

Once There Was No Church and State: Re-Envisioning the Social Order in Light of Thirteenth-Century History

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“In the love that pours forth from the heart of Christ, we find hope for the future of the world.”

—Pope St. John Paul II, *Memory and Identity*¹

ANDREW JONES’S *Before Church and State* is a truly revolutionary book.² It not only challenges many of the assumptions that underwrite so many studies in history, political science, theology, and related disciplines, but lays the groundwork for others to take his work further and apply them in their own fields.³ To say that *Before Church and State* has what it takes to shift paradigms in the reigning scholarship is too mild. *Before Church and State* is more like a time bomb, each new reading of which brings it closer to detonation. Like a live hand grenade tossed at a bookshelf, *Before Church and State* rips through the scholarship of so many books. His intent was not as hostile as these metaphors imply. Jones is simply trying

¹ Pope Saint John Paul II, *Memory and Identity: Conversations at the Dawn of a Millennium* (New York: Rizzoli, 2005), 168.

² Andrew Willard Jones, *Before Church and State: A Study of Social Order in the Sacramental Kingdom of St. Louis IX* (Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Academic, 2017).

³ I would venture to opine that Scott Hahn, *The First Society: The Sacrament of Matrimony and the Restoration of the Social Order* (Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Road, 2018), is the first book that takes partial inspiration from Jones’s work, which he cites. He also dedicates the volume to Jones.

to get the history right. In doing that, however, he has left mountains of literature containing received scholarly assumptions and misreadings in his wake. There is no going back after reading *Before Church and State*. Medieval history, the thirteenth century, the history of secularization, and the history of Western political thought can never be read the same again. More importantly, Jones's work poses a challenge for us today, as we seek to envision our role in the social order in which we live, and as we strive for a brighter hope-filled future.⁴ In what follows, I provide an overview of *Before Church and State* and then situate Jones's work in the broader context of theories of secularization and genealogies of modernity.

The Anachronism of Church versus State

Jones's volume kicks off with a brief preface (xiii–xvi) wherein he explains the genesis of his work, which began as his history doctoral dissertation at Saint Louis University, whose name derived from the very same Saint Louis Jones would study in his project. As he approached the study, however, he soon began to realize that modern paradigms for understanding medieval society just did not fit the evidence: "Notions of Church and State, of religious and secular, of worship and politics, of private and public, simply couldn't be made to express what I saw in the sources" (xiii). Rather, what Jones discovered in the copious primary texts he examined was a "unity of the spiritual and the temporal powers within a coherent medieval Christian worldview" (xiii). What he does in the rest of the volume is unpack just what that unified "medieval Christian worldview" looked like, by walking through the primary evidence. What he discovered was a unified sacramental society completely bereft of any modern analogue to "sovereignty," contrary to virtually all prior scholarship.

He proceeds with a lengthy and thorough introduction, "Church and State?" (1–28). The introduction begins with four quotations from Saint Augustine, Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, Cardinal Henry of Susa, and Vincent of Beauvais. After this introduction, every single section and chapter commences with a quotation from Saint Augustine, all but one coming from the same source, his *City of God*.⁵ It becomes clear that Jones is reading through this history alongside *City of God*, which I think helps him keep a supernatural perspective as he does his careful historical work. He states his main argument up front:

⁴ Hahn's *First Society* takes up this challenge and proposes to do just that, inspired in part by Jones's work.

⁵ The singular exception is chapter 13, which opens with a quotation from St. Augustine's *On the Trinity*.

Thirteenth-century France was not a world of the secular and the religious vying for position and power, but a world in which the material and the spiritual were totally dependent on each other and penetrated one another at every level. This was a world not of the religious and the secular, but of the New Testament and the Old, of virtue and vice, of grace and law, of peace and violence. This world offered a coherent vision of the whole in which mankind moved through grace from the lesser to the greater, from the fallen to the redeemed (2).⁶

Jones underscores how different this society was from our own:

Our own vision is secular. Even when we acknowledge the importance of religion, we do so from within the assumption of the secular: that reality itself is ultimately free of the religious. Religions come and go; they are relative. The secular is permanent; it is absolute and universal. To us, the secular is the field on which the game of history—including religious history—is played. Within this secular vision, religion as a sociological category is often considered inessential to the concept of society itself. In this view, religious societies are, in a sense, accidentally religious: their religion can fade away. . . . To us moderns, the secular is fundamental. . . . In such an approach “religion” is a category that functions *within* the secular. (3)

Before summarizing his volume (22–28), Jones lays the fundamental groundwork that is necessary to understand the vision of medieval society he articulates—derived directly from the primary sources. He calls for the abandonment of the anachronistic categories we habitually use and read back into the medieval sources—like “secular” and “religious,” “Church” and “State.” These individual terms were used, but not in the way we employ them today. He also introduces us to the main figures who will serve as the focus of his study: Saint Louis IX (1214–1270; ruled France 1226–1270) and Gui Foucois (1190–1268). Both men are incredibly interesting characters.

