# From the Purse and the Heart: Exploring Charity, Humanitarianism, and Human Rights in France

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The evolution in the material and political expression of French moral consciousness is reflected in the histories of charity, humanitarianism, and human rights. By bringing together these often disconnected fields, we seek to open new avenues of research and to consider the junctures, discontinuities, and overlap often neglected by historians of humanitarianism (and related movements), welfare, charitable enterprises, religion, and missiology.[1]

By focusing on practices as well as ideas, we wish to engage with more than the current paradigm of the history of humanitarianism, which tends to concentrate on why people began to feel compassion or empathy for an enslaved, suffering, or persecuted group during certain historical periods, whereas earlier (or later) generations showed a lack of such compassion.[2] The practices with which we wish to engage in this special issue encompass more than a cultural history of compassion.[3] It is not merely a history of the changing outlook on the sufferings of

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[1] See, e.g., the classic essay by Thomas L. Haskell, "Capitalism and the Origins of the Humanitarian Sensibility," *American Historical Review* 90 (1985): 339–61, 547–66; and for France, the work of Françoise Vergès, *Abolir l'esclavage: Une utopie coloniale* (Paris, 2001).

[2] See the recent study by Sankar Muthu of Enlightenment anti-imperialist writings (focusing on Diderot, Kant, and Herder), which examines why only in the late eighteenth century (and only to disappear in the nineteenth century) some political thinkers developed arguments about the injustice of European imperial rule: *Enlightenment against Empire* (Princeton, NJ, 2003). See also Norman S. Fiering, "Irresistible Compassion: An Aspect of Eighteenth-Century Sympathy and Humanitarianism," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 37 (1976): 195–218.

[3] Nevertheless, much can be gained by following the approach of Ginzburg in his analysis of Balzac's response to Diderot. See Carlo Ginzburg, "Killing a Chinese Mandarin: The Moral Implications of Distance," *Cultural Inquiry* 21 (1994): 46–60.

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others but also a history of the scale and deployment of generosity in space. This space could range from the neighborhood to distant lands, from a visible locality to imagined communities.[4] In a very pragmatic manner, this deployment of French charity also constituted an explicit and material development of the meaning of being French in the world. Beyond philosophical engagements with abstract concepts such as universality, material gifts and aid expressed French political aspirations to play a leading role in the spiritual and secular world.

Stressing continuities, innovative reinventions, and the nature of practices, we wish to address what seems to us a central weakness in much of the historiography dealing with nineteenth- and twentieth-century French humanitarianism: its tendency to ignore the continuing relevancy of the early tradition of Saint Vincent de Paul and the religious missionary.[5] The vitality in the modern period of local, voluntary, and often religious charitable and humanitarian organizations involved in disaster relief efforts and fund-raising makes it all the more important to trace the historical genealogy of voluntary charitable associations. Although giving patterns were localized, they later often embraced universal themes. For the nineteenth century, the work of Jean-Luc Marais has made the history of giving an object of inquiry in its own right. This scholarship emphasizes the scale and diversity of giving in French society, even if historians tend to contrast the limitations of charity in France with the alleged liberality of "Anglo-Saxon" philanthropy. Marais, working principally on legacies and *mainmorte*, charities that could possess gifts in perpetuity, notes the remarkable continuities in rates of giving during the period 1800–1939, emphasizing that the roots of these charitable practices were firmly established in the ancien régime.[6] And since the comparison with Britain or the United States is difficult to test, one could at least posit that it may be an artifact of commonplace comparative politics going back to Tocqueville.

In terms of humanitarian movements, France in the early nineteenth century had nothing comparable to the enormous antislavery mobilizations in the United States and Britain, which were associated with evangelical Protestant "awakenings" and involved public organizing, petitioning, and fund-raising, as well as the boycotting of products

[4] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London, 2006).

[5] See, e.g., the assumed continuities over time in Albert Dupoux, *Sur les pas de Monsieur Vincent: Trois cent ans d'histoire parisienne de l'enfance abandonnée* (Paris, 1958).

[6] Jean-Luc Marais, *Histoire du don en France de 1800 à 1939: Dons et legs charitables, pieux et philanthropique* (Rennes, 1999), 219–20. Marais's work is a reference for anyone working on the history of giving or philanthropy.

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made or grown by slaves. And while the modern French state, in contrast to Britain or the United States, attempted to control and regulate charity tightly, arguably to the point of restricting charitable giving, the French still had many opportunities to expend their resources on worthy causes. Sociability, which underscores giving at church, at market, through a newspaper, or at special charitable events such as galas and society events, has deep roots.[7] The performance of charitable deeds acted as a social marker of distinction and established or consolidated adherence to common spiritual values. Yet an unfortunate teleological approach tends to underlie much of the historiography, in particular, a desire to pinpoint the origins of the modern welfare state or the philosophical legitimacy of the contemporary *humanitaire*.[8]

Countering these dominant paradigms will be a lengthy enterprise, and our hope of placing the work of modernists, early modernists, and medievalists in dialogue with each other has not yet been fully realized. Of the many submissions we received for this issue, none dealt with the medieval period and few discussed anything prior to the Revolution. This came as a surprise, given the rich scholarly work on earlier charitable practices. While the four essays included here deal with the more recent past, they reflect varied and original approaches to studying the evolution of French moral perceptions and of activism on behalf of the oppressed and the suffering. As Samuel Moyn has recently suggested, "There have been many different and opposed universalisms in history, with each equally committed to the belief that humans are all part of the same moral group or—as the 1948 declaration was to put it—the same 'family.'"[9] The four essays included here consider some of these different visions in French history: the history of the universalist idea of French social protection; nineteenth-century romantic socialists' "humanitarian" defense of France's *mission civilisatrice*; the emergence, during the interwar years, of a new moral consciousness about how non-Europeans experienced colonialism; and debates among humanitarians during the 1980s, especially Médecins sans Frontières, over political activism and how best to achieve their universalist goals. For the purposes of this introduction, we seek to embed these essays in a broader historiographical context by juxtaposing some of the work

[7] See, e.g., the insights provided by tragedies such as the devastating fire of the Bazar de la Charité, in Geoffrey Cubitt, "Martyrs of Charity, Heroes of Solidarity: Catholic and Republican Responses to the Fire at the Bazar de la Charité, Paris, 1897," *French History* 21 (2007): 331– 52.

[8] Some more recent works such as Philippe Ryfman, *Une histoire de l'humanitaire* (Paris, 2008), are set against the vast hagiographic literature of pioneers of humanitarianism such as Benoît Charenton, *Léopold Bellan: Un pionnier de l'humanitaire* (Paris, 2008), and Michel-Antoine Burnier, *Les septs vies du Dr Kouchner* (Paris, 2008).

