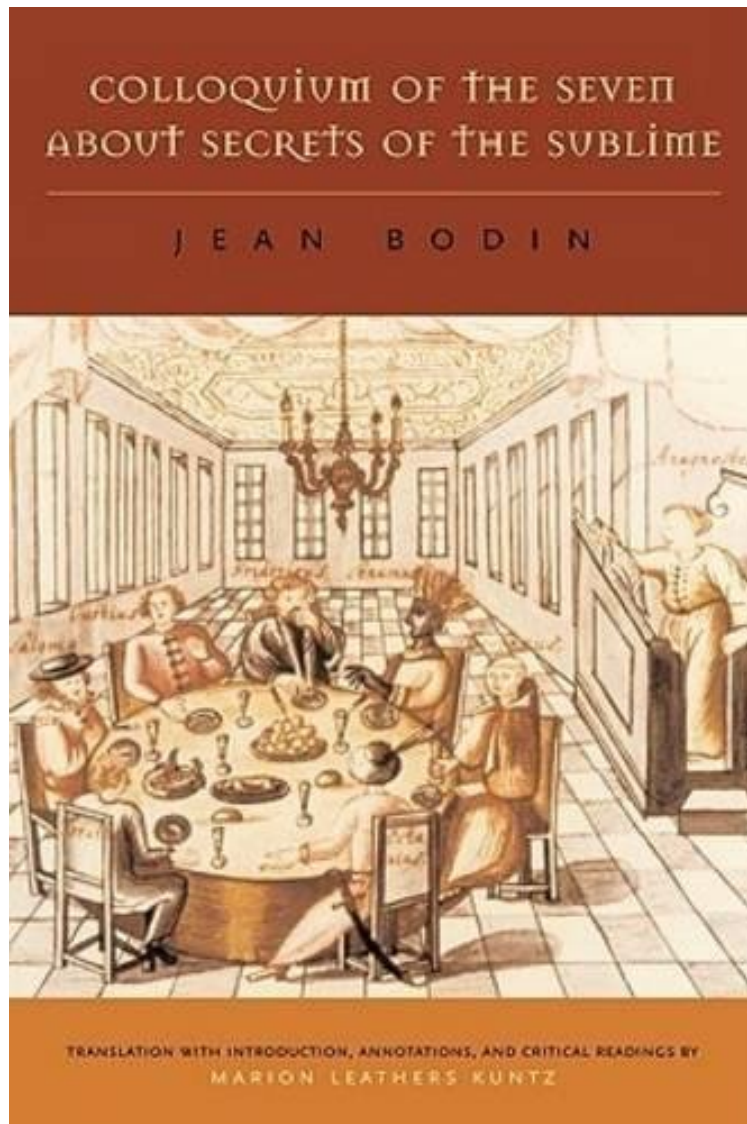


# Colloquium of the Seven About Secrets of the Sublime

Jean Bodin

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#2691554 in Books Penn State University Press 2008-10-28 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.00 x 1.64 x 6.00, 1.90 #File Name: 0271034351592 pages | File size: 79.Mb

**Jean Bodin : Colloquium of the Seven About Secrets of the Sublime** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Colloquium of the Seven About Secrets of the Sublime:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Fascinating Work of Religious Dialogue / Modern Readers May Both Profit and Smile By DonL2507I've always enjoyed writing that presents multiple points of view, and varied arguments, in the form of a dialogue, particularly when all points of view, especially those viewpoints to which you may be inherently opposed, are compellingly argued. When I recently became aware of Jean Boden's "Colloquium of the Seven", written in 1588, where seven intelligent and erudite representatives of seven points of view concerning

religion debate various religious and theological issues, I had to purchase this new translation. We have a Catholic (the genial host), a Jew, a "Mohammedan" (representing the "Ishmaelites"), a "natural philosopher", a skeptic, a Lutheran, and a Calvinist extolling doctrines and aspects of their own religions, and criticizing aspects of the others, sometimes quite strongly, but all amid a generally congenial and respectful atmosphere. Bodin's dialogue is a remarkable effort in promoting religious toleration for its time, an era that had recently witnessed wars between Catholics and Calvinists in France and the infamous St. Bartholomew's Massacre, as well as the Turkish invasion into the heart of Europe. Bodin's "Colloquium of the Seven" warrants five stars for its scholarship and its exploration into 16th century intellectual and religious history, as well as for Marion Kuntz's excellent translation. The book was never published until the 19th century having circulated in select circles in previous centuries in its original Latin. Professor Kuntz and the Penn State Press deserve much commendation for "rescuing" this classic from seeming obscurity and allowing a wider circulation for today's readers. The scholarship is evident by my count of 2,481 footnotes which might seem excessive but many are interesting and the flow of reading is not too impaired. (Maybe it's my imagination, but be aware that "The Catholic Encyclopedia" seemed to be the source of much of her explanatory notes.) Unfortunately, for a work of such historical significance, I've lowered the rating to four stars for today's readers interested in religious differences for several reasons. For the first 100- 150 pages the disputants seemed to be too agreeable so that conflicts and disagreements seemed to be muted. Of course, after many pages we have concurrences on somebody's "proof" that "demons are corporeal" to which modern readers will smile. In addition, much of the disputation is pedantic where translations of significant theological works are challenged and references to obscure works of "history" from ancient authors of the classical period are disputed. Many of the examples cited to support a position come from myths and fables (or so it seemed to me). The "Jew" (Salomon) seemed to get about 25% of the dialogue, which might be fair since there's three Christians (A Catholic, Lutheran, and Calvinist) arrayed against him. Salomon might be both the most erudite of the participants, and the most pedantic (can we tell the difference?). My disappointment is that Bodin excluded atheists from his dialogue and any representatives from non-Abrahamic (e.g., Eastern) religions, so the range of religious debate is somewhat narrowed. Presumably, the "natural philosopher" is suppose to represent science but he sounds more like a philosophical "logic-chopper" (Bodin wrote before the true age of science began) and the role of the "skeptic" was not well articulated. Of course, Bodin had to maintain theistic views in the 16th century. Despite this quibbling at what is a historical work, it was fascinating to hear the Jewish representative and the Mohammedan gang up on the Christians for worshipping a "dead man", for almost all of them ganging up on the Catholic for the veneration of, and prayers to, a multitude of saints, for all of them ganging up on the Calvinist on the doctrine of predestination, for the Catholic defending free will, and for the Jew and Mohammedan defending the "one, true God." But again, no insults were exchanged, and the dialogue ended on a note of harmony and a basic agreement to foster toleration. Since the historian Will Durant's "The Story of Civilization" recently, and accidentally (upon a re-reading), acquainted me with Bodin's "The Colloquium of the Seven", I think it's only fair to suggest to readers that Durant's own religious dialogue in his "The Adventures of Philosophy" (not his more popular "The Story of Philosophy") seems to me to be the most wide-ranging and accessible dialogue of different religious points of view. He also includes an atheist, an agnostic, a Hindu, and an adherent of ancient Chinese religion, as well as a historian and an anthropologist, and the discussion seems to be focused more on the basic religious impulse and on religious values, rather than on some of the arcane theological issues that man died over in the 16th century and that Bodin's Colloquium features. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Tom W. Great book

Jean Bodin (1530-1596), renowned for his powerful intellect and breadth of knowledge, was truly a renaissance man. His works on political and legal thought set him apart as one of the most brilliant minds of the period. Although he is perhaps less known for his writing on religious questions of his day, his Colloquium remains a unique contribution to religious dialogue. It circulated in its Latin manuscript form, but it was not published until the nineteenth century. Marion Leathers Kuntz offers the first English translation of this masterpiece. Structured as a conversation among a Catholic, a Jew, a Lutheran, a Calvinist, a Muslim, a skeptic, and a philosophical naturalist, the Colloquium encourages religious tolerance and poses challenging questions for anyone interested in the nature of religious and philosophical thought. Kuntz's introduction, translation, and annotations situate the volume both as a historical work and as a timeless chronicle of the tensions among religion, philosophy, science, faith, doubt, and empirical evidence.

Dr. Kuntz's accurate translation of Bodin's Colloquium will make this important and practically unknown work available to all scholars and students interested in the philosophy, literature, and religious thought of the Renaissance, and especially in the emergence of free thought and religious tolerance. Paul Oskar Kristeller, Columbia University  
About the Author Marion Leathers Kuntz is the Regents Professor of Classics Emerita at Georgia State University. She is the author of Guillaume Postel: Prophet of the Restitution of All Things; His Life and Thought (1981) as well as The Anointment of Dionisio (Penn State, 2001)