

to address the concerns, raised by Buchanan himself on the very first page of his book, that human rights generally face. What of those who object that human rights lack moral foundations, or that they serve the interest of powerful states, or that they lack legitimacy because they are the product of undemocratic institutions? Treating human rights procedurally further exacerbates those concerns, and it is unclear how this procedural approach constitutes the *heart* of human rights—rather than its cold, rational, and bureaucratic side.

Much more powerful, however, is the conclusion by Buchanan that some legal rights provide certain benefits—education and health care, for example—that are stronger than any moral human right could justify. This is potentially quite a radical contribution, but he shies away from these consequences by failing to call upon the United States to provide these goods for its citizens, for instance. In the end, it is difficult not to throw back the accusation of imperialism at the author, for Buchanan remains noncommittal about the voluntary nature of legal human rights. While in the past, states have signed treaties on a voluntary basis, he argues that it is not a necessary model for the future, and that it is not morally unacceptable to impose certain human rights. This would raise alarm bells in many corners of the world, and the paternalistic approach of his predecessors echoes in his own works.

Last but not least, Buchanan fails to take seriously enough the pluralist challenge, to which he nevertheless devotes a chapter. Like that of Rawls, his pluralism is not radical but superficial. Unlike someone like John Gray, for example, who has argued for the merits of a *modus vivendi*, Buchanan incorrectly assumes that this model is weak because it is based on a balance of power, where no one can enforce his or her own interests on others. A much thicker understanding of pluralism, whereby lack of agreement between different moral values is not taken as a nuisance but as a richness and a positive element in itself, is altogether ignored. Buchanan still tries to find a way in which legal human rights can be imposed on all, without considering that there are a number of approaches that could bypass these universal rights, which so often end up justifying the interests of the powerful.

Dissent on Core Beliefs: Religious and Secular Perspectives. edited by Simone Chambers and Peter Nosco.*
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— Olivia Newman, *Rider University*

Dissent on Core Beliefs is the most recent volume in The Ethikon Series in Comparative Ethics, asking contributors

to consider how various ethical traditions treat intramural dissent. When is dissent allowed or encouraged, and when is it punished? Who decides? How much dissent can these traditions accommodate before they fracture? Simone Chambers and Peter Nosco posed a series of such questions to experts from an enormous range of traditions: political and intellectual traditions like liberalism, Marxism, and natural law; and religions including Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Sikhism, and Buddhism. The reader will come to appreciate the ways in which Hinduism and Confucianism slowly consolidated into religious or pseudo-religious traditions with specific political purposes.

The breadth of this book is impressive and the individual contributions are fascinating. The purpose of the volume, however, is perplexing. For political liberals, it makes good sense to view disparate traditions as commensurate; Rawls would easily recognize each as a comprehensive worldview that can fall more or less in line with the demands of living in a liberal society. The very construction of the book, along with Michael Walzer's afterword, nod at this liberal question, but such a question is never explicitly posed, nor could the essays provide an answer if it were. As Chambers and Nosco explain, because no one contributor could draw out a full comparison with other traditions, the volume instead aims to "contribute to a comparative conversation between and within traditions," providing "the reader easy access to comparative lines of argument" (p. 13). In this way, *Dissent on Core Beliefs* can serve as an instructive and insightful resource for those wishing to consider how the inner life of various ethical traditions sits within liberal polities.

While this analysis is left to the reader, the editors recognize the political dimension of the project, observing that states often exploit ethical traditions in the process of nation-building, while adherents of traditions often try to secure the "spoils of the state" for their own people (p. 7). Such entanglements are touched upon by several authors, if not fully elaborated, from Anne Murphy's description of the consolidation of Hinduism as a nationalist project, to Andrew Levine's description of the ways in which Marxist theory morphed into Leninist political practice. Peter Steinfels admits that the analytical separation of governing and religion is largely anachronistic (p. 101), which raises important questions that I wish were taken up more directly throughout. To this end, I would pose one further question to the contributors: *What has been the political trajectory of this tradition and how did dissent figure into it?*

Nonetheless, scholars of politics will find much to recommend this volume, which offers rich and nuanced views of each tradition under study. The contributors had no easy task, aiming to provide a cogent overview of each tradition's history and central ideas, while remaining sensitive to the contested nature of all traditions. Alan Mittleman explains that without an explicit creed, Judaism has always been more concerned with

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“orthopraxis,” to use Madsen’s term, than with orthodox belief. This has allowed Judaism to define itself as the “religion of reason” (p. 96). Meena Sharify-Funk highlights the same focus on orthopraxis in many strains of Islam. Sharify-Funk clarifies the various trajectories of Islam today: secular, progressive, revival, radical, and neo-traditional, with the first two providing the easiest path to “multiple loyalties” between Islam and the liberal state (p. 155). Madsen and Noscoe elaborate on how Confucianism and Buddhism, respectively, encourage loyalty to the state. We also learn how political exigencies and the Western construct of “religion” helped consolidate dispersed traditions, as Murphy describes in the case of Hinduism and Madsen in the context of Confucianism.

