

*Academic Freedom and the Telos of the Catholic University.* By Kenneth Garcia. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. ix + 216 pages. \$90.00.

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Faculty and administrators in Catholic universities in the United States often perceive a tension between academic freedom and their institutions' Catholic identity and mission. Kenneth Garcia provides a theological warrant for academic freedom enabling him to argue that academic freedom and Catholic identity lead in the same direction. For Garcia, academic freedom is grounded in the mind's "insatiable desire to comprehend the totality of existence in its essence" (132) and ultimately to know God—an idea for which he draws on Henri de Lubac, Karl Rahner, and Michael Buckley. Academic freedom is "a specific instance of religious freedom: the freedom to pursue the spiritual dynamism of the mind wherever it will go," which includes the freedom to pursue ultimate questions or to stop short of them (130). As Garcia acknowledges, his argument resembles that of John C. Haughey's *Where Is Knowing Going? The Horizons of the Knowing Subject* (2009), but he differs from Haughey in linking the mind's dynamism, in a Catholic university, explicitly to Catholic tradition.

Similar ideals guided medieval Christian thinkers and the founders of the University of Berlin, "the prototype of the modern university" (35). But in American research universities of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries such ideals fell victim to the trends of increasing disciplinary specialization and growing exclusion of religion from the university. Catholic colleges and universities resisted these trends, continuing to pursue "the integration of knowledge into a comprehensive Christian worldview" (79). What proved fatal to this project in the 1960s was institutions' increasing dependency on government funds, together with litigation that allowed government aid to church-related colleges only if they were not "pervasively sectarian," which is more or less identical in American law with "pervasively religious." Vatican concern about growing secularization of American Catholic universities led to Pope John Paul II's *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (1990), which restated the telos of the Catholic university as "the exploration of all aspects of truth in their essential relation to God" (125). Today, Garcia holds that administrators at Catholic universities cannot "articulate the relationship between the Catholic intellectual tradition and other disciplines," and faculty often resist engagement with the Catholic tradition (127). Catholic universities, he thinks, have uncritically adopted the secular academy's notion of academic freedom as "freedom from interference and pressure from anyone lacking competence in one's specialized field or subfield, not a freedom to explore beyond it and connect with other aspects of the whole of reality" (74).

What Garcia offers is not so much a new definition of academic freedom as a new rationale for it, one that enables it to dovetail with universities' Catholic identity and mission. He makes his job easier, however, by prescinding from the question of theologians' academic freedom relative to church authorities (20) and not raising the question of the freedom of scholars in other fields to pursue lines of thought that may appear to be at odds with church teaching. In addition, he distinguishes inadequately between academic *freedom* and the academic *evaluation system*. It is in regard to the latter, not the former, that Garcia's proposal would make a difference. American secular academics are hired, tenured, and promoted on the basis of their disciplinary competence, and surely in Catholic universities this is necessary if perhaps not sufficient. In the secular academy, faculty are *free* to speak outside the limits of their disciplines, especially on public policy, and the American Association of University Professors will defend them against legislators and administrators who try to silence them. In theory, contrary to what Garcia claims (74), they are even free to speak in theological terms, and some theologically minded professors have found homes in state universities, though in practice others are doubtless discouraged from talking of God. Catholic universities would differ from secular ones, if Garcia's understanding took hold, in that pursuing the integration of knowledge across disciplinary lines and relating one's discipline(s) to the Catholic theological tradition would be positively rewarded when it came to hiring, tenure, promotion, and the like.

I used this book in an interdisciplinary faculty seminar on the Catholic intellectual tradition, and it sparked good conversation, though some colleagues complained of its style. Faculty and administrators reflecting on Catholic identity and academic freedom at their institutions might well find it helpful; they may want to examine the mixed lot of practical proposals that make up Garcia's concluding chapter. This is not a book for students, however—indeed, despite its subject, it seems only occasionally to have them in mind.

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This volume contains twenty-three essays contributed by twenty-one theologians and a religionist or two. Twelve of the authors are Lutherans; two are