

encyclopedias, book catalogs, and other modes of diffusion of ideas, but there is no survey of the recently growing study of correspondence networks. The coda on Rousseau is a bit underdeveloped; much more has been said elsewhere about Spinoza's reception in the period 1750–1800, and one area for future research would be Kant's Spinozism. But any such matters of detail would only confirm the overall message of this book: Major sectors of English-language political theory and history of political thought have been missing a great deal of what was important in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and it can be found here.

Lincoln's Sacred Effort: Defining Religion's Role in American Self-Government. By Lucas E. Morel. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2000. 251p. \$70.00 cloth, \$23.95 paper.

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Lucas Morel presents an excellent survey of Abraham Lincoln's frequent use of biblical language and allusions. Yet, Morel fails the significance test he sets for himself (pp. 1–2): Did Lincoln frequently use such language merely because it was the most common vernacular of his time; the vernacular with which his audiences would be most familiar? Or did he also frequently use such language because he thought that the right ordering of the relationship between religion and politics was critical to the maintenance of a democratic regime and that he actually had something important and original to say about that relationship?

I agree with Morel that the latter is probably the correct answer; he does not show that it is the correct answer. This is far from a personal failure on his part, as he probably does the best he can with the available evidence. The problem is that so little evidence is available. In essence, Morel stretches that evidence into a set of arguments that Lincoln *might* have made about the proper relationship between religion and politics. He shows considerable ingenuity in developing these arguments, but it must be emphasized that he is the one who has developed them, not Lincoln.

Perhaps a useful comparison is between Lincoln and Thomas Hobbes. In both cases, scholars have engaged in extensive speculation about their personal religious beliefs and whether they were atheists or, at most, tepid theists. In both cases, a lack of evidence has fueled this speculation. The two cases appear very different, however, once we move beyond the question of personal religious beliefs and begin to look at their views on the relationship between religion and politics. Much more evidence is available for Hobbes than for Lincoln. Morel tries to analyze Lincoln's views on the relationship between religion and politics as if Lincoln had written something equivalent to parts III and IV of *The Leviathan*. But of course he did not.

In making this comparison, my intention is not to stress the difference between analyzing the works of a philosopher and a statesman so much as it is to emphasize the difference between analyzing Morel's chosen topic and other possible topics in Lincoln's works. The writings and speeches of Lincoln can bear a fairly high level of analysis on such subjects as democracy and slavery, as has been shown by, among others, Harry Jaffa, who is mentioned so prominently by Morel (pp. ix, 14). They simply cannot bear the same level of analysis on Morel's chosen topic. There is a very good reason that, as Morel claims (p. 11), such a book has never been written before.

The one possible exception to Lincoln's relative silence on the relationship between religion and politics is his famous Lyceum speech of 1838 (chap. 2). Yet, as Morel emphasizes,

the political religion of that speech is not really a political *religion* but, rather, a civil disposition of obedience to law that religion then might be used to foster (pp. 8–9, 14–5, 31–2). Lincoln understands the relationship between religion and politics in this speech quite narrowly. But Morel is also very interested—and claims Lincoln is as well—in that relationship more broadly defined to include the ways in which politics should accommodate religion (chap. 3), in which religion might be misused politically (chap. 4), and in which religion teaches men the limits of politics as well as of religion itself (chap. 5). It is on these more strictly religious topics that Lincoln says so little and Morel says so much.

This gap is especially yawning in chapter 4, which is the weakest of the book. (Chapter 5, which deftly but still too expansively for my taste analyzes Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, is the strongest chapter.) In chapter 4, Morel analyzes Lincoln's temperance address of 1842 and elaborates one of the major motifs of his book: The abolitionists were Lincoln's exemplar for the political misuses of religion (pp. 9–10, 26, 125–6, 140). Yet, the abolitionists were not Lincoln's explicit targets in this address; self-righteous temperance reformers were. Furthermore, even when the abolitionists were Lincoln's explicit targets, as in his celebrated 1858 campaign debates with Stephen A. Douglas, his attacks seem grounded much more in political expediency than in personal disdain for either the principles or tactics of the abolitionists. However moderate Lincoln's own antislavery principles and tactics may have been, they eventually coalesced with those of the abolitionists (pp. 175–80). There is a large measure of truth to Wendell Phillips's gloss on Lincoln's victory in the 1860 presidential election: "Lincoln is in *place*, Garrison is in *power*" ("Lincoln's Election," in Wendell Phillips, *Speeches, Lectures, and Letters*, 1864, p. 305; emphasis original).

Where does this leave us? Morel provides some very interesting speculations about Lincoln's views on the proper relationship between religion and politics, but he stretches the evidence beyond what it can bear.

Worlds of Difference: European Discourses of Toleration, c. 1100–1550. By Cary J. Nederman. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000. 157p. \$40.00 cloth, \$18.95 paper.

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This book is novel, attending more to the history than to the logic or morality of tolerance. It propounds, against the popular grain, a significant presence for tolerance in medieval Europe. Cases are made for Abelard, Marsilius, and others as significant exponents. The result provides students with an opportunity briskly to explore work too often ignored. If this study hits methodological sandbanks, it is hoped that will not deter others from voyaging in premodern times and in non-European waters.

Nederman takes aim at two key notions: The doctrine of tolerance is exclusively modern, and, more narrowly, tolerance is the lineal progeny of "liberalism." He is right to target the second, but he has invented the first. He is right to counter the view that "the Christian Middle Ages has [sic] *nothing whatsoever* to contribute to our understanding . . . of tolerance" (p. 3, emphasis added). Except that only one of four whom he "counters" arguably takes this view. A traveller who is construed to claim "there is no water *whatsoever* in the desert," is proved wrong by the little rain that will eventually fall. An observer who claims that no medieval writer can "readily" be conceived to oppose tolerance, or that medieval