

well the TWN project. The hypothesis of the project that CST contributes significantly to economic prosperity deserves deep elaboration, and this book constitutes an excellent point of departure.

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## Faith in Politics: Religion and Liberal Democracy

**Bryan T. McGraw**

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2010 (320 pages)

While theorists and scholars come at liberal democracy from a variety of angles, it is a rare work that brings many of these disparate points of view into conversation with one another. That he has succeeded in doing so would be reason enough to be grateful to Bryan T. McGraw, Assistant Professor of Politics and International Relations at Wheaton College.

McGraw magisterially weaves together a variety of strands of thought and scholarship, beginning with the work of the late John Rawls and his commentators and critics, perhaps the dominant voices in Anglo-American liberal political theory. The book also features careful engagements with proponents of “deliberative democracy” (most prominently Jürgen Habermas), neo-Calvinist political theory (e.g., Jonathan Chaplin), and empirical scholarship on consociationalism and Christian Democracy in Europe.

The focal point of McGraw’s investigation is the ways in which liberal democratic theory can and cannot accommodate religious groups whose members wish to organize their lives in “illiberal” ways. Believing as they do that God’s sovereignty extends to all spheres of human existence, these “religious integrationists” pose a challenge to the “liberal consensus,” which insists both upon the reformation of religious belief to cohere with concepts of individual autonomy and upon the predominance of “public reason” (as opposed to faith-based argumentation) in the public square.

McGraw is not the first to find fault with this liberal consensus, but he is perhaps one of its most thorough and perspicacious critics. While it is impossible in a brief review to do justice to the lines of reasoning he develops at great length, it is possible to offer a couple of examples of how he argues. Much of John Rawls’s *Political Liberalism* is devoted to developing the argument on behalf of an overlapping consensus of “political, not metaphysical” principles, while McGraw contends that we should rest satisfied with a more modest “constitutional consensus,” in which citizens “maintain a sincere commitment to constitutional democracy” (141) based, not on “political reasons,” but rather on, say, a comprehensive religious concept of personhood. Rawls would regard such a consensus as dangerously unstable, but McGraw argues that, on the contrary, any insistence that religious believers abandon their core commitments when it comes to politics runs the risk of provoking a reaction against constitutional democracy *tout court*. In other words, if the stability of democratic republicanism is a principal concern of those contemporary

liberal theorists who address the role of religious integrationists in our society, this issue may be better resolved by leaving them free to bear witness to their faith in the public square, especially if they are embedded in comprehensive religious institutions that help them defend their distinctive ways of life.

Similarly, McGraw takes on those liberal theorists who argue that some sort of comprehensive autonomy is ultimately required for decent liberal citizenship. He suggests that, instead, a more modest “political autonomy” or “independence” may serve the interests of liberal democracy equally well. Religious integrationists indeed do not cultivate and celebrate the capacity simply to choose freely without any preconditions, but they are certainly capable, McGraw argues, of “a workable sort of independence, at least enough to make consent ... work and be part of a flourishing human life” (190).

Implicit in these arguments and explicit in McGraw’s book as a whole is the example of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Christian Democracy in Europe—above all, in the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, and Austria. From these cases, McGraw gleans a model of religious integrationist engagement in pluralistic politics. Embedded in a comprehensive set of religious, social, and political institutions, religious integrationists who seek to defend their way of life—and not, importantly, coercively to impose it on others—can act as responsible citizens without being remade in the image either of autonomous liberal individualism or of democratic civic devotion.

Of course, there are plenty of reasons to question whether this old model of religious integrationist engagement is adequate to the accommodation of religious groups in contemporary democratic republics. First, given that the trajectory of Christian Europe seems to have been a long-term decline into secularization, it is not clear whether these models of protecting religious integrationism and accommodating religion offer long-term hope to those who sympathize with these religious groups. To be sure, there are many ways in which conditions in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Europe are different from those faced, for example, by American Christians in the early twenty-first century, but if the model McGraw proffers is just a matter of slightly slowing the path toward decline, few religious integrationists will be attracted to it. Of course, if his purpose is to persuade liberal secularists that religious integrationists are not a threat to the political arrangements they hold dear, then this is less of an immediate concern.

Second, while in most nineteenth-century European countries there were a small number of relatively well-organized Christian denominations (e.g., Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Dutch Reformed), the twenty-first century American situation is much more pluralistic, much more individualistic, and much harder to organize in any sort of coherent fashion. Yes, there are “Christian” institutions that parallel their secular counterparts—above all, elementary and secondary schools and universities, as well as welfare organizations—but they are for the most part loosely connected with their sponsoring denominations (if any) and, as they are to some degree in competition with one another, they cannot present any sort of consistently integrated united front *vis-à-vis* “public” institutions. For all the agreements regarding the battle lines of the “culture wars,” for example, people in the Reformed tradition remain suspicious of their charismatic brethren, let alone Mormons

and Catholics. Then there are the Baptists, always prone to separate from one another. While McGraw's European examples are (or were) promising, their success depended on responsible leadership that could speak for (and to some degree discipline) the rank and file. Given the American religious marketplace, it is much less obvious that such an arrangement would be possible here.

Finally, leaving aside for the moment Christians, who have doctrinal reasons for eschewing the use of coercion in matters of religion and for whom respect for those created in God's image is paramount, there are Muslim religious integrationists. While the former have their own reasons for living peacefully with their fellows in a secular pluralistic order, this is somewhat less clear for the latter. McGraw's answer is twofold. Conceding that "theocratic" Islamist parties are, to put it mildly, problematical, he argues, first, that in almost every conceivable liberal democratic (Anglo-American or continental European) context, a Muslim community would be a relatively small minority. One might surmise that their best prospect is to join in a coalition with non-Islamic parties. In addition, the fact that Islam as a whole is not centralized and hierarchical cuts both ways. While there are no structures of authority to integrate communities and marginalize extremists, there is also no "monolithic" Islamist threat.

McGraw's second response is to point to the example of Turkey, which he acknowledges also cuts both ways:

It may very well be the case ... that the AKP's leaders are playing a kind of double game, professing their democratic bona fides while waiting for the moment to impose an undemocratic Islamist polity. But even if that *is* the case, we should not be surprised if such intentions, should they exist, never come to fruition.... [T]he logic of electoral competition and the requirements of parliamentary and democratic government can exert a powerful pull and reshape intentions, sometimes in ways that surprise the most reflective of political agents (278–79).

In the end, McGraw relies very heavily on the ways in which the cut and thrust of engagement in democratic political life can have a transformative effect on participants. On this view, what is required is not so much adherence to a particular theoretically justified way of making one's arguments or conceiving one's self but, rather, time spent in the crucible of political conflict and compromise. This is a problem, he argues, for contemporary American religious integrationists because "the lack of structurally pluralist options ... leaves ... partisans without an institutional framework in which they can learn effectively to distinguish well the sorts of goods and ends proper to democratic politics" (291). More precisely, it seems, they will have to learn it on their own, rather than from responsible leaders who can speak authoritatively to and for them.

McGraw is surely correct that when a secularist liberal tells a religious integrationist that he or she needs to behave, the appeal or command is likely to provoke a vigorous reaction. We certainly do not need more theory, at least not more theory of that sort. However, I cannot imagine the emergence of an American Christian Democratic party, with its attendant array of social institutions, which seems to be McGraw's preferred alternative. We may have to rest satisfied with the more modest process, which we currently have,

in which people engage as individuals and as parts of small, often contingent groups, in electoral politics and issue advocacy. They will inevitably learn what works, will be sometimes inspired, and often chastened. What will enable them to resist the supposed theocratic temptation is, in the end, their recognition of their fellows as image bearers of God and the distinction between the City of God and the City of Man.

If McGraw succeeds in persuading liberal democratic theorists that their concerns about religious integrationists are misplaced, he will have done both groups an immense service. He will have left the political process free to do the kind of work it does best, with or without the assistance of the kind of comprehensive religious, social, and partisan institutions he favors. From that process, everyone can learn and everyone can benefit.

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## Entrepreneurship in the Catholic Tradition

**Anthony C. Percy**

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There is a portion of the population of otherwise orthodox Catholic thinkers and authors who—for reasons that absolutely need to be examined and resolved—look at the business world with undue diffidence. This has created a real problem in politics and even in other areas of human activities as it has hindered the proper understanding and implementation of Catholic social thought and works of evangelization. This unacceptable situation has often been the reason why some good Catholics have found justification to place themselves in the camp of enemies of the Church, especially concerning major social issues.

With this backdrop, the work of Father Percy is a great resource to help alleviate the problem. First, he approaches the issue from the proper perspective. He is looking at man, the entrepreneur, son of God, and gifted with skills and talents but, especially, with the intellectual powers of intelligence and decision. Too often the subjects of entrepreneurship and free markets are viewed at the rarefied altitude of economics that looks at human affairs in such an elevated and macro dimension that the human quality of the whole field is ignored or terribly crippled.

Father Percy, a diocesan priest, whose present work is the fruit of his doctoral dissertation at the Catholic University of America, after proper study of the works of theologians, finds the quality of entrepreneurship in the very practical and immediate realities of men at work. He finds it in the very nature of work itself of which entrepreneurship is nothing more than a logical extension or more simply a fuller expression. He tells us that Saint Jerome is not shy in his use of the term *capital* as a metaphor for grace. Indeed, as human beings strive for personal sanctity, their progress is measured in “graces” that have been acquired to merit the beatific vision and even further to climb in the scale of glory that exists in the heavenly Jerusalem. Furthermore, at a minimum, of necessity, a parallel has