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[See also Shugendō.]

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[For related discussion of the Books of Enoch, see Apocalypse, article on Jewish Apocalypticism to the Rabbinic Period.]

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STEVEN D. FRAADE

ENTHUSIASM. The history of enthusiasm is as much the history of the word as of the phenomenon it signifies. In the English-speaking world, the word came to prominence as a technical religious term in the seventeenth century, used always in reference to religious experience, and, for the most part, as a term of denigration. For about two hundred years, the usual usage was to denote ill-regulated religious emotion or, more specifically, fancied inspiration, the false or deluded claim to have received divine communications or private revelations. In the course of the last hundred years the technical religious meaning has been almost completely superseded by the more positive meaning now current (ardent zeal for a person, principle, or cause), though unfavorable overtones still cling to the derivative term, *enthusiast*, as connoting an impractical visionary or self-deluded person. It is, however, the technical religious term with which we are here concerned.

A discussion of enthusiasm is also a discussion of the word, in the important sense that disputes over its ap-

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STEVEN D. FRAADE (1987)
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ENTHUSIASM. The history of enthusiasm is as much the history of the word as of the phenomenon it signifies. In the English-speaking world, the word came to prominence as a technical religious term in the seventeenth century, used always in reference to religious experience, and, for the most part, as a term of denigration. For about two hundred years, the usual usage was to denote ill-regulated religious emotion or, more specifically, fancied inspiration, the false or deluded claim to have received divine communications or private revelations. In the course of the last hundred years the technical religious meaning has been almost completely superseded by the more positive meaning now current (ardent zeal for a person, principle, or cause), though unfavorable overtones still cling to the derivative term, *enthusiast*, as connoting an impractical visionary or self-deluded person. It is, however, the technical religious term with which we are here concerned.

A discussion of enthusiasm is also a discussion of the word, in the important sense that disputes over its applicability were also disputes over the propriety and validity of any claims to divine inspiration and revelation. For those hostile to religion as such—or to any save a strictly rational religion—enthusiasm was no different from superstition, a charge which could be brought against the Jewish prophets of old, the apostle Paul, or Muhammad with as much justice as against John Wesley (1703–1791). For members of the established church who were fearful of schism, enthusiasm was another name for sectarianism, and as such could be used of Francis of Assisi or Dominic, or "papists" in general, as well as the followers of George Fox (1624–1691) or Madame Guyon (1648–1717). For those suspicious of any display of emotion, particularly in religion, *enthusiasm* was synonymous with fanaticism. Only in the nineteenth century, under the influence of the Romantic revival, did a more positive