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Michael Green, *The Huguenot Jean Rou (1638 – 1711): Scholar, educator, civil servant*. Paris: Honoré Champion, 2015. Collection Vie des Huguenots, No. 69. 479 pp. Appendices, illustrations, bibliography, and index. 95€ (pb). ISBN 978-2-7453-2758-1.

Review by Diane C. Margolf, Colorado State University

History is filled with individuals who were renowned, admired, and prominent during their lives, but whose fame and significance receded over time until they all but disappeared from view. According to Michael Green, Jean Rou illustrates this pattern. Rou was a respected member of western Europe's Republic of Letters in the late seventeenth century, and the publication of Rou's memoirs in 1857 sparked a brief revival of interest in and controversy about his life and work. Since that time, however, Rou has been consigned to historical oblivion. The purpose of Green's book, then, is to re-examine Rou's life as recounted in his memoirs and to re-evaluate his contributions to the history of the Huguenots, especially in the areas of employment and education. How did Rou turn his intellectual interests into a career as a man of letters, assuming that such a "career" existed during the seventeenth century? What connections can be identified between Rou's writings about education and his experiences as a private tutor to young men in several aristocratic families in France, England, and the United Provinces? Finally, what do Rou's memoirs reveal about the unique or representative qualities of his life?

Green defines his study of Jean Rou as "a historical biography with an emphasis on context—the life of the biographee and his or her surroundings" (p. 22). The book's organization clearly reflects this approach. The introduction summarizes the book's purpose, offers a brief overview of Huguenot history in France and the United Provinces during Rou's lifetime, describes the sources to be analyzed, and indicates the research questions to be addressed. Chapter one provides an overview of Jean Rou's life and career, focusing on several key moments in his development as a man of letters. Born in Paris and educated at Saumur, Rou initially followed in his father's footsteps and became a lawyer in the Parlement of Paris. After about five years, however, he left that profession to devote himself to the study of literature, languages, and history. His *Tables de l'histoire universelle* constituted his most important work, albeit one that had a mixed impact on his life. The first volume won him praise and recognition when it was presented to the Dauphin and the King of France in 1672, whereas the second volume led to his being imprisoned in the Bastille from November 1675 to April 1676. Following his release, Rou gained employment as a private tutor, first in France and England and then in the United Provinces, where he settled in 1680. The pinnacle of his professional life as a Huguenot émigré turned Dutch citizen came in 1689, when he was appointed translator of French and Latin for the States General, a position he held until his death in 1711.

In subsequent chapters of his book, Green explores different elements of Rou's experiences in more detail. Chapter two focuses on Rou's involvement in networks of patronage and intellectual exchange among members of Europe's Republic of Letters. Green draws upon the work of Norbert Elias, Pierre Bourdieu, and Sharon Kettering to interpret the various forms of "capital" that were evident in Rou's

dealings with his patrons, employers, and friends. In chapter three, Green analyzes what it meant to be an *homme de lettres* in seventeenth-century Europe, and why Rou was recognized as such by some of his more famous contemporaries, including Pierre Bayle and Pierre Jurieu. Green also reviews many of Rou's published and unpublished works on history, religion, and linguistics, as well as Rou's translations of Diego Saavedra Faxardo's *Le prince chrestien et politique* and introduction to Juan de Mariana's *L'Histoire d'Espagne*. He notes that through these works, Rou gained recognition and legitimacy as a scholar. Rou's scholarly engagement also contributed to a more practical pursuit: work that would allow him to support himself and his family.

Chapters four and five examine Rou's ideas about education in conjunction with his employment in that field, specifically as a private tutor. Here Green attempts to link Rou's writings about education, including his *Projet dressé pour l'éducation d'un jeune seigneur*, written ca. 1692, with the ideas, publications, and practices of those who influenced education in his day, including Desiderius Erasmus, John Locke, and Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet. One purpose of this analysis is "to position Jean Rou within the inter-confessional 'brotherhood' of educators of his time" (p. 268), while another goal is to explore the possibility that Rou's was an explicitly Huguenot educational program. Green concludes, however, that Rou's curriculum and approach as an educator were shaped above all by the preferences of his employers, that is, by the parents of his pupils. In chapter five, the author recounts Rou's experiences as a private tutor in England (for the Earl of Sunderland's children), in France (for the young Counts of Wittgenstein and the Earl of Northumberland), and in the United Provinces (for the Van Aerssen van Sommelsdijk children and the Earl of Portland's son). According to Green, Rou obtained these positions not only through the recommendations of friends and patrons, but also because he possessed the scholarly reputation, French language skills, and religious affiliation with Calvinism that his employers desired. Yet, readers will also note that Rou lost at least two of his tutoring positions due to conflicts with his pupils' mothers, whose influence in their children's education apparently outweighed Rou's qualifications.

In his conclusion, Green suggests that Jean Rou's life was a story of success. Rou sought to become a man of letters, and he won renown and acceptance by his peers even if modern scholars have tended to overlook his contributions to seventeenth-century intellectual life. He overcame hardships throughout his life—imprisonment, emigration, and financial struggles—to pursue his goals, including steady employment to support his family. As Green himself acknowledges, however, this may be the story that Rou wanted to tell his children when he wrote his memoirs. *The Huguenot Jean Rou* reflects exhaustive research in archives, libraries, and online resources. Modern approaches to the study of biography, patronage, education, and aristocratic household organization are diligently applied to the text of Rou's memoirs. Yet readers are left with many unanswered questions about Jean Rou's life, career, and historical significance.

The main reason for this is the book's organization. Although the strategy of outlining Jean Rou's life at the outset and then studying its components separately in subsequent chapters seems promising, it ultimately tends to undermine the reader's ability to understand and appreciate Rou's life and work over time. For example, chapter four's description of Rou's educational ideas and writings is informative but disconnected from the detailed account of Rou's own education, as recounted in the first chapter. In addition, the analysis of patronage and social networks in chapter two is detached from chapter five's discussion of Rou's educational employment, where similar issues swirl around his relationships to patrons, friends, and employers. Indeed, the contents of chapter five may present a challenge for readers who want to follow how Rou gained (and lost) various positions as a private tutor: instead of appearing in chronological order, these experiences are grouped according to categories of students and Rou's teaching responsibilities for them. Constant reference to the timetable of Rou's life in Appendix 1 is needed to sort out Rou's movements from one appointment to another.

Finally, Green asserts that after his marriage in 1669 to Louise Elle-Ferdinand, Rou strove constantly to support his wife and children, adapting to changing circumstances in order to achieve this goal. Although Rou apparently wrote very little about his family in his memoirs, his correspondence and other documents offer valuable morsels of information. In particular, Rou's wife apparently advocated for his release from prison and managed his affairs in France when he left for the United Provinces until she joined him there several years later. Yet, these details are scattered in different parts of the book, making it difficult to grasp fully the nature of Rou's financial struggles or the way in which concern for his family influenced Rou's choices. The overall result is that the historical context tends to overwhelm the biography. Put another way, Jean Rou becomes lost in his surroundings, instead of the scholarly analysis of his social networks, writings, and activities illuminating his life.

This is unfortunate, since Green's book offers tantalizing glimpses of Rou as a complex, even colorful person. For example, Rou's first encounter with religious persecution occurred at age nine, when two Catholic relatives killed his father. The *Tables de l'histoire universelle* was arguably his most important work, not only because of its ambitious and innovative approach to comparative history, but also because it brought him money, fame, and endorsement at the French royal court by Bossuet and the Duke de Montausier, a Huguenot convert to Catholicism who became one of Rou's most important and loyal patrons. When Rou was later arrested because the second volume of this work was published without royal permission, he claimed in his memoirs that the true reason for his fall from grace was the king's belief that the work was "heretical and anti-Catholic" (p. 79). Montausier obtained his release from prison, but Rou refused to revise the *Tables* and failed to recoup his financial losses from the original publication. The French crown's condemnation did, however, gain him support and sympathy from fellow Huguenots, while the erudition displayed in the *Tables* consolidated his scholarly reputation and helped him in his later endeavors as a tutor. As Green points out, Rou left France for the United Provinces five years before the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and so was not technically a refugee from religious persecution. Yet, the consequences of his Huguenot identity, combined with his intellectual ambitions, clearly drove many of Rou's actions and decisions.

Rou's identity as a respected scholar, author, and teacher also did not make him immune to the darker elements of envy, insult, and polemic in the Republic of Letters. According to Green, Rou may have blamed Bossuet for failing to intercede amid the scandal surrounding the publication of the *Tables'* second volume. Ten years later, in 1686, Rou had his revenge by anonymously publishing *La seduction érudite ou Lettres de Mr. l'Evêque de Meaux*, a collection of letters in which Bossuet and Rou—writing under an assumed name—debated the legitimacy of Roman Catholic and Reformed religion, as well as the king's recent revocation of the Edict of Nantes. In another controversy surrounding the *Tables*, Rou suspected the English scholar Francis Tallents of plagiarizing his work, though Green notes that the *Tables* may simply have influenced Tallents. Conversely, Rou may have published under his own name the French translation of Faxardo's *Idea de un príncipe político christiano* done by Rou's friend Claude Le Petit, who was publicly executed in 1662. Finally, Green indicates that although Rou successfully cultivated patrons in the United Provinces who assisted him in obtaining the position of translator for the States General, Rou believed that he was still perceived by many as an undistinguished foreigner who did not deserve such advancement.

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing readers of *The Huguenot Jean Rou* will be the one that Michael Green has attempted to meet: to assess Rou's historical significance based on his memoirs, and to derive a larger meaning from the details. This challenge is further complicated by numerous copyediting errors in the book, as well as extended quotations in Dutch, Latin, and French that have not been translated for readers who may be unfamiliar with all of those languages. But thanks to Green's copious research and careful application of methodology, many elements of Rou's activities are analyzed and explained.

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