**ABSTRACTS**

**Helena Rosenblatt**, On the Intellectual Sources of Laïcité: Rousseau, Constant, and the Debates about a National Religion

Recent scholarship has uncovered laïcité’s Protestant sources by focusing attention on its late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century advocates. This article argues that the intellectual sources of laïcité stretch further back than this, namely to the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) and Benjamin Constant (1767-1830). These two thinkers are rarely seen as allies. However, an examination of their views on religion reveals a surprising complicity, attributable in large part to their liberal Protestant sympathies. Benjamin Constant was well placed to understand and appreciate Rousseau’s “Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar” and his chapter “On Civil Religion” in the *Social Contract*. Moreover, Constant had observed firsthand the distortion of Rousseau's views by the French revolutionaries. This essay shows that Constant’s writings on religion were those of a disciple of Rousseau, who wished to clarify and disseminate ideas that would prove foundational for the modern notion of laïcité.

*Keywords:* Benjamin Constant, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, laïcité, civil religion, Protestantism

**Fabienne Randaxhe**, Religion, politique et régulation juridique aux États-Unis [in French]

From a French perspective, the relationship between the state and religion in the United States may seem paradoxical. On the one hand, the American nation was the first one to have established, by constitutional means, a separation between religious bodies and the political realm. On the other hand, religious and political spheres in the US still seem to overlap to some extent. While French approaches tend to regard US laïcité as uncertain and incomplete, this article discusses whether laïcité is in the US incomplete or aware of tensions to be lessened among religious, political and social forces. I focus on legal regulation and consider the notion of accommodation as a particular form of legal laïcité.

*Keywords:* religion, state, law, accommodation, secularism, United States

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Jean-Paul Willaime, Religion et politique en France dans le contexte de la construction européenne [in French]

Strongly marked by the weight of the past, the French approach to State-Religion-Society relations has distinct qualities, and especially a strong confrontational and emotional dimension. This essay address the evolution of these relations and their tensions by focusing on three subjects that make manifest the relationship between politics and religion in important ways, namely, schools, sects, and Islam. The arena of the school is especially significant in three respects: the link between public and private schools; the question of what should be taught about religion, and the display of religious expression by students. The essay considers these matters within the context of wider transformations in religion (secularization) and politics (disenchantment and changes in the state’s role in society). It concludes by situating recent developments in the context of globalization and especially Europeanization.

Keywords: France, Religion, Politics, laïcité, Europe

Gérard Grunberg, Les élections françaises de 2007 [in French]

The 2007 presidential elections have been the most important in France since 1981 because they provoked ruptures in the way the state and the French political system function. These ruptures, which this essay explores, include: the structural advantage the Right now has over the Left in national elections; the extension of the president’s power and role in the regime; the transformation of the French political parties system into bipartism; and, finally, evolution inside the two major French parties due not only to the personality, ideas and choices of their respective candidates but also to the growing role of the president in the regime and its effects.

Keywords: France, elections, presidential, legislatives, 2007

Pascal Perrineau, Analyse de l’élection présidentielle des 22 avril et 6 mai et des élections législatives des 10 et 17 juin 2007: une rupture politique? [in French]

Nicolas Sarkozy’s victory in the 2007 French presidential elections represents a true rupture: rupture with years of political apathy, rupture with what was an escalating rise of political protest, rupture with a “law” that since 1981 seemed to require that every outgoing majority be beaten. Sarkozy’s electoral victory was substantial. It was built on a notion that what the French were looking for was a strong sense of direction, and it gave rise to a dynamic of striking change right after the election (a political opening to the left, a shift in presidential style, disarray in the Socialist Party, and the marginalization of the National Front).

Keywords: France, presidential election, legislative election, vote, Sarkozy
Frédérique Matonti, La singularité française: la campagne présidentielle de Ségolène Royal [in French]

For the first time, a woman has come close to becoming the president of France. This essay examines the conditions that account for why Segolène Royal was chosen as Socialist candidate for the presidency. These conditions were above all political and were linked to key features of the Socialist Party. But her nomination also needs to be understood in the context of the Socialist Party. To an important extent this law reinforced the gendered order, and Ségolène Royal’s candidacy emerged readily in the wake of the law. The essay goes on to analyze the candidate’s campaign. Before and during the primary campaign, the general framework was conducive to her ascendancy. But, after the primaries, critics were sharp: Royal was portrayed as ever less competent. Although there is a sociological basis for the voting of 2007, misogyny also played a part in Ségolène Royal’s defeat.

*Keywords:* French presidential election, Ségolène Royal, woman politician, media representation, parité

William Miles, Once Again, From a Distance: Martinique and the French Presidential Election of 2007

In May 2007, Martinique did not follow the rest of France in endorsing Nicolas Sarkozy in his bid to become president. Along with the other overseas French states Guadeloupe and Réunion (but not Guyane), Martinique supported rather the Socialist candidate Ségolène Royal. Martinique thereby distanced itself from the rest of the République—as it had done in 1995—by backing a left-wing presidential candidate rather than the ultimately victorious right-wing one. 2007 represents the converse of 1981, when Martinique voted for the rightist candidate but France as a whole elected a leftist (François Mitterrand). Over time, being at electoral odds with the nation as a whole has become less troubling for Martinicans: independence, which most islanders oppose, is no longer seen at stake in presidential outcomes. On the other hand, Martinicans have become progressively resigned to their peripheral status within French presidential politics.

*Keywords:* Martinique, French elections, French presidency, postcolonialism, DOM (French overseas states)