⁶ In other words, “the Middle Ages were neither religious nor secular because the religious and the secular are two features of a single construction: the modern, Western social architecture of ‘Church’ and ‘State,’ ‘private’ and ‘public,’ ‘individual’ and ‘market,’ and so on. The societies of the Middle Ages had a different architecture based on different assumptions and different concepts, ultimately on a different vision of the cosmos” (4).

Saint Louis was a layman and temporal ruler. He is the last king to have been canonized thus far—the only canonized king of France—and thus provides us a glimpse into how a saint governs in his society. Foucois is particularly fascinating in that he played important roles in both the spiritual and temporal realms. He was a married laymen with children and served as an important legal aid to the king, Saint Louis. After the death of his wife, Foucois was ordained a priest and then very quickly was ordained a bishop. He was named a cardinal and served as the papal legate to France. He was then elected Pope Clement IV and reigned from 1265–1268. The ways in which Saint Louis and Clement IV worked together provide a great example of what Jones is trying to describe.

Jones explains what their medieval context was like, in contrast to our own:

In the Middle Ages the “secular” was integral to a conception of social reality that was thoroughly “supernatural” in character. . . . The “religious” was not accidental to this world, and the kings were not the State. It was a sacramental world in which the material and the spiritual were everywhere and always present together. The spiritual power was the power of the priests to dispense the grace that sustained this society in charity and they wielded the spiritual sword of excommunication against the mortal sinner. The temporal power was the power of the laymen to organize the world of things and events, and they wielded the temporal sword against the violent. (5)

The rest of his book walks through the evidence for his argument, showing the unity of the sacramental society of the thirteenth century.

Heretical Violence

Jones divides his book into four main parts. He entitles part 1 “The Business of the Peace and the Faith” (29–165). This notion, “the business of the peace and the faith,” will be important for understanding the remainder of the book. He begins each part with a brief overview. In the overview of the first part (29–32) he explains the relationship between the Inquisition and the French institution of the *enquêteurs*, who functioned as “itinerate judges” (30). Significantly, Foucois, the future Clement IV, was intimately involved with the development of both the Inquisition and the institution of *enquêteurs*, and played a hands-on role for both. The key to understanding how both institutions worked, which becomes the key to understanding the union of temporal and spiritual authorities in general, was their shared goal of *negotium pacis et fidei*, that is, “the business of the

peace and the faith." Spiritual and temporal rulers worked in their different ways for that shared goal.

In chapter 1, "Enemies of the Faith and of the Peace" (33–51), Jones culls the primary textual evidence, using case after case, to show the intimate connection between heresy and crime in medieval society, that challenges to orthodox doctrine were threats to earthly peace and threats to earthly peace were tied up with heresy. Jones explains: "We can understand neither the heretics without the mercenaries nor the mercenaries without the heretics. It is their unity that makes the entire *business of the peace and faith* intelligible, and it is a unity that goes to the core of the thirteenth-century conception of society" (35–36).⁷ It was the mercenaries that protected the heretics, and the heretics provided the intellectual architecture that supported the anti-society of the mercenaries. This view of society was connected with medieval biblical exegesis as well. Jones uses Pope Innocent III's sermon which opened Lateran IV, and the classic issue of the "two swords," by way of example:

The movement from the historical to the allegorical, to the tropological, and on to the anagogical was not simply a movement of scriptural exegesis, as if the senses were parallel glosses to the biblical text. Rather, the historical was fulfilled in the allegorical, the allegorical in the tropological, and all in the anagogical, and this sequence was nothing short of the very path of salvation, for society as a whole as much as for each of its individuals members. Revelation was read this way because reality was, in fact, understood this way. Both swords, the spiritual power's excommunication . . . and the secular power's iron, then, performed the function of the law. (47)

Jones's second chapter, "Enemies of the King and the Church" (53–73), follows the theme of the first by showing how the enemies of the king were the enemies of the Church, and vice versa. When "peace perished, . . . heresy spread" (54), and likewise, when heresy spread, peace perished. Temporal and ecclesiastical authorities had different functions within medieval society, but the functions of both often overlapped the temporal and spiritual

