Le Roy, contended that in an unstable world, royal monarchy and the court were "the only place of legitimate power" (102). In polemical wars over alternative images of the king (including as tyrant and heretic), the Huguenots, anti-Italian xenophobes, and the Catholic League justified rebellion at court and in religious, noble, civic, and military venues. In response, *politiques* invested the king's body with permanent royal "majesty" equal to divine majesty. In these times of assassinations and massacres, an "evolution of sensibilities" shifted imagery from the "court to the convent," from piety to penitence, as forms of religious expression (130). Although Le Roux doesn't state it this way, Counter-Reformation gravity suppressed Renaissance playfulness. The old conflict between reconciling the authority of the king with the universal claims of the Papacy remained. The early modern idea of the sovereign state took root in the resolution of this issue.

Chapters 7–11 explore the attempts and obstacles to peace and unity from the death of Henry II (1559) to the assassination of Henry III (1589), where persuasion of the French that all government started with obedience to the king regardless of religious beliefs or traditional status held center place. Le Roux enumerates the expenses, strategies, and major actors in this effort, including the January 1562 publication of the "first edict of toleration in the history of France" (283). He well shows other agents in these efforts, including the Duke and Cardinal of Guise's meeting with the Lutheran Duke of Wurtenburg and his theologians. The Queen Mother and Henry III are judged pragmatic in dealings with the religious question, and, tellingly, Catherine's extravagant programs of reconciliation were justified as means "of assuring obedience to the king and never as a battle against heresy" (191). Also, the unprecedented attacks on royal government and the circulation of printed materials shifted the traditional royal party's projection of the king from protector of the Church in favor of that of "the image of the living God" (213) and his court as a model of perfected government. Le Roux finds the war over imagery a major step in establishing "the autonomy of the state" (213, 254). Surprisingly, he does not mention that while the king sought to elevate himself at court, he was also attempting to subvert the influence over royal ceremonies of the Duke of Guise in his office of Grand Master of France.

Chapters 13–18 follow the major reorientation of programs after the assassination of Henry III. For the Catholic League, divine providence had intervened to destroy a heretical tyrant, and, for the Huguenots, it acted to bring the rightful heir to the throne. In either case, Henry III's reign was erased. The league leader, the Duke of Mayenne, continued the conflict by replacing the coupling of "religion/king" with "religion/State" (254). For his part, Henry IV made treaties and gave pardons, as had the Valois rulers, with the command that all memories of past conflicts and offenses be forgotten; but he also did not refer to Henry III. Rather, the mythic "Salic law" became one of "the inviolable laws of the State" (272), and this unique French dynastic succession made "the king . . . himself the ultimate miracle" (274). Victories at Araques and Ivry and the peaceful entry at Paris provided a "providential image" of Henry IV (276), chosen by God and ruler by military prowess rather than Valois persuasion. This preservation of the mystery of the royal person shaped French identity and placed its emphasis on foreign affairs. From these foundations (with some help from Christian Stoic thinkers), noble and religious traditions were transformed in such a way that placed the war-weary French in obedience to and within the habitus of an absolute king.

In *Richelieu and Reason of State* (Princeton, NJ, 1971), William Farr Church wrote that "for those who would trace the growth of the French state, the word *état* is ambiguous," and "all meanings had one element in common, their juridical basis" (14). Church reminds us that while Le Roux's history is very rich in its parts and enriches our knowledge of many contingent circumstances in that growth, it does not give the complete history. The idea of state was continuous with a longer history that requires recognition of past monarchical programs, offices, and *parlements*. Finally, a book with so many themes and cross references would be well served by an index.

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