

sacrifices too much, and that by abandoning 'the search for the true religion' Ward steers us uncomfortably close to the void he strives to deliver us from. But for Ward, religion cannot be isolated from the societies in which we live. And, for a faith tradition, this demands a stance which is robust in its sense of religious identity, but which avoids the fetishisation of its own 'truths' or practices – and which sees, in pluralism, an opportunity to share and flourish together (indeed an 'interdependence'), to work together to redeem a 'world of possibilities' (p. 153).

Those familiar with Ward's previous work will find *True Religion* something of a departure in style and tone, though still firmly within the trajectory of thought charted within *Cities of God*. However, as part of the 'Blackwell Manifestos' series, *True Religion* is aimed at a more general readership than Ward's earlier work. Ward therefore tries to avoid overly technical discussions, focussing instead on a series of lively cultural analyses; when Ward does indulge in jargon, it is (usually) explained. (Having said this, a reader without any grounding in philosophy or theology might find the discussions about Schleiermacher, Kant and Hegel heavy going – but this is unavoidable given the nature of the material and its centrality for Ward's thesis.) Ward therefore succeeds in introducing some of the key ideas that we meet in *Cities of God* (and 'Radical Orthodoxy' in general) to a readership that would otherwise find them inaccessible. A grand achievement! This is serious and accessible theology and we should be grateful for it.

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CATHOLIC INTELLECTUALS AND THE CHALLENGE OF DEMOCRACY by Jay P. Corrin, *University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, Indiana, 2002, Pp. x + 571 hdbk.*

In France, it was after the condemnation of *Action Française*, in 1926, that the Church started its painful recovery from the extreme right. Jay Corrin shows how, conversely, in the United States and in Great Britain, the Catholic Church had a tendency to become more right wing, above all under the influence of Hilaire Belloc. His main purpose, however, is to show that a few intellectuals resisted this general movement. He offers a very lively portrait of H.A.Reinhold, probably the hero of the book, who tried, with little success, to alert the Catholic world to the threat of Nazism. He also offers an excellent account of the debates surrounding the Spanish Civil War and Mussolini, using many primary sources. The book starts, as it should, with the French Revolution and the French 19th century, and culminates

with the Distributist movement, which is presented as the single most important synthesis of Catholic social and political thinking to have emerged in the English-speaking world.

Corrin addresses the very serious problem, for a contemporary liberal democrat, of the Church's long-standing affinities with authoritarian regimes. His book is perhaps more a collection of articles than an integrated whole. As a result, the last chapter or the overall argument turns out to be weaker than the chapters taken individually. Does the existence of a liberal tradition within the Church still need to be demonstrated? I should add that it would have been good to read some harsher words on the so-called third way, the myth or the utopia of a Catholic path which would have equally escaped both communism and capitalism

The book is well written and pleasant to read. Corrin has a rare quality: he treats deeply incompatible views with a great deal of fairness, in that he manages to offer what seems to be an insider's view for both the right and the left. He manages to have sympathy or empathy with people whose views he strongly disapproves of. Corrin does not, however, convey the *reasons* why Catholics might have been anti-liberal. Ultimately, in spite of a serious attempt to be fair, he describes anti-liberalism as a thoughtless reactionary attitude, without emphasising the tension between freedom and truth, the difficult problem of the existence of a right to err. More generally, Corrin often mentions 'democracy', 'liberalism', 'modernity', but these terms are so vaguely used as to become difficult to grasp. The book belongs to a genre of intellectual history which aims to escape both theology and political philosophy, but I wonder whether it does not show the limits of the genre itself. *Catholic Intellectuals and the Challenge of Democracy* remains a good historical introduction to the ideological debates which have divided the Church from the French Revolution to Vatican II, when many of these issues were, it is to be hoped, finally resolved.

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