⁷ In regard to the official relevant canon from Lateran III (canon 27), Jones elaborates: "To the orthodox the heretic was a type of perverted monk or priest, a distortion of the spiritual and his defender a type of perverted knight, a distortion of the secular, a violent and unjust warrior, a mercenary—the drafters of the canon understood the spiritual and the secular as always bound up together both in orthodoxy and in heresy" (36).

realms, and moreover, they shared a single mission, that of the “business of the peace and the faith.” Thus, as Jones underscores, when Louis launched a crusade, it would be mistaken to view this as the king simply following the express desires of the pope; rather, Louis understood it as the necessary demands of his position precisely as king. As Jones examines various oaths and legal documents, he points out how obedience to the Church and obedience to the king were seen as two sides of the same coin. If you were faithful to the king, you understood yourself, and were understood by others, to be faithful to the Church, and vice versa. If you were unfaithful to the king, you were seen as unfaithful to the Church, and vice versa. Thus, heresy and crime were viewed as going hand-in-hand. This was enshrined in secular and ecclesiastical laws from the time. One prominent example of this that Jones brings to light is how “contempt for the sentence of excommunication became rebellion against the king, and rebellion against the king was grounds for excommunication” (64–65).

Arguably the most important example Jones provides in this chapter of the unified sacramental vision of this medieval society is the Council of Toulouse and the crusade against southern France, and the Peace of Paris. Jones explains:

The council was not concerned only with rooting out the black-robed heretics hiding in the woods, but also with up-rooting the entire heretical social order and replacing it with a Catholic social order. . . . Read together, the documents of 1229 aimed at dismantling an entire way of life and replacing it with another. They were directed against a society of small-scale warfare and vendetta. As the orthodox saw it, it was a world in which vassals had little obligation to their lords, and in which lords fought their wars with mercenaries, a world of castles and fortified villages and near perpetual violence. Within the orthodox sacramental cosmos, the society of the South was understood to be as intrinsically spiritual as it was temporal. To the orthodox, the “heretics” of the documents were not isolated dissidents; they were the holy men of a deeply unholy society. (69–72)

Chapter 3 is entitled “For the Extirpation of Heretical Depravity and for the Conservation of the Peace” (75–94). This chapter deals with Gui Foucois’s pivotal role in the Inquisition and secular *enquêteurs*. This dual secular and ecclesiastical cooperation for the same end explains the context for Louis’s crusade and broader reforms:

Louis sought to reform his officials and cleanse his kingdom of sin not just because that would help him gain the favor of God and so win a war. Rather, he was engaging in the crusade because he more-over intended to be the type of king who also reformed his officials and cleansed his kingdom of sin—they were multiple sides of the same *business*, a business to which Louis was committed as a Davidic monarch. (84)

The lines between the ecclesiastical inquisition and its secular counterpart were likewise blurred, at least for us, since “there was nothing ‘secular’ (in the modern sense) going on here” (85). Friars serving as “secular” judges did so in their role as working to do their part of the business of the peace and the faith.⁸ Gui’s role here was instrumental, since he was tasked with creating the regulations for the *enquêteurs*, but this was not some secular attempt to increase the state’s authority over that of the Church; rather it was an attempt for the temporal rulers to do their part in ensuring the business of the peace and the faith.

Davidic Kingship

In chapter 4, “From the Duty of Royal Power” (95–111), one of the key documents Jones examines is Louis’s *Grande ordonnance*, which too often is viewed as an example of state-building—an attempt to increase the secular State’s authority over and against that of the Church. Jones clarifies the situation and how it fits within the sacramental social order of the time in a more unified way:

Regardless of what these offices eventually evolved into, Louis was not building an absolutist State, let alone the foundations of a secular one. In the thirteenth century the *Grande Ordonnance* was a part of something that had nothing to do with absolutism, “divine right of kings,” the separation of Church and State, or the construction of the modern State. It was a part of the construction of a Christian kingdom. . . . When they are read as a secular action within orthodoxy, we can see that the articles of the *Grande Ordonnance* that not only forbid royal officers from swearing, playing games of chance, fornicating, and visiting taverns, but actually forbid *all* gambling, prosti-

⁸ On this, Jones notes: “The clerics and friars were working for peace and justice, and such things were understood to be as much a part of the ‘religious’ world in which they lived as were questions of doctrine or right worship—the concern of those other mostly Mendicant friars, the ‘inquisitors’ into heresy” (85).

tution, and frequenting taverns (by any except travelers) in the king's domain are not some moralizing or puritanical gloss to legislation otherwise notable for its establishment of official and bureaucratic government; they rather point to the very core of the *Grande Ordonnance's* significance. In the pursuit of the fulfillment of the "debt of royal power," Louis brought together the long-running discourse on right rulership with that on the moral life itself. . . . To Louis in the *Grand Ordonnance* the moral life of the laity was the same as that of the clergy. (98–100)⁹

This is quite radical for the time and shows a de facto recognition of the call to holiness among the laity as well as among the clergy and religious.