[9] Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge, MA, 2010), 13.

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done on medieval and early modern charity and modern humanitarianism. By considering the genealogy of French values and practices over the *longue durée*, including how the act of giving (and the spatial and cultural relationship between giver and receiver) differed by social and cultural context, we hope to raise new questions about charity and humanitarianism for historians of France to consider.

## Charity, Humanitarianism, and Human Rights

Current students of large human rights nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and large humanitarian agencies—especially French ones, which have often taken on advocacy roles and *témoignage*, the self-imposed duty to bear witness in a denunciatory fashion[10]—have been at pains to distinguish these organizations' origins and legal credentials.[11] Inspired by this contemporary trend, many historians have sought to show the intertwining of human rights with ideas of humanitarian aid. The lead taken by French organizations in human rights, and more recently in the creation of international humanitarian organizations, has led some to suggest that a kind of French *Sonderweg* was part of its revolutionary legacy. In an era of the country's declining global importance, this revival of French universalism seemed to emphasize afresh the paradigmatic importance of the principles of 1789. Yet however tempting this teleology is, the assumption that the human rights movement grew out of the long history of humanitarianism has come under increasing scrutiny.[12] For one, the absence of religion from this largely secular narrative needs to be questioned.[13] Furthermore, the supposed links between the contemporary human rights movement and the universalism (and the articulation of rights) of the Enlightenment and revolutionary eras appear increasingly superficial, since different

[10] Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists without Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, NY, 1998).

[11] Rony Brauman, *Humanitaire le dilemme: Entretien avec Philippe Petit* (Paris, 1996); Peter Redfield, "A Less Modest Witness: Collective Advocacy and Motivated Truth in a Medical Humanitarian Movement," *American Anthropologist* 33 (2006): 3–26; Bernard Hours, *L'idéologie humanitaire ou le spectacle de l'altérité perdue* (Paris, 1998); Bernard Kouchner and Mario Bettati, *Le devoir d'ingérence (peut-on les laisser mourir?)* (Paris, 1987); Jacques Meurant, "Inter Arma Caritas: Evolution and Nature of International Humanitarian Law," *Journal of Peace Research* 24 (1987): 237–49; Mario Bettati, *Le droit humanitaire* (Paris, 2000); Fiona Terry, *Condemned to Repeat: The Paradox of Humanitarian Action* (Ithaca, NY, 2002); Michael Barnett and Thomas Weiss, eds., *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics* (Ithaca, NY, 2008); Didier Fassin, *La raison humanitaire: Une histoire morale du temps present* (Paris, 2010)

[12] In "On the Genealogy of Morals," *Nation*, Apr. 16, 2007, Samuel Moyn challenges Lynn Hunt's arguments in *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York, 2007) about the historical connections between humanitarianism and human rights. See also the introduction to Richard Ashby Wilson and Richard D. Brown, eds., *Humanitarianism and Suffering: The Mobilization of Empathy* (Cambridge, 2009).

[13] David D. Irvine, *Between Justice and Politics: The Ligue des Droits de l'Homme, 1898–1945* (Stanford, CA, 2007).

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objectives inspired them. Recent scholarship has tended to emphasize the "sacredness" of much contemporary humanitarian universalism, as well as its quasi-religious aspirations to purity of purpose. Stephen Hopgood even defines the moral authority derived from this use of the sacred as a challenge to Kantian universalism.[14] While this revision of the human rights movement goes a long way toward critiquing any linear genealogies, it does not go as far as Samuel Moyn's insistence that the human rights movement only really formed in a significant way in the 1970s.[15] Beyond this debatable attempt to assign a clear starting point, one contradicted by the long history of the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme or Hopgood's work on Amnesty International,[16] Moyn argues that human rights and humanitarianism have only recently become "fused enterprises."[17] The debate will undoubtedly continue, but this mutual embrace of two vital forms of universalism has tended to occlude other essential building blocks of humanitarianism.

Charity, meanwhile, is generally regarded as a separate category, and the term itself seems to have acquired pejorative connotations, which have excluded it from contemporary discussions. Although humanitarianism can be directed toward any suffering group, it has tended to focus on the oppressed and on those whose basic human rights have been violated. And while Marxists and others have regarded the poor—often the principal objects of charitable assistance—as the victims of an unjust economic system, the poor have also been seen, even before the growth of a capitalist "work ethic," as at least partly responsible for their condition. Yet there may be some common denominators in the cultural forces underlying the charitable impulse and the emergence of humanitarian movements. Balzac, in several novels, such as *Les employés* (*Bureaucracy; or, A Civil Service Reformer*) and *Le père Goriot*, made a similar point to stress the depth of genuine belief invested in charitable practices in contrast to the shallowness of forced empathy. In a devastating portrayal, Balzac lampooned the forced idealism of the revolutionary generations:

> Républicain en secret, admirateur de Paul-Louis Courier, ami de Michel Chrestien, il attendait du temps et de la raison publique le triomphe de ses idées en Europe. Aussi rêvait-il la Jeune Allemagne et la Jeune Italie. Son cœur s'enflait de ce stupide amour collectif qu'il faut nommer *humanitarisme*, fils ainé de la défunte philanthro-

[14] Stephen Hopgood, "Moral Authority, Modernity, and the Politics of the Sacred," *European Journal of International Relations* 15 (2009): 229–55.

[15] Moyn, *Last Utopia*.

[16] Stephen Hopgood, *Keepers of the Flame: Understanding Amnesty International* (Ithaca, NY, 2006).

[17] Moyn, *Last Utopia*, 221.

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> pie, et qui est à la divine charité catholique ce que le système est à l'Art, le raisonnement substitué à l'œuvre.
>
> [Republican in secret, an admirer of Paul-Louis Courier and a friend of Michel Chrestien, he looked to time and public intelligence to bring about the triumph of his opinions from end to end of Europe. He dreamed of a new Germany and a new Italy. His heart swelled with that dull, collective love which we must call humanitarianism, the eldest son of deceased philanthropy, and which is to the divine catholic charity what system is to art, or reasoning to deed.][18]

In a rather more favorable perspective, Lynn Hunt has proposed a causal relationship between eighteenth-century cultural experiences, such as the reading of epistolary novels, and the rise of empathy and humanitarian concerns.[19] This approach may be fruitfully projected back in time. Just as these novels provoked "imagined empathy" in their readers for the plight of the novels' characters, it is likely that the medieval faithful, for instance, projected their own "imagined relationship" with a suffering Jesus and compassionate Mary, evoked in preachers' sermons and in visual representations in churches, onto the *miserabiles* of their own community.[20] Could developments in medieval spirituality, including a rather personal relationship with Jesus and Mary, have made it easier for medieval Christians to empathize with a suffering stranger, to see themselves (or Jesus) in the sufferer (or, for that matter, in the one who sought to alleviate the suffering)?

