Ranging from the early Middle Ages to the present, this is one of the broadest and most up-to-date studies of French history available in English. Amongst its central themes are the relationships between state and society, the impact of war, competition for power, and the ways in which power has been used. Whilst taking full account of major figures such as Philip Augustus, Henri IV, Louis XIV, Napoleon and de Gaulle, it sets their activities within the broader context of changing economic and social structures and beliefs, and offers rich insights into the lives of ordinary men and women. The recording also includes a chapter on contemporary France – its society and political system as a result of globalisation, rising unemployment, a failing educational system, growing social and racial tensions, corruption, the rise of the extreme right, and a widespread loss of confidence in political leaders.

Mark Meadows has recorded over 80 audiobook titles, for a large number of publishers, and can be heard frequently on BBC Radio, with shows including Book at Bedtime. He is a former musical director of the Swingle Singers and has various theatre and recording credits as composer and arranger, in addition to his numerous stage-acting credits. For Naxos AudioBooks he has read More’s Utopia, Kierkegaard’s Fear and Trembling and The Confessions of St Augustine.
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