Jones's fifth chapter, "Desiring that the King Not Gain Some Advantage from This Violence" (113–44), explains the vision of medieval society, including its laws, in terms of peace as normative. This is not something we moderns are accustomed to. For us, war is the norm. Think of Thomas Hobbes's famous dictum about the state of nature, which he described as "such a warre, as is of every man, against every man."¹⁰ Such an ontology of violence makes sense of our modern rights language and legal infrastructure. Jones shows, however, how foreign such an ontology of violence is to medieval society, wherein an ontology of peace reigned. Courts stepped in when peace was violated, and they typically sided with established custom trying to restore peace where it had been broken. The view was not, as ours is, individuals running around with rights and desires kept in check by coercive force, but rather a peaceful society where coercive force had to enter to restore peace once it was shattered. Such breakers of the peace were a threat to both the temporal and ecclesial orders. Jones concludes this chapter: "Peace was found not in the unity forged by the overwhelming violence of the 'State' but in the partnership, really the friendship, of these powers engaged in a *business*, in the pursuit of a goal—the sanctification of the world and, ultimately, salvation" (143–44).

Chapter 6, "Gird Thy Sword Upon Thy Thigh, O Thou Most Power-

⁹ Jones elaborates: "Far from laying the groundwork for the 'secular' State, the *Grande Ordonnance* was a proposal to bring the spiritual and the temporal powers further into each other. It expanded the domain in which they overlapped and strengthened their unity within an orthodoxy that included the lay and clerical estates intrinsically and that recognized through its sacramental understanding of reality that fundamentally the spiritual and the material were not only not in conflict—rather, they interpenetrated each other at every level" (100).

¹⁰ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ch. 13, in *Leviathan*, vol. 2, *The English and Latin Texts (i)*, ed. Noel Malcolm (Oxford: Clarendon, 2012), 192.

ful (Ps 44)” (145–65), helps clarify how the kings were viewed as a sort of continuation of the Davidic monarchy, at least, in so much as they were attempting to live out the spirit of the Davidic kingdom, which was concerned with both spiritual and temporal matters. Jones explains:

In the world, in the realm of sin, the king wields the sword as did the historical kings of the Old Testament, but he does so not simply to achieve an earthly peace that consists only of submission, even submission to the Law. Rather, he wields the sword to prepare the sinner for Christ and ultimately to convert the kingdom of the Law into that of grace and so into the kingdom of true peace that was ruled by Christ himself. (151)

The Mass, where heaven meets earth, becomes the model. In the king’s rule, heaven is intended to meet earth in the broader sacramental society. In this society, spiritual and temporal are linked with a shared goal, albeit using their different means in the cooperation appropriate of friendship.

Disturbers of the Peace

Jones begins part 2, “Counsel and Aid” (167–310), with an overview (167–76) of what he will cover in the proceeding chapters. The first of these, chapter 7, “The Lord King Orders that the Plain Truth Be Found” (177–217), takes a look at copious parliamentary proceedings to examine how peace and justice were restored when conflict arose. This becomes an especially important chapter in demonstrating that, rather than a conflict between secular and religious authorities, we rather find temporal and ecclesiastical rulers exercising their respective authorities only when the peace is disturbed, and then only in order to restore peace, not in secular–religious power struggles. Sometimes the “secular” parlement ruled against the king. The questions were those of inquiring about who disturbed the prior peace, and then they were intent on setting things back in order.

Union of Spiritual and Temporal

In chapter 8, “The Spiritual and the Temporal” (219–47), Jones again shows the unity between spiritual and temporal authorities. He shows how what sometimes looks to moderns like the king “doing the Church’s bidding” (223) was actually the king exercising authority for the sake of justice, as he understood it. Such matters were always both spiritual and temporal. There were distinctions, such as between laity and clergy, but such distinctions were united with a common purpose. Jones observes: “Parlement sought to maintain peace in the temporal realm and the clerics

most certainly lived and dispensed the sacraments in the temporal realm. Indeed, the whole field of action was as much 'the Church' as it was the kingdom" (234). Although different, both swords found their origin in God, and the wielders of both understood themselves as wielding them differently for God.