There is a need, in other words, to explain why in France's history charitable giving (evident, for example, in more testamentary bequests going to charitable institutions than to testators' own family members) seems to have been more prevalent at certain times than at others. Nor can we lump all charitable giving into one monolithic category, since careful attention must be paid to the context and dynamic of each individual gift. One could perhaps argue that social and economic dynamics prove more important than cultural shifts in shaping patterns of giving or that giving practices shape a compassionate ethos rather than the other way around.

While none of the essays submitted for inclusion in this issue addresses charity directly, the subject of charity touches on many of the themes central to the study of humanitarianism (attitudes toward *les malheureux*; the relationship between local, voluntary associations

[18] Honoré de Balzac, *Les employés* (1837), in *Oeuvres de Balzac*, ed. Albert Béguin and Jean A. Ducourneau, 16 vols. (Paris, 1962), 5:1082–83. English translation extracted from the Roberts edition of 1889.

[19] Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights*.

[20] Sarah McNamer, *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Medieval Compassion* (Philadelphia, 2010). On imitative devotion to Christ and Mary during the Middle Ages, see also Rachel Fulton, *From Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, 800–1200* (New York, 2002).

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and the state; the roles of lay and religious power; the history of compassion), and so we will briefly survey some of the questions scholars have pursued and might consider exploring further about the history of charity and poor relief in France.[21]

Charity has not been a monolithic, unchanging social practice in France across the centuries. As Colin Jones's study of charity in eighteenth-century Montpellier showed, the "charitable imperative" was more imperative during some periods than others, with the number of charitable bequests rising sharply, then falling off just as much, and then rising again in just a few decades.[22] Likewise, the medieval historian André Vauchez has suggested that the twelfth century witnessed "une véritable révolution de la charité et . . . l'apparition d'une authentique spiritualité de la bienfaisance" (a revolutionary change in charity and . . . the emergence of an authentic spirituality defined by benefaction).[23] While charity had been a central ideal of the Christian tradition from its beginning and a fundamental tenet of the Christian scriptures, Vauchez argues that a seismic shift occurred throughout Latin Christendom in the High Middle Ages: charity went from being an aspiration primarily of the clergy to being a cherished and much-practiced value of the European laity. We see evidence of this development in the charitable bequests of lay testators; the charitable activities of lay confraternities (visiting the sick, burying the dead, clothing the needy, dowering orphan girls, etc.), penitential groups (such as the beguines and Humiliati), and the Hospitaller and military orders; and the hundreds of *hôtels-Dieu* and leper houses founded and supported by the laity throughout Latin Christendom.[24] More laymen and laywomen were also canonized during this period, with their sanctity directly tied to their charitable activities.[25] The spiritual ideal of "holy poverty," embodied by the monastic renunciation of private property, also did not diminish the desire to help the involuntary poor; if anything, the religious exaltation of voluntary poverty may have elicited greater compassion for the involuntary poor.[26] Moreover, charity became a cen-

[21] The title of a recent conference proceedings draws a direct connection between the history of charity and the subject of Thomas M. Adams's essay in this issue on the history of the French notion of social protection: André Gueslin and Pierre Guillaume, eds., *De la charité médiévale à la sécurité sociale: Economie de la protection sociale du Moyen Age à l'époque contemporaine* (Paris, 1992).

[22] Colin Jones, *Charity and Bienfaisance: The Treatment of the Poor in the Montpellier Region, 1740–1815* (New York, 1982).

[23] André Vauchez, *La spiritualité du Moyen Age occidental (VIIIe–XIIIe siècle)*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1994), 118; our translation.

[24] It has been estimated that in thirteenth-century Liège, 79 percent of testaments included bequests to hospitals for the poor. See Pierre de Spiegeler, *Les hôpitaux et l'assistance à Liège (Xe–XVe siècles): Aspects institutionnels et sociaux* (Paris, 1987), 183.

[25] André Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, trans. Jean Birrell (Cambridge, 1997).

[26] Bronislaw Geremek, *Poverty: A History* (Oxford, 1994), 36.

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tral feature of medieval lay spirituality, an opportunity to do penance without renouncing the world by joining a monastic order or by going on a crusade, which itself was seen by contemporaries as a charitable endeavor and an expression of one's love of God and one's fellow Christians in the East.[27]

Where did the medieval laity's new commitment to charity come from? Some have pointed to the pressures that arose from a commercial, urban, monetary society, with a rapidly growing population and more visible signs of both structural and conjunctural poverty and other forms of human suffering.[28] Lester Little has suggested that it may not have been poverty that prompted giving but in fact anxiety and guilt about growing prosperity. In this scenario, philanthropy may have justified profit making.[29] It is also possible that the birth of the doctrine of purgatory may have contributed to the charitable movement, since works of mercy on earth were believed to shorten the time spent in purgatory.[30]

The spread of charitable activity was also likely tied to changing social attitudes about the poor and the marginal. As Michel Mollat showed in his classic study of the poor in the Middle Ages, the poor acquired a new social status during the twelfth century as the notion of the "poor of Christ" was extended from the monks and nuns, who lived in voluntary poverty, to the involuntary poor.[31] Even lepers, who at times were the objects of scorn, began to be depicted as Christlike and admired as valuable spiritual intercessors.[32] What has not been adequately explained is *how* these new attitudes toward the *miserabiles* coalesced during the twelfth century. How did charity come to be a cultural norm and an "imperative"?

Much of the scholarship on charity in ancien régime France has sought to trace the origins for the development of the French national welfare system, a quest that necessarily entails a teleological perspective. In differentiating between medieval and early modern forms of charity, some scholars have been quick to accept the Weberian model, which depicts medieval charity as voluntary, inclusive, moral-religious,

[27] Jonathan Riley-Smith, "Crusading as an Act of Love," *History* 65 (1980): 177–92.

[28] On the Annalistes' distinction between structural and conjunctural poverty, see Michel Mollat, *The Poor in the Middle Ages: An Essay in Social History*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New Haven, CT, 1986), 26.

[29] Lester K. Little, *Religious Poverty and the Profit Economy in Medieval Europe* (Ithaca, NY, 1978).

[30] Jacques Le Goff, *La naissance du purgatoire* (Paris, 1981).

[31] Mollat, *Poor in the Middle Ages*.