The first several chapters fit somewhat uncomfortably with the rest, tackling the political and intellectual traditions of liberalism, Marxism, and natural law. Tom Angier’s chapter is captivating from the perspective of natural law and political theory, but its inclusion in this volume feels forced. It would be rare, I think, to find a believer whose professed ethical tradition was natural law. Rather, this intellectual discourse informs church edicts, which in turn constrain everyday ethical behavior. Of course, natural law theorists wish to provide an alternative to Rawlsian public reason by demonstrating that natural law is non-revelatory and available to all. But its tight relationship with the Catholic Church (which maintains the authority to discipline scholars like Charles Curran when their theories run afoul of church doctrine) only further highlights the commitment of these theorists to reach foregone conclusions. Natural law theory is no stand-in for liberalism. Levine’s account of Marxism, and particularly its political variants, is similarly fascinating and, as a chapter in this book, confusing—a tension not lost on Levine. Like natural law theory, Marxism is neither a substitute for liberal accommodation of worldviews (being inconsistent with most views), nor is it an ethical tradition that guides the lives of adherents, so much as it is an intellectual toolkit.

William Galston’s chapter on liberalism is a better fit with the imputed purpose of the book, as the very point of liberal politics is to accommodate a wide range of worldviews. As Galston posits, “[t]o be a twenty-first century American is to accept the liberal creed, at least for civic purposes” (p. 22). This may have struck a different note at the time of writing, but as I watch illiberal politics unfold around the world and in the U.S. presidential campaign season, it seems unjustifiably optimistic. Walzer sounds this optimistic tone even more loudly when he opens his afterword with the bold statement: “We are all liberals now.”

This does not seem to be a moment in which we can make such claims. Can this book help put us back on the right path, or, at least help us gain our bearings in a world where both intra- and extramural ethical conflict are on the rise? Levine laments that world religions continue to thrive as they become “more anti-modern, violent, and

extreme. . . [while] Marxism is a memory almost everywhere” (p. 51). This is the rub: The Enlightenment’s progeny—reason, liberalism, and Marxism—appear to be losing ground to the most intolerant trains of modern religion. This makes this series, and this particular book, all the more important. But it also raises the bar very high. It is not enough to bring us access to comparative lines of argument—we need to know how these various traditions are shaping the citizens of tomorrow. Nancy Rosenblum once offered the tempting claim that all associations—even the most illiberal—help prepare citizens for liberal civil society (*Membership and Morals*). But I have my doubts. So how can humanity learn to get along when it is housed in so many different traditions? The comparative groundwork provided in this series is a noble first step that will undoubtedly take up as much shelf space as Max Weber’s efforts did a century ago. It is disheartening that Weber’s words ring true today: “Not summer’s bloom lies ahead of us, but rather a polar night of icy darkness and hardness” (“Politics as a Vocation”). As he elsewhere exhorts, however, “[w]e must work while it is still day” (“On the Situation of Constitutional Democracy in Russia”). *Dissent on Core Beliefs* is a good place to start.

Nietzsche’s Culture of Humanity: Beyond Aristocracy and Democracy in the Early Period. By Jeffrey Church.

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— Vanessa Lemm, *University of New South Wales Australia*

The overarching goal of this book is to rescue Nietzsche’s concept of culture from postmodernist appropriations and their critiques of modern subjectivity in order to reconcile it with the modern idea of the autonomous subject and the political principles of liberalism. On Jeffrey Church’s account, through his ideal of culture, Nietzsche sought to promote liberal conceptions of equality and liberty. Church argues that the politics that best supports Nietzsche’s vision of cultural renewal is a liberal conception of the state based on the rule of law and the protection of individual rights. While *Nietzsche’s Culture of Humanity* is impressively clear in its writing and in the general presentation and development of its argument, the main thesis of the book is ultimately unconvincing.

Church argues that Nietzsche’s commitment to classical liberalism becomes clear when we situate his views in the “right philosophical context” (p. 5) and read him against the backdrop of Kant’s cosmopolitan and Johann von Herder’s nationalist conceptions of culture; and furthermore, it becomes clear when we turn to his early period as it offers a “much clearer statement of his view” on politics (p. 4), in contrast to Nietzsche’s later reflections on politics that tend to be “elliptical, ambiguous and hence open to divergent interpretations” (p. 207). Church’s rather ad hoc choice of discursive