The ninth chapter, "Counsel and Aid" (249–74), examines how the social "network of friends" (250) enabled large-scale achievements despite the lack of modern political centralization. Jones shows how "social power was wielded not through controlling 'proto-absolutist' institutions such as 'the Church' or 'the State,' but through building networks of cooperation, of loyalty, of debt, of favor, and of friendship" (250). Society thus was governed through such a network of *consilium* (counsel) and *auxilium* (aid). Such social networks functioned within the Church as well. It is in this context that Jones explains how peace and difference could coexist. In the modern period, after a Hobbesian ontology of violence has become assumed in virtually all Western political and legal traditions, difference and peace can coexist only through the imposition of centralized authority wielding a monopoly on legitimate forms of violence, and that violence, or threat of violence, can secure and maintain peace amidst difference. In contrast to this, however, Jones shows the medieval "Trinitarian cosmos" wherein "difference does not necessitate such conflict. Rather, differences can coexist and cooperate through friendship, through mutual giving and trust, and through a shared vision of divine justice" (260). Thus, when peace fails, coercive law enters; such laws do not emerge as the grounding of peace, but rather when the peace which is the grounding norm of society has failed. Thus, Jones aptly concludes, "The social order that the Crown was trying to build and that which the papacy was trying to build were basically the same—they were two aspects of the same organization of thought and power—and both believed the role of the other to be essential" (274).

In the tenth chapter, "In the Fullness of Royal Power" (275–310), Jones isolates the power of the crown in order to elucidate its role in medieval society, showing how, again and again, "apostolic and royal power worked in concert toward the achievement of shared ends, with neither side bending the other to its will" (281). Jones takes the concrete example of the elevation of three men who had been assisting the king to aid the work of Pope Urban IV: Gui Foucois, Simon de Brie, and Radulph Grosparmi, all of whom the Pope made cardinals. The first two would both become popes. Jones observes: "With the elevation of these men, the council of the pope, the college of cardinals, and the council of the king found real integration: these men remained in the king's network—this was the reason for their elevation—but were not thereby less in the council of the pope,

far from it" (284).¹¹ In this context, we find the theoretical expressed in the actual concrete set of circumstances which actually happened, namely that the idea of the *consilium et auxilium* which Jones identifies was precisely that there was no "State" as such that governed, as in the modern period, but rather that society was governed by a "network of friends" wherein each party, each "friend," "wielded his differentiated power on the field that was the peace, and with bits of law inserted here and there" (306). The vision he articulates, driven by the date in the historical sources, is that of "a single sacramental and incarnational world within which the material and the spiritual were always and everywhere intertwined" (310).

Part 3, "The Fullness of Papal Power" (311–91), begins with an overview (311–14). The focus here will be on the authority and role of the pope and his legates within the shared social order. Chapter 11, "In the Image of a Proconsul" (315–38), takes an in depth look at canon law at the time as it relates to his discussion of papal authority. He shows how the sacraments were not the only means the Church had of exercising its spiritual authority, but rather, Church law made its own contribution. All law, civil and ecclesiastical, had both temporal and spiritual goals, and they worked together in harmony to achieve the same end. In chapter 12, "With the Counsel and Assent of the King" (339–69), Jones takes a look at the crusades under Pope Clement (Foucois), both to the Holy Land and in what would later become Italy. In this context, gathering money, using it to help in the Holy Land, and stirring up support for the crusade were united as "a single project" (342). In the persons of King Louis and Pope Clement we find again an instantiation of the theory Jones has been demonstrating of the unified vision, working in their own collaborative but unique ways for the same shared end. Jones explains:

The pope's apostolic power was only one aspect of the fabric of this network, albeit an essential one. It had to be combined with royal power within the context of a total effort. It was not that an alliance between the king and the pope was advantageous; it was rather that the very structure of society, of the order that pope and king had built, was such that the execution of a major initiative required apostolic and royal power to act in concert within the context of a vast network of *consilium et auxilium* that was made up as much of prel-

¹¹ Jones presents as an interesting side note but something well worth remembering within this history the fact that, "with his elevation, Gui moved to the papal curia, where he worked as Urban IV's legal advisor just as the Dominican theologian Thomas Aquinas served as his theological advisor" (285).

ates as of laymen. It was through such networks that social power was wielded and the pope's fullness of power had to be deployed within this context. (357–58)