[32] R. I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe, 950–1250* (New York, 1987). For correctives to Moore's argument about medieval attitudes toward lepers, see Carole Rawcliffe, *Leprosy in Medieval England* (Woodbridge, UK, 2006); and François-Olivier Touati, *Maladie et société au Moyen Age: La lèpre, lépreux et les léproseries dans la province ecclésiastique de Sens jusqu'au milieu du XIVe siècle* (Paris, 1998).

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and personal and charity in early modern Europe as compulsory, exclusive, rational, a function of state government and bureaucratic structures, and a mechanism of social discipline. Some of the flaws in these generalizations have begun to be exposed, also highlighting some of the continuities between medieval and early modern forms of charity.[33] Contrary to the notion of indiscriminate medieval charity, the statutes of many medieval hospitals excluded specific categories of people (e.g., the mentally ill, lepers, those with incurable diseases, and pregnant women).[34] Medieval canonists differentiated between the deserving and the undeserving poor, and the late twelfth-century theologian Peter the Chanter and members of his Parisian circle expressed concern that false beggars were receiving alms. Yet some of these theologians were so worried about the plight of the deserving poor that they considered the possibility of making poor relief compulsory, an idea that anticipated the English Poor Laws, which several centuries later financed poor relief through public taxation.[35] In the eyes of the medieval saints venerated for their charitable work, charity might spring from one's love of God, but it was also a matter of social justice, an attempt to eradicate social and economic inequality. According to Peter Abelard and Pope Innocent III, the motivation behind a charitable act was as important as the act itself. And long before the sixteenth-century Spanish humanist Juan Luis Vives framed the problem of poverty as one that threatened public order, the twelfth-century bishop of Paris Maurice de Sully, who oversaw much of the construction of Notre-Dame, expounded on the social utility of alms.[36]

In tracing the origins of the French welfare state, scholars have explored the historical relationship between private philanthropy and public welfare, often stressing the importance of the Enlightenment and revolutionary heritage.[37] Yet the once popular notion that at some point during the early modern period the French state co-opted the role of poor relief from the church, with charity being secularized, has largely been overthrown.[38] As a number of scholars have shown, the

[33] Jean-Pierre Gutton, *La société et les pauvres: L'exemple de la généralité de Lyon, 1534–1789* (Paris, 1971); Thomas Max Safley, ed., *The Reformation of Charity: The Secular and the Religious in Early Modern Poor Relief* (Boston, 2003).

[34] Léopold Le Grand, "Les maisons-Dieu: Leurs statuts au XIIIe siècle," *Revue des questions historiques* 60 (1896): 95–134.

[35] Brian Tierney, *Medieval Poor Law: A Sketch of Canonical Theory and Its Application* (Berkeley, CA, 1959); John W. Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants: The Social Views of Peter the Chanter and His Circle* (Princeton, NJ, 1970), 236–37.

[36] Jean Longère, "Pauvreté et richesse chez quelques prédicateurs durant la seconde moitié du XIIe siècle," in *Etudes sur l'histoire de la pauvreté*, ed. Michel Mollat (Paris, 1974), 255–73.

[37] Bruno Valat, *Histoire de la sécurité sociale (1945–1967): L'Etat, l'institution et la santé* (Paris, 2001).

[38] Gutton, *La société et les pauvres*; Tim McHugh, *Hospital Politics in Seventeenth-Century France:*

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seventeenth and eighteenth centuries witnessed the creation of numerous private charitable organizations, many of them run by women.[39] These organizations, which were expressions of Catholic spiritual renewal, engaged in a wide range of charitable activities, including visiting the sick, helping young women turn away from prostitution, providing religious instruction to the poor, working in orphanages, and assisting war refugees. The revivals of the nineteenth century similarly showed a reinvestment in gendered charitable and social reform work, with a multitude of charitable organizations existing alongside and supporting more secular forms of welfare, such as the *assistance publique*, which reached its zenith under the Second Empire.[40] This is not to undermine the importance of the secular heritage in the French mix, which gradually enabled welfare ideology, but simply to highlight the complex and debated nature of this history.[41] Even the remarkable work of Paul Dutton tends to underestimate the charitable sector or any religious influence in the making of the French welfare state.[42]

The gender politics of philanthropy have become a central issue in recent debates. A number of scholars show that even in a paternalistic society in which the public sphere was often restricted to men, the world of giving and the organizing of charity could open to women spaces and social roles of importance.[43] Moreover, rather than seeing the early modern and modern French state as eclipsing private charity, historians have increasingly stressed the cooperation between the state and private charitable organizations, many of them run by and for

*The Crown, Urban Elites, and the Poor* (Aldershot, UK, 2007); Colette Bec et al., eds., *Philanthropies et politiques sociales en Europe, XVI–XIXe siecles* (Paris, 1994).

39 Barbara Diefendorf, *From Penitence to Charity: Pious Women and the Catholic Reformation in Paris* (New York, 2004); Susan E. Dinan, *Women and Poor Relief in Seventeenth-Century France: The Early History of the Daughters of Charity* (Aldershot, UK, 2006); Marie-Claude Dinet-Lecomte, *Les soeurs hospitalières en France aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles: La charité en action* (Paris, 2005); Christine Adams, "Maternal Societies in France: Private Charity before the Welfare State," *Journal of Women's History* 17 (2005): 87–111; Richard D. Burton, *Holy Tears, Holy Blood: Women, Catholicism, and the Culture of Suffering in France, 1840–1970* (Ithaca, NY, 2004).

40 Elinor A. Accampo, Rachel G. Fuchs, and Mary Lynn Stewart, *Gender and the Politics of Social Reform in France, 1870–1914* (Baltimore, MD, 1995); Jean-Paul Martineaud, *Les ordres religieux dans les hôpitaux de Paris: Les congrégations hospitalières dans les hôpitaux de l'assistance publique à Paris; Des fondations à la laïcisation* (Paris, 2003). This is not to say that much paternalism could not be reinterpreted as social control or propaganda, of course. See David I. Kulstein, *Napoleon III and the Working Class: A Study of Government Propaganda* (Los Angeles, 1969); and Claude Langlois, *Le catholicisme au féminin: Les congrégations françaises à supérieure générale au XIXe siècle* (Paris, 1984).

41 Contrast the perspectives of Catherine Duprat, *Le temps des philanthropes* (Paris, 1995), with those of Henri Hatzfeld, *Du paupérisme à la sécurité sociale, 1850–1940* (Nancy, 2005); see also John H. Weiss, "Origins of the French Welfare State: Poor Relief in the Third Republic, 1871–1914," *French Historical Studies* 13, no. 1 (1983): 47–78.

