

everywhere in this country today powerful special interests are poisoning our environment, and for the most part getting away with it, and killing our children because they can.

Wade Sikorski has written several other books. I suspect, though, that the others did not require the scope or discipline of emotions that *Sacrificial Rituals* demanded. It is a personal book. He meditates on the wrongs that were done, citing philosophers and political scientists and psychologists in his effort to understand why such havoc. There seem to be no answers, only responses. And people like Gene Huntley and the county librarian are the exemplary responses to what is wrong and what is to be done.

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NO ANSWERS

Thaddeus J. Kozinski: *The Political Problem of Religious Pluralism: And Why Philosophers Can't Solve It*. (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2011. Pp. xxv, 263.)

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The subtitle of the book is self-explanatory—the author finds all strictly philosophical accounts inadequate to explain or justify religious pluralism, for which a solution can only be found in theology. He mainly analyzes the work of John Rawls, Jacques Maritain, and Alasdair MacIntyre and along the way brings several others into his account.

Rawls stands in the modern, post-Kantian tradition that denies teleology and sees the political order as a “non-natural artifice of human reason.” Ultimately, however, this modernist position can provide nothing more than a “rhetorically persuasive account of the liberal society” and “cannot establish a universally valid account of reality.”

Rawls makes this descriptive account of the liberal society politically normative, as the only valid polity in the modern world, but he cannot offer a compelling argument for his position, basing it instead on the claim of historical inevitability and the pragmatic benefits it brings. Illogically and unrealistically, he assumes the modern liberal order to be a permanent reality.

Thus a significant number of people are excluded from Rawls’s “overlapping consensus” of viewpoints, with only those who accept modernist assumptions being fully integrated. The “public political culture” alone has the authority to determine the nature of justice, with no further appeal possible.

Rawls’s pluralism fails because, among other things, it requires the religious believer to put aside his beliefs when he enters the public realm, an

action that has theological implications in terms of what the believer thinks is God's will for the world.

Maritain, who of course lived and worked long before Rawls, at first glance provides an antidote, since he posited natural law as the basis of the just society and sought to unify ancient and medieval traditions with modernity.

But Kozinski finds Maritain also to have erred in his easy acceptance of the virtues of modern liberal society. While Rawls sees modern religious pluralism as a positive good and Maritain saw it as a tragedy, both saw it as an inevitability to be accepted. For Maritain modern democracy provided the opportunity for a "new Christendom" shorn of the deformities of the old.

Maritain believed that no genuine philosophy could exclude the reality of the supernatural and that a Christian political community is mandated by divine revelation, but he could not explain how these could be reconciled with the liberal state. As Rawls would later do, Maritain required the believer to hold to a democratic faith and to acquiesce in a situation in which the Gospel is barred from public discourse.

MacIntyre comes closest to resolving these issues. He sees that modern liberalism cannot in principle reach any kind of moral consensus, since it bases all morality on subjective perceptions. It is a tradition of its own and does not represent the neutral exercise of reason.

Maritain was also deficient, according to MacIntyre, in not seeing that all rational inquiry is necessarily tradition bound. Maritain was a Thomist, and MacIntyre regards Thomism as the only tradition-bound community where real inquiry can take place, but in fact Maritain accepted modern liberal pluralism to the point where his position was no longer properly Thomistic.

In the liberal milieu the nation-state itself takes on a sacred character, according to MacIntyre, purporting to protect the liberties of individuals but actually constituting a threat to particular political communities. Both Rawls and Maritain accept the legitimacy of the nation-state, and Kozinski thinks MacIntyre's position is flawed because it allows only for small political communities and requires people of sincere moral principle to avoid dealings with the state as much as possible, which thereby permits the liberal state to thrive unhindered.

While MacIntyre believes that the unity of a tradition is a good, he also seems to require that each tradition validate itself by confronting both other traditions and possible variations within itself, something he believes Thomism does particularly well but that Kozinski thinks is not far from Rawlsian liberalism.

Even MacIntyre cannot validate the Thomistic tradition without an appeal to theological justification, which he does not do but which is the next necessary step.

Kozinski asks, "How could the religiously divided nation-states of today ever attain the unity in religious truth?" and admits that he has no answer. The Catholic Church, he affirms, has prescriptive authority over all states and communities, although he seems to rule out the use of "oppressive power."

The book is dense and rigorously argued in an abstract way, but occasionally the tone changes, as when the author refers to the Catholic Church today as “neutered, privatized, individualized, and disembodied.” Significantly, there is only cursory reference to Benedict XVI and to the Second Vatican Council and none at all to John Paul II or John Courtney Murray.

Startlingly, in his acknowledgments Kozinski cites with special thanks several Catholics who question the authority of the Second Vatican Council, one of whom interprets contemporary Catholic life in terms of a conspiracy to suppress the “Third Secret of Fatima” and another who has characterized the reign of John Paul II as “the worst pontificate in history,” dismissing the pope as “an honest slave of the Enlightenment” whose ideas were contained in “goofy wrapping” that made him “the Master of Muck.”

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PERSISTING TO THE END

Paul P. Mariani: *Church Militant: Bishop Kung and Catholic Resistance in Communist Shanghai*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011. Pp. xiii, 282.)

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Ignatius Kung (Gong Pinmei, 1902–2000), the Catholic bishop of Shanghai, was arrested in 1955 and almost five years later, in 1960, was sentenced to life imprisonment as head of a “traitorous counterrevolutionary clique.” He was convicted of spying for the Americans and attempting to organize an armed rebellion against the People’s Government. In 1979 Pope John Paul II secretly (*in pectore*—“in his chest”) elevated Kung to the rank of Cardinal. Kung was finally released in 1988 (after a couple of years on parole under house arrest), and probably as part of the deal went into exile, living out his days at the home of a nephew in Connecticut. With others, notably Dominic Tang (Deng Yiming), bishop of Guangzhou, Kung stands among prominent Chinese Catholics as a brave soldier of the faith under persecution (there were, of course, many more in the lower ranks, among religious sisters, and in the laity). This study by Paul Mariani is a welcome one.

Mariani’s book details the communist crackdown on the Church in Shanghai prior to the Cultural Revolution. A Jesuit priest and a professor of history at Santa Clara University, Mariani draws most of his information from the correspondence of Shanghai Jesuits, especially those from the United States, who lived through these events. Mariani has also interviewed some of the actual participants, both Chinese and foreign. His vivid