In light of this history, a whole host of questions arise when a pope died. This is the topic Jones takes up in the last chapter of this section, chapter 13, "*Sede Vacante*" (371–91). Jones shows how, "the status quo always took precedent" (379). The questions concerned what to do about the authority of papal legates after the pope died. What sorts of decisions could be made, what were ratified, and so on. Had the status quo somehow been challenged? The logic was basically as Jones describes it: "Nothing new could begin after jurisdiction was removed, but all pending cases were to be completed" (380). The relationship between the pope and his cardinals was far more intimate than average networks of friends in medieval society, but the relationships were more "moral" or "familial" than "constitutional" or "democratic" (386). Thus, when a pope died, although the cardinals could not legally make novel innovations, they were so connected to the office and person of the pope in his life, that they could function as part of his body even after he died. The logic here follows the assumption that the pope, as father of the Catholic family spread across different lands, intends the good of the family, of the Church, and that the cardinals similarly intended fidelity to the pope and the Church. Again, Jones reminds his readers: "Friendship, not the violence of human law, was the fundamental principle of social order" (388).

Christian Kingdom

Part 4, "Conclusions: St. Thomas Aquinas and the 'Most Christian Kingdom'" (393–454), begins with an overview (393–95) and sums up the volume's conclusions. He reiterates a point difficult for moderns to keep in view, but essential for understanding this history, namely:

The State did not exist at all. The State exists only as a particular organizational scheme of thought and practice, as a particular social order at a particular time and place. It has no independent, transhistorical or transcultural existence, no universal applicability. It may be true that the State described by Max Weber . . . had historical reality in the West during the modern period, but that was as transitory as was the social order of the thirteenth century. . . . "The State" and its companion, "the secular," have a history, and there was a time before they existed. . . . The "religious" has a history, and the construction of the concept of the Church as the

realm of the religious is a product of that history. (394)

This is important to keep in mind as Jones begins chapter 14, “The New Law and the Two Swords” (397–448), taking Saint Thomas Aquinas as his guide. Jones reads salvation history with a focus on natural law, in light of the reality of sin, with Saint Thomas.

Although natural law reflects God’s design for how we are to live, sin rendered us unable to live out these demands apart from grace. Jones points out how human law is intended to be “nothing other than the practical determination of the natural law, its application” (401). In Saint Thomas’s reading, however, sin has so fundamentally damaged us that we do not reason or act in accord with the dictates of the natural law, and this affects our human laws. The Old Law, according to Saint Thomas, was intended by God “to begin to correct this condition” (407). As Jones elaborates:

The Ten Commandments were the most basic dictates of the natural law. Through them, God re-promulgated a law that before sin had been immediately available to reason. . . . The totality of the natural law, the entire life in accordance with reason and so with virtue, was contained within the precepts of the Old Law. Through the Old Law, God’s promulgation of the natural law internally through the illumination of the human mind and through human reason’s contemplation of creation, now compromised by sin, was re-accomplished externally through the revelation of the same law. (408–9)

The divine law of the Old Testament was intended to help the people worship God aright, but also to live rightly with each other. The Old Law not only restored the natural law, but “habituated” the people in living according to the divine decrees (412). As an attempt to help us live by the natural law, the Old Law pointed beyond itself to the New Law Christ would institute, which would be primarily interior.

Jones explains that, “within the New Law . . . human nature was redeemed, becoming once again itself and most fully ‘natural,’ even as grace elevated it past itself to its supernatural end” (414). Unlike the Old Law, then, the New Law not only pointed out how to live, but went beyond this, supernaturally enabling us to actually live out the precepts indicated by God. The theological virtues, faith, hope, and love, were foundational to the New Law. This is the context for understanding medieval conceptions of instantiating the New Law in society. This would require both tempo-

ral and spiritual powers. The temporal power “provided organization and direction to the grace-filled community as it satisfied the necessities of life” (421). Again, in this context, the violence involved in wielding the temporal sword was not the main thing keeping the peace, in contrast to modern conceptions; rather, the temporal sword was wielded only when such peace was already threatened or lost. The challenge on the ground, so to speak, was, as Jones puts it, “that the realm of perfected nature and the true, interior peace it proposed was everywhere and always . . . intermingled with the realm of fallen nature and the exterior peace it proposed” (426).