42 Paul V. Dutton, *Origins of the French Welfare State: The Struggle for Social Reform in France, 1914–1947* (Cambridge, 2002).

43 Bonnie G. Smith, *Ladies of the Leisure Class: The Bourgeoises of Northern France in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton, NJ, 1981), 123–61. Smith highlights the growth of municipal-level anticlerical critique from 1885 on (149–53).

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women.[44] In her work on the Society for Maternal Charity, for example, Christine Adams has demonstrated the extent to which the nineteenth-century state supported this local, voluntary association.[45] As Carol E. Harrison has pointed out, Tocqueville was mistaken in assuming an inherent tension between voluntary associations and governmental centralization, an assumption that led him to conclude that France, a statist society, necessarily lacked the kinds of voluntary associations found in the United States.[46] The historiography on French charity and humanitarianism contradicts Tocqueville's notion of the "unsociable Frenchman," showing that even when there was a strong centralized state power, localism and voluntarism were salient features of French society.

To be sure, conflicts arose between the state and local charitable organizations, as Daniel Hickey vividly illustrated in his book on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century small rural hospitals. But even here Hickey found that, despite the best efforts of royal officials to shut down these institutions, many of them survived thanks to the determined resistance of local elites. And even when charity was under lay, civic control, a development that can be traced as far back as thirteenth-century Narbonne, it was not necessarily "secular" in character.[47] As Susan E. Dinan has put it, "In France, state-sponsored poor relief, which was certainly motivated by a desire to bolster social order, was often carried out by members of religious communities who were committed to the salvation of the poor and their benefactors."[48] Even in the anticlerical years of the Third Republic the state never managed to control the Hydra-like ability of religious charities to regrow when formally abolished.[49] Expelled, persecuted by petty administrators or dispossessed, religious organizations, often focused on specific charitable work, constantly grew apace and rebuilt their income base while expanding their activities throughout the colonial empire. This particular form of universalism has become the object of many recent studies, as three of our articles illustrate, but the profound connections within French metropolitan society still need further exploration. The social space

[44] Lee Shai Weissbach, "Oeuvre Industrielle, Oeuvre Morale: The Sociétés de Patronage of Nineteenth-Century France," *French Historical Studies* 15, no. 1 (1987): 99–120.

[45] Christine Adams, *Poverty, Charity, and Motherhood: Maternal Societies in Nineteenth-Century France* (Champaign, IL, 2010).

[46] Carol E. Harrison, "The Unsociable Frenchman: Associations and Democracy in Historical Perspective," *Tocqueville Review* 27 (1996): 37–56; Harrison, *The Bourgeois Citizen in Nineteenth-Century France: Gender, Sociability, and the Uses of Emulation* (Oxford, 1999).

[47] Jacqueline Caille, *Hôpitaux et charité publique à Narbonne au Moyen Age* (Toulouse, 1977).

[48] Susan E. Dinan, "Motivations for Charity in Early Modern France," in Safley, *Reformation of Charity*, 183.

[49] Katrin Schultheiss, "Gender and the Limits of Anticlericalism: The Secularization of Hospital Nursing in France, 1880–1914," *French History* 12 (1998): 229–45.

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that these organizations created, whether Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish, has been constantly underestimated even though they redefined the role of French values at home and abroad.[50] As Lisa Moses Leff has shown, for instance, the Alliance Israélite Universelle, created in 1860, defined a very French universalism for Jews worldwide.[51] The role of the state in rethinking social bonds and links of solidarity has also been revised to emphasize the greater role played by "think tanks" and private initiatives.[52]

Ultimately, what a broader history of charity and humanitarian aid offers is the possibility of investigating afresh the supposed limits of civil society in France and the position of the state in French life throughout the ages. That this story still needs to be written may well be due to historians' reluctance to engage seriously with the motivations and micropractices of gift givers.

## Giving: A Historical Process?

In the Middle Ages, those who decided to dedicate themselves to working in a leprosarium often claimed in charters that they intended "to serve God and his poor rather than vain glory in this world."[53] Historians have viewed such statements with skepticism, not only because of their formulaic nature but also because of the selfless intentions they purport. Moreover, one of the recent historiographical preoccupations has been to make sense of precisely why at different points in history women and men have given their property and/or of themselves to help the less fortunate. During the Enlightenment, a distinction was drawn between charity and *bienfaisance*, a term coined by the Abbé de Saint-Pierre and popularized by Voltaire. Traditional charity was viewed as stemming solely from the giver's concern with his or her own salvation (as opposed to the recipient's material or spiritual state)

[50] This debate has been particularly fruitful in the reevaluation of the Catholic contribution to literacy in France. See Sarah Curtis, "Supply and Demand: Religious Schooling in Nineteenth-Century France," *History of Education Quarterly* 39 (1999): 51–72; Curtis, *Educating the Faithful: Religion, Schooling, and Society in Nineteenth-Century France* (DeKalb, IL, 2000); Raymond Grew, Patrick J. Harrigan, and James Whitney, "The Availability of Schooling in Nineteenth-Century France," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 14 (1983): 25–63; and Raymond Grew and Patrick J. Harrigan, "The Catholic Contribution to Universal Schooling in France, 1850–1906," *Journal of Modern History* 57 (1985): 211–47.

[51] Lisa Moses Leff, *Sacred Bonds of Solidarity: The Rise of Jewish Internationalism in Nineteenth-Century France* (Stanford, CA, 2006), 158–61.

[52] Sanford Elwitt, "Social Reform and Social Order in Late Nineteenth-Century France: The Musée Social and Its Friends," *French Historical Studies* 11, no. 3 (1980): 431–51; Janet Horne, *A Social Laboratory for Modern France: The Musée Social and the Rise of the Welfare State* (Durham, NC, 2002).

[53] François-Olivier Touati, "Les groupes des laïcs dans les hôpitaux et les léproseries au Moyen Age," in *Les mouvances laïques des ordres religieux*, ed. Nicole Bouter (Saint-Etienne, 1996), 160.

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and thus associated with *égoïsme*, whereas *bienfaisance* was regarded as a more pure, selfless form of altruism, one stripped of religious values.[54] Some of the recent historiography on charity seems to echo this rather polemical eighteenth-century distinction or, for that matter, the later Foucauldian paradigm in which poor relief institutions such as hospitals were created as instruments of containment for purposes of study, reeducation, or simple social control.[55]

While some scholars continue to subscribe to these models, many have moved away from the "homo economicus" model, in which it is assumed that humans always act in "rational self-interest"; perhaps under the influence of behavioral economics and game theory, historians have recently displayed an interest in the role of emotions, altruistic motives, and "moral sentiments."[56] This is particularly reflected in scholarship on the motivations underlying charitable work. Thomas Max Safley, for instance, argues that a desire to police the poor and a genuine concern for their material and spiritual well-being were by no means mutually exclusive in early modern Europe.[57] The reasons for working in medieval hospitals were likewise complex and could include a desire both to assist the sick poor and to obtain greater material security for oneself, whether or not one had the status of a full-fledged sister/brother or that of a *donata/donatus*, a hospital boarder.[58]

Historians of charity have also been keenly interested in situating the practice of (and discourses about) charity in particular contexts. As an integral part of the social, cultural, and institutional landscape, charity at times proved a divisive force, and a number of studies on the politics of charity have emerged: they deal with the conflicts that erupted between hospitals and parishes over matters such as burial rights; the tensions that arose between the French crown and local charitable organizations; and the competition between charitable groups and religious institutions (monasteries, friaries, parishes) over largesse.[59]

54 Jones, *Charity and Bienfaisance*, 2–3.

55 Teofilo F. Ruiz, for example, has argued that there was no genuine charitable spirit in the Middle Ages. Rather, medieval donors used the poor as instruments of their own salvation (*From Heaven to Earth: The Reordering of Castillian Society, 1150–1350* [Princeton, NJ, 2004]). Miri Rubin has emphasized charity's function as a means of social and economic advancement for donors (*Charity and Community in Medieval Cambridge* [Cambridge, 1987]). For a discussion of these and other interpretations, see James William Brodman, *Charity and Religion in Medieval Europe* (Washington, DC, 2009).

56 See, e.g., Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (Edinburgh, 2004).

57 Safley, *Reformation of Charity*.

58 Charles de Miramon, *Les "donnés" au Moyen Age: Une forme de vie religieuse laïque (v. 1180–v. 1500)* (Paris, 1999); Touati, "Les groupes des laïcs."

59 McHugh, *Hospital Politics*; Elizabeth Rothrauff, "Charity in Medieval Community: Politics, Piety, and Poor Relief in Pisa, 1257–1312" (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1994);

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Historians of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century France have also compared the nature of Catholic and Protestant charity and have emphasized some of the similarities and differences in charitable giving.[60] Kathryn Norberg finds that while seventeenth-century Protestants tended to give less than Catholics, they gave at a higher rate than Catholics. And while Catholics tied their soteriological self-interest to public welfare, Norberg rightly rejects as "simplistic and naive" the notion that Catholic charity was somehow inherently selfish and indiscriminate while Protestant charity was rational and discriminating. Both Natalie Zemon Davis and Norberg maintain that early modern Catholics and Protestants shared a genuine concern with helping the poor. Although this special issue deals with historical movements aimed at alleviating suffering, it should be noted that ever since the pioneering work of the French historian Michel Mollat in the 1970s, work advanced by his many students, social historians have shown a reluctance to study institutions, preferring instead to uncover the lives of the poor "from below."[61] Other scholars have similarly sought to create a socioeconomic taxonomy of givers and recipients of aid.[62]

There remains a need, however, to examine how much social (and physical) distance separated givers and takers. How familiar were social welfare officials with the local poor they served? And how did the process of giving and receiving affect the social dynamic between different groups?[63] Did private and public benevolence help create a more tightly knit community, reinforcing solidarity between the poor and the nonpoor, or did it reaffirm hierarchies and deepen social divisions?

These questions are equally relevant for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. While a concern for the poor undoubtedly expanded and became more inclusive during this period, it also often remained very local and competitive.[64] Charitable work was reinvented after the revolution and reintegrated broader concerns with the impact of charities on social and political stability. From the late 1820s on the con-

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Daniel Hickey, *Local Hospitals in Ancien Régime France: Rationalization, Resistance, Renewal, 1530–1789* (Montreal, 1997).

[60] Kathryn Norberg, *Rich and Poor in Grenoble, 1600–1814* (Berkeley, CA, 1985); Natalie Zemon Davis, "Poor Relief, Humanism, and Heresy: The Case of Lyon," *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History* 5 (1968): 217–75.

[61] Mollat, *Etudes sur l'histoire de la pauvreté*; Mollat, *Poor in the Middle Ages*; Nicole Gonthier, *Lyon et ses pauvres au Moyen Age (1350–1500)* (Lyon, 1978).

[62] See, e.g., Cissie Fairchilds, *Poverty and Charity in Aix-en-Provence, 1640–1789* (Baltimore, MD, 1976).

[63] These issues are current ones in the field of psychology. See Paul Slovic, "'If I Look at the Mass I Will Never Act': Psychic Numbing and Genocide," *Judgment and Decision Making* 2, no. 2 (2007): 70–95; and Tehila Kogut and Ilana Ritov, "The 'Identified Victim' Effect: An Identified Group or Just a Single Individual?" *Journal of Behavioral Decision Making* 18, no. 3 (2005): 157–67.

[64] Rachel S. Fuchs, *Poor and Pregnant in Paris: Strategies for Survival in the Nineteenth Century* (Piscataway, NJ, 1992).

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cern with dependency grew in proportion to the rapid growth of urban populations. In the nineteenth century, religious institutions of every denomination thrived on the practical relief brought to particular categories of recipients, which were demarcated with increasing specificity. Yet this normative drive to support orphanages of various kinds, charities for cancer sufferers, and the like was not the monopoly of any religious organization. Undoubtedly a cross-fertilization of practices occurred, and secularists could and did have their own social networks and charities. Furthermore, these networks could support wider and more universal concerns while drawing on the same pool of habitual benefactors.

Their work disrupted yet also reinvigorated by the challenge of the French Revolution, missionaries relied on local resources and infused preexisting networks with a greater sense of the global issues that required attention. In this sense charity was already inscribed in a global economy of exchanges and gifts.[65] The nineteenth century witnessed the renewal of French missionary work and its expansion in the Middle East (Lebanon, Syria, Egypt) and East Asia (Tonkin, Annam, China) from the early nineteenth century and in Africa especially after the founding of the White Fathers in 1868.[66] This missionary revival was rich in martyrs and charities and opened up new avenues for gendered religious activism.[67] Orphanages, dispensaries, schools, and leper and fever hospitals raised their funds in France through existing charities. This missionary work and fund-raising for disasters abroad often reinforced local charities and gave them a new sense of meaning. The raising of funds for orphans in China or Algeria relied on the vitality of religious networks at home. Beginning in 1843, for instance, the Oeuvre de la Sainte-Enfance regularly collected small sums to buy Chinese and other "pagan" orphans throughout the world.[68] Authorized fund-raising in church, often during the Offertory, both brought in money and was supported by regular publications that fed an imagined community along the lines defined by Benedict Anderson. By 1933 the organization claimed to be financing part or all of the education

[65] Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century historians of charity were not conversant with the linguistic subtleties of humanitarian vocabulary and tended to merge philanthropy, charity, and institutional work. See, e.g., Léon Lallemand, *Histoire de la charité*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1910–12).

[66] Bernard de Vaulx, *Histoire des missions catholiques françaises* (Paris, 1951); François Renault, *Le Cardinal Lavigerie: L'Eglise, l'Afrique et la France* (Paris, 1992).

[67] Elizabeth Dufourcq, *Les aventurières de Dieu: Trois siècles d'histoire missionnaire française* (Paris, 2009); Sarah Curtis, *Civilizing Habits: Women Missionaries and the Revival of French Empire* (New York, 2010).

[68] Armand Mattelart, *Invention de la communication* (Paris, 1997), 206; Henrietta Harrison, "'A Penny for the Little Chinese': The French Holy Childhood Association in China, 1843–1951," *American Historical Review* 113 (2008): 72–92.

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of 1,370,224 children throughout the world.[69] The new theological groups of *conférences*, such as the Conférence de Saint Vincent de Paul, founded by Frédéric Ozanam in 1833, provided new fund-raising opportunities and could patronize one or several orphans.[70] The habitual collection of alms in church was often combined with special events, guest preachers, entertainment, and additional fund-raising. For the Catholic Church, the investment in the social at the turn of the century, following the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, may have built on stronger traditions than historians have assumed.[71]

Some of the continuities between the nineteenth century and the early modern and premodern eras may well have derived from sustained reflection and the revival of theological interest in charity rather than simply from the resumption of giving practices. An ideology of engagement, so ingrained in the Catholic faith, spurred continuous attempts to reach out to new social groups. The Jeunesse Ouvrière Catholique in the 1930s or the Mission de France in the 1940s sought to engage head-on with new political forces, while missionaries explicitly related their work to social work.[72] This combination of missionary spirit and charitable work took on a particular color in the postwar era, particularly when social claims came to the fore with a new urgency. The work done by Abbé Pierre in the 1950s and 1960s was framed by charitable continuities, missionary revivalism, and new humanitarian ideals.[73] This particular synthesis fit in between the great secularist-religious debate that polarized French humanitarian efforts between *secours populaire*, inspired by the Communist Party, and *secours catholique*, part of the Caritas Internationalis family of Catholic NGOs.[74] These polarities, rooted in late ancien régime oppositions between secularists and religiously minded people, did not prevent the emergence of alter-

[69] Paul Lesourd, *Histoire générale de l'oeuvre pontificale de la Sainte Enfance depuis un siècle* (Paris, 1947), 64.

[70] Bertrand Taithe, "Algerian Orphans and Colonial Christianity in Algeria, 1866–1939," *French History* 20 (2006): 240–59.

[71] Philippe Levillain, *Albert de Mun, catholicisme français et catholicisme romain, du syllabus au ralliement* (Rome, 1983); Jeanne Caron, *Le sillon et la démocratie chrétienne, 1894–1910* (Paris, 1967).

[72] Union Missionnaire du Clergé, *Le service social dans les colonies françaises d'Afrique Noire* (Paris, 1945); Pierre Pierrard, Michel Launay, and Rolande Tempré, *La JOC: Regards d'historiens* (Paris, 1984); Oscar Cole-Arnal, "Shaping Young Proletarians into Militant Christians: The Pioneer Phase of the JOC in France and Quebec," *Journal of Contemporary History* 32 (1997): 509–26; Tangi Cavalin and Nathalie Viet-Depaule, *Une histoire de la mission de France: La riposte missionnaire, 1941–2002* (Paris, 2007); Jean Vinatier, *Le cardinal Suhard: L'évêque du renouveau missionnaire en France* (Paris, 1983); Vinatier, *Le cardinal Liénart et la mission de France* (Paris, 1978); Charles-Edouard Harang, *Quand les jeunes catholiques découvrent le monde: Les mouvements catholiques de jeunesse de la décolonisation à la coopération, 1920–1991* (Paris, 2010).

[73] Axelle Brodiez, *Emmaüs et l'abbé Pierre* (Paris, 2009).

[74] See esp. Axelle Brodiez, *Le secours populaire français, 1945–2000: Du communisme à l'humanitaire* (2006); and Luc Dubrulle, *Monseigneur Rodhain et le secours catholique: Une figure sociale de la charité* (Paris, 2008).

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natives that were neither militantly secular nor clearly religious. In fact, some of the recent studies of even avowedly secular organizations, such as Médecins sans Frontières, have proved that religious beliefs strongly motivated many volunteers, even though these individuals were rarely explicit about their faith or spiritual needs.[75] Furthermore, the philosophical nature of these debates suggests that, far from being a small part of the political arena monopolized by an overwhelmingly present state, the volunteering and charitable sectors are sites of open contest and competitive practices, suggesting the superabundance of civil society rather than its scarcity.

If much of this humanitarian activity is and was turned outward, it should not occlude the fact that France itself has been the site of humanitarian work from proselytes and charitable organizations often from the United States or the United Kingdom. As early as the 1870s, France was a territory for British and Swiss Protestant missionary work. The devastations of war from 1870 on have also invited benevolent interventions. The pioneers in this respect were the Quakers, who proposed to help rebuild the French countryside following the war in 1870–71.[76] When the French state seemed unequal to the task, some charitable interventions sought to tackle structural issues. The best-known example from the interwar and the postwar eras was the Rockefeller Foundation, which intervened in public health policy and science domains normally monopolized by the state. For instance, the foundation played a crucial role in the Office National d'Hygiène Sociale in national campaigns against tuberculosis.[77] This reveals that France not only has been a fountain of charitable giving but also has been intertwined in a complex web of exchanges that crisscross its society and interact with other traditions of giving, in particular, the missionary and humanitarian fields.

The authors of the articles in this issue engage forcefully with many of the themes we have outlined above. Thomas M. Adams's article traces the evolution of the notion of social protection—the protection

[75] See Johanna Siméant, "Socialisation catholique et biens de salut dans quatre ONG humanitairs françaises," *Mouvement social,* no. 227 (2009): 101–22; and Bruno Duriez, François Mabille, and Kathy Rousselet, eds., *Les ONG confessionnelles: Religions et action internationale* (Paris, 2007).

[76] William K. Sessions, *They Chose the Star: Updated Account of Quaker Relief Work in France, 1870–1875* (York, 1991); Horatius Bonart, *The White Fields of France; or, The Story of Mr. McCall's Mission to the Working Men of Paris and Lyons* (Whitefish, MT, 2009).

[77] See Judith Surkis, "Enemies Within: Venereal Disease and the Defense of French Masculinity between the Wars," in *French Masculinities: History, Culture, and Politics,* ed. Christopher E. Forth and Bertrand Taithe (Basingstoke, UK, 2007), 103–22; Lion Murard and Patrick Zylberman, "La mission Rockefeller en France et la création du comité national de défense contre la tuberculose (1917–23)," *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* 34 (1987): 257–81; and William H. Schneider, "War, Philanthropy, and the National Institute of Hygiene in France," *Minerva* 41 (2003): 1–23.

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from vulnerability and deprivation that the French state was thought to owe its citizens—as a universal right. While Adams calls the Revolution a crucial period in the conception of republican social rights, he points out that the rhetoric about the right to social protection was not realized (or even attempted in any serious way) on a practical level during this period, when forces continued to oppose the notion that charity and relief should be anything but local initiatives, left to voluntary associations and interested individuals.

Adams also finds that the conception of republican social rights was indebted to a cultural legacy of *bienfaisance* that stretched back to the policies of the statesman Turgot, the philosophes' writings about the state's responsibilities for dealing with inequality, and the ideas of the sixteenth-century humanist Vives, who anticipated many of the later notions about *bienfaisance* and the relationship between work and citizenship. A persistent theme in French history clearly has been the challenge of translating universalist ideals into social realities. Yet as Adams also shows, the universalist ideal of social protection has not been a monolithic or unchanging aspiration throughout French history. Rather, it has repeatedly been adapted to particular political and social contexts, whether in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen in 1793, the social insurance laws of 1928 and 1930, or Pierre Laroque's attempt to create a comprehensive social security system in 1945, reflecting a continuous evolution in the notion of what constitutes social protection and its relative importance in French society.

Whereas Adams traces the history of the idea of social protection across many centuries, Naomi Andrews examines the tensions in romantic socialist thought about colonialism and empire during a specific period, the 1830s and 1840s. She asks how romantic socialism's "humanitarian agenda" could coexist with its "unequivocal endorsement of colonial expansion." By analyzing the writings of Constantin Pecqueur, Etienne Cabet, and Jean Reynaud, Andrews surveys some of the ways that the romantic socialists rationalized the subjection of colonized peoples, particularly in Algeria: colonialism held out the promise of ending intra-European war; the French people were a "chosen" and morally redemptive nation; the nature of French settler colonialism was benign; Algeria was an ideal place for the associationist model of land ownership, meaning there would be no inequality of wealth or class conflict. While the romantic socialists may have had a vision of a unified humanity, Andrews sees them as having clearly privileged their own French, Christian society. Yet she argues that they saw no contradiction or moral dilemmas in their "humanitarian" model of colonialism. Indeed, they believed that humanitarianism not only justified but in some cases necessitated French colonialism and military conquest.

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Shifting from "humanitarian" defenses of colonialism to "humanitarian" critiques, J. P. Daughton examines a change in how the French regarded the colonial experience during the interwar years. By analyzing literary and journalistic accounts in tandem with the efforts of the League of Nations and the International Labor Organization (ILO) to document colonial human rights abuses, Daughton brings together "that space where cultural and diplomatic history meet." It has been argued that the experience of World War I brought about a change in how the French regarded the colonial experience. But Daughton also shows that the dissemination of articles, books, and reports by people like Albert Londres, Léon Werth, Paul Monet, André Gide, and Roland Dorgelès made people aware of the shocking behavior of the French abroad and forced the French people to put themselves in the colonial subjects' shoes. In addition to the investigative journalism about and firsthand accounts of the humiliation and suffering of colonial subjects, the ILO, founded to work on issues of social justice and labor conditions in European countries, began investigating the matter of colonial forced labor. The ILO documented the practice of colonial forced labor and began expanding its international mandate to include the eradication of a wide range of human rights abuses linked to colonial rule. As Daughton points out, criticisms of colonial abuses were met with stiff resistance by defenders of the status quo. Furthermore, those who expressed compassion for the colonial subjects were not necessarily critical of the colonial enterprise per se. Yet Daughton sees in the interwar period the emergence of an individual human rights agenda and the awakening of a new moral consciousness in France.

This theme is further developed in the final article for a more contemporary period. As Eleanor Davey reminds us in her essay, the 1980s also witnessed a new global awakening to the need for humanitarian mobilizations, particularly in the case of Ethiopia. Davey is principally concerned with how French humanitarians framed their debates with each other about the role of NGOs in the Third World. With the Cambodia campaign of 1980, the creation of the Fondation Liberté sans Frontières (LSF), and the decline of *tiers-mondisme,* this period is often viewed as marking a departure from the radical politics of the preceding era. But Davey suggests that this view largely resulted from the humanitarian debates of the 1980s that set up various rhetorical binaries, casting as mutually exclusive, for example, humanitarianism and politics (or emergency relief action and long-term development). By deconstructing these binaries, Davey shows that this rhetoric clouded a far more complex reality. There may have been anxiety and internal division among and within NGOs such as Médecins sans Frontières over the dangers of politicizing humanitarianism, but Davey argues

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that this did not translate into a sudden reluctance to engage in the politics of *tiers-mondisme*. Indeed, the LSF has been called an "ideological war machine" precisely because of its role in politicizing humanitarian action. And despite the LSF's attacks, *tiers-mondisme* continued to be relevant, according to Davey, as did the humanitarians' use of public denunciation (*témoignage*).

All four articles are concerned, to some extent, with the history of French ideas and attitudes, whether the notion of social protection, attitudes toward the colonial project, or debates about the costs and benefits of various forms of humanitarian aid. Two of the four articles, roughly a century apart in the time period covered, deal with quite divergent attitudes toward French colonialism. The mobilization of public opinion is a central concern in both of the articles on twentieth-century topics, whether the newspapers, novels, and reports of the interwar years or the *sans-frontièriste* movement's use of the media during the 1980s for what Bernard Kouchner called "the law of hype."[78] While politics certainly play a prominent role in all four essays, especially in Davey's, it is also notable how absent the French state generally is (except in Adams's article on protections that the state supposedly owed its citizens), underlining a central theme of this introduction. All four articles provide valuable insight into how French moral perceptions have evolved, how public opinion has at various times been mobilized, and how debates have been framed about moral obligations and competing humanitarian objectives. In this way, these articles provide a window on the changing universalist visions of France's moral mission and proper place in the world.

[78] Bernard Kouchner, *Le malheur des autres* (Paris, 1991), 193–212.

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