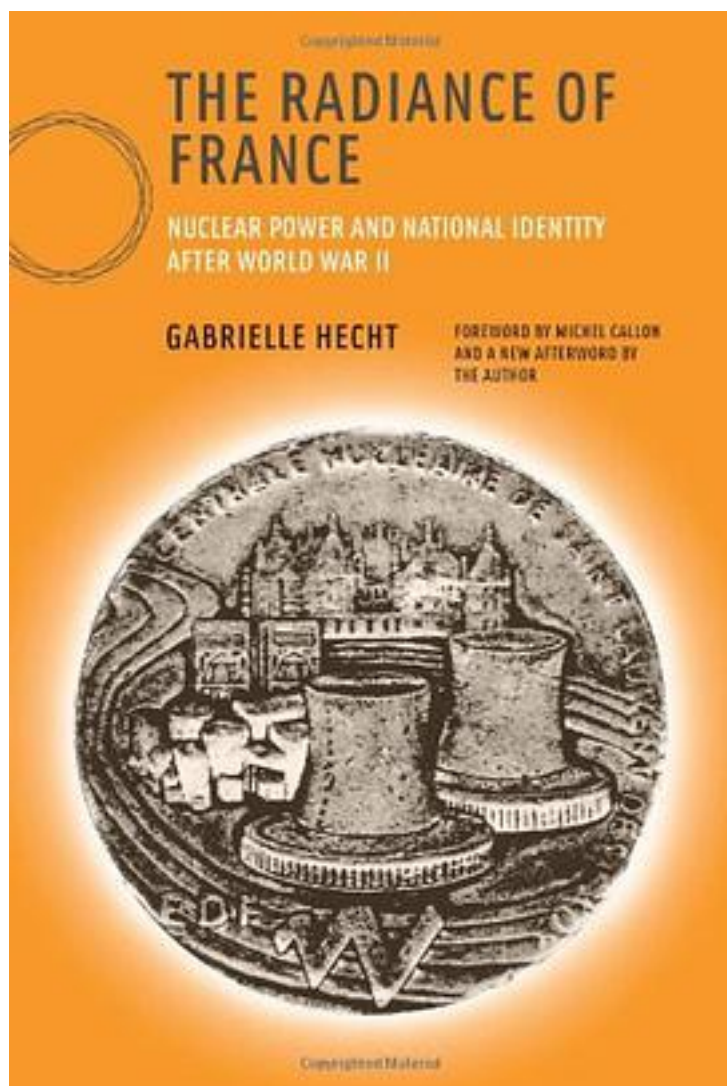


The Radiance of France



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Winner of the 1999 Herbert Baxter Adams Prize of the American Historical Association. and Winner of the 2001 Edelstein Prize (formerly the Dexter Prize) presented by the Society for the History of Technology (SHOT). This award is given to the author of an outstanding scholarly book in the history of technology published during any of the three years preceding the award. "Thanks to Gabrielle Hecht's talent and insight, the French nuclear program she explores has turned out to be for STS what the drosophila was for genetic research. This book not only sheds new light on the role of technology in the construction of national identities. It is also a seminal contribution to the history of contemporary France." --from the foreword by Michel Callon, coauthor of *Acting in an Uncertain World* In the aftermath of World War II, as France sought a distinctive role for itself in the modern, postcolonial world, the nation and its leaders enthusiastically embraced large technological projects in general and nuclear power in particular. *The Radiance of France* asks how it happened that technological prowess and national glory (or "radiance," which also means "radiation" in French) became synonymous in France as nowhere else. To answer this question, Gabrielle Hecht has forged an innovative combination of technology studies and cultural and political history in a book that, as Michel Callon writes in the new foreword to this edition, "not only sheds new light on the role of technology in the construction of national identities" but is also "a seminal contribution to the history of contemporary France." Proposing the concept of technopolitical regime as a way to analyze the social, political, cultural, and technological dynamics among engineering elites, unionized workers, and rural communities Hecht shows how the history of France's first generation of nuclear reactors is also a history of the multiple meanings of nationalism, from the postwar period (and France's desire for post-Vichy redemption) to 1969 and the adoption of a "Frenchified" American design. This paperback edition of Hecht's groundbreaking book includes both Callon's foreword and an afterword by the author in which she brings the story up to date, and reflects on such recent developments as the 2007 French presidential election, the promotion of nuclear power as the solution to climate change, and France's aggressive exporting of nuclear technology. Inside Technology series

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