Jones summarizes the work of the two swords, temporal and spiritual, thoroughly and eloquently, and is thus well worth quoting at length:

The spiritual and temporal powers’ project was to bring people to interior peace, to life under the New Law. . . . It was as they operated in the realm of sin that the most pronounced distinctions between the temporal and spiritual powers emerged: they became most clearly two powers when they were the two swords. . . . Against the violence of sin, the temporal power was that authority that used force, and the spiritual power was that authority that invited the sinner back to the realm of true peace, that preached penance and offered mercy and so a return to grace through the sacraments. . . . The spiritual sword sought to scare the sinner back into the realm of grace before he really left it. Excommunication was first medicinal. . . . If this failed, . . . the temporal sword would be deployed to frighten or force him into accepting a worldly peace. This exterior peace not only protected the society of true peace from the violent but also created in the sinner habits that were conducive to acquired virtue and conversion, and it was the space within which the spiritual power sought conversions back to, first, a sort of faith and so subjection to the divine law (as had been the case under the Old Law), and then to Charity through grace and so freedom and true peace. (426–27)

In this context, the ultimate purpose of Church law was to regulate “the availability of the sacraments to a fallen world” (428). The purpose of law from the perspective of the temporal power was “to build a society of virtue” (428). Thus, the spiritual and temporal powers worked together in their different ways for the same goal: the beatific vision.¹²

¹² Jones explains it thus: “The temporal power sought to build a society of virtue, a task that included education, good counsel, leadership, discipline . . . and

In light of all of this, it is a mistake to view the legal developments of the thirteenth century, and prior in the twelfth, as some sort of early beginnings to modern secularization, modern state-building, and so on, over and against the religious. On the contrary, as Jones has demonstrated quite persuasively, “it was the effort to convert more and more of the world from violence to true peace, to produce in the law the bridge from fallen nature to redeemed nature” (431). Jones brings his important volume to a close with his approximately five-page fifteenth chapter, “The Most Christian Kingdom” (449–54), wherein he explains how Jesus—the Second Person of the Trinity taking on human nature—is the ultimate grounding of the relations between temporal and spiritual. The two powers worked together, and both needed each other in order to be fully themselves: “What made the spiritual power a power was that it operated in the material world of the temporal. . . . What made the temporal power a power, rather than the violence of the pagan kings, was that it operated within the spiritual, that it participated in divine law” (452).

Genealogies of Modernity

In what follows, I hope to situate Jones’s argument within the broader context of contemporary theories of secularization, and thus genealogies of modernity. The “secular” is a contested term. Often juxtaposed with “religion” and “religious,” we assume modern definitions, which Jones has shown to be foreign to the earlier medieval universe. Thus one of the great contributions his work makes is to highlight the inevitable anachronisms which occur when we read such modern notions back into the medieval sources. Related misunderstandings occur even when we discuss “modernity,” which my own doctoral advisor, William Portier, used to say was “embodied in modern secular states.”¹³

protection from outside threats. . . . The spiritual power was necessary for the achievement of this object [a virtuous life] because . . . true virtue was not possible without grace. . . . What is more, the end of human society was not simply the life of virtue, but rather, through it, to achieve the enjoyment of God, the beatific vision, which was perfect peace. . . . The royal and the priestly were therefore distinct but united in a single endeavor that was rooted in the united kingship and priesthood of Christ himself. The spiritual power was ‘higher’ than the temporal power not because the rule of the temporal world of virtue was a delegation from the spiritual power, but because the temporal world was brought up and into true peace through the spiritual power” (428–29).

¹³ William L. Portier, *Divided Friends: Portraits of the Roman Catholic Modernist Crisis in the United States* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2013), 7 (see 7–12 for the broader context).

By the “secular” we typically mean something like the world apart from God: the public space from which “religion” has been banished. Jones problematizes this dichotomy as it is too often applied to earlier times where such words meant something quite different. As he explains, “in the Middle Ages the ‘secular’ was integral to a conception of social reality that was thoroughly ‘supernatural’ in character” (5). Or as the anthropologist Talal Asad states: “At one time ‘the secular’ was part of a theological discourse.”¹⁴ Earlier Jones elaborates: “Thirteenth-century France was not a world of the secular and the religious vying for position and power, but a world in which the material and the spiritual were totally dependent on each other and penetrated one another at every level” (2).

Certain segments of the Catholic theological world have retained this older sense. Thus we still speak of religious life in reference to religious orders, and diocesan priests are understood to be secular clerics. Some official Church documents still write of the secular as the temporal realm where God is present and which is the ordinary operating theater of the lay faithful.¹⁵ We find this as well in some of the writings of the saints.¹⁶ Changes in definition become clear as secularization enters English idiom in reference to the violent “stripping of the altars,” as detailed in Eamon Duffy’s book by the same title, whereby lands held by the Catholic Church were violently taken over by the state in the English Reformation.¹⁷

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI summarizes the modern view of the secular:

The secular state arose for the first time in history, abandoning and excluding as mythological any divine guarantee or legitimation of the political element, and declaring that God is a private question that does not belong to the public sphere or to the democratic formation of the public will. Public life came to be considered the domain of reason alone, which had no place for a seemingly unknowable God: from this perspective, religion and faith in God

¹⁴ Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 192.

¹⁵ E.g., *Lumen Gentium* §31 and *Apostolicam Actuositatem* §2.

¹⁶ E.g., Pope Saint John Paul II, *Ecclesia in America* §44 (which is a formal document of the Church), and Saint Josemaría Escrivá, “Amar al mundo apasionadamente. Homilía pronunciada en el campus de la Universidad de Navarra el 8-X-1967,” in *Conversaciones con Mons. Escrivá de Balaguer: Edición crítico-histórica*, ed. José Luis Illanes and Alfredo Méndiz (Madrid: Rialp, 2012), 473–508.

¹⁷ See Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England c. 1400 – c. 1580* (New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 1992).

belonged to the domain of sentiment, not of reason. God and His will therefore ceased to be relevant to public life.¹⁸

Contrast this notion of the secular with the use of “secular” in the thought of Saint Josemaría Escrivá:

God is calling you to serve him *in and from* civil, material, secular doings of human life: in a laboratory, in the hospital operating room, in the barracks, in the university chair, in the factory, in the workshop, in the field, in the home and in all the immense panorama of work, God awaits us each day. . . . There is *something* holy, divine, hidden in the most common situations, that is up to each one of you to discover.¹⁹

These represent very different uses of “secular”: in one God is absent; in the other God is present and calling for a divine encounter, a form of contemplation in the middle of the world.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels’s *Communist Manifesto* belongs to what we might call the early stages of a modern secularization theory.²⁰ We might add the work of Émile Durkheim and Max Weber, all of which seem to envision the secular world as “disenchanted,” to use Weber’s nomenclature.²¹ Critiques of Enlightenment “disenchantment” emerged especially after the Second World War. I am thinking here specifically of the neo-Marxist thinkers of the Frankfurt School, like Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno with their *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.²² The idea that the secular required the demise of religion has not died, as we are likely all too well aware. Something akin to this appears as the backdrop and

¹⁸ Joseph Ratzinger, “The Spiritual Roots of Europe: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow,” in Joseph Ratzinger and Marcello Pera, *Without Roots: The West, Relativism, Christianity, Islam*, trans. Michael F. Moore (New York: Basic, 2006), 62–63.

¹⁹ St. Josemaría, “Amar al mundo apasionadamente,” 487 (translation mine).

²⁰ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei* (1848), 3rd ed. (Berlin: Dietz, 1973).

²¹ Émile Durkheim, *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse: le système totémique en Australie* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1912); Max Weber, *Wissenschaft als Beruf* (Munich: Duncker and Humblot, 1919). Weber used the phrase “die Entzauberung der Welt” (“the disenchantment of the world”), which was inspired by Schiller’s earlier “die Entgötterung der Natur” (“the de-divinization of nature”; “Die Götter Griechenlands,” in *Gedichte von Friedrich von Schiller*, [Philadelphia: Schäfer and Koradi, 1868], 55–57).

²² Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialektik der Aufklärung. Philosophische Fragmente* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1969 [originally 1944]).

assumption of our culture today. Indeed, Jones points out as much when he admits that:

Our own vision is secular. Even when we acknowledge the importance of religion, we do so from within the assumption of the secular: that reality itself is ultimately free of the religious. Religions come and go; they are relative. The secular is permanent; it is absolute and universal. To us, the secular is the field on which the game of history—including religious history—is played. . . . To us moderns, the secular is fundamental. . . . In such an approach, “religion” is a category that functions *within* the secular. (3)

This was not the vision of the world of the thirteenth century.

There have been several histories of modernity that have contributed something helpful to this discussion. Below I briefly mention a few of them in passing, in order to situate Jones’s fine work within this tradition. Richard Popkin published an enormous amount uncovering the early modern reception of philosophical skepticism.²³ His most famous work is *The History of Scepticism*, which went through three separate editions.²⁴ Popkin’s scholarship helping demonstrate the role of skepticism within the traditions associated with Enlightenment thinkers showed an important part of this history, which was anything but the work of unbiased science.²⁵

The work of Alasdair MacIntyre was also important in showing the changing contexts and practices that rendered virtues once intelligible from antiquity through the medieval period unintelligible after the

²³ See, e.g.: Richard H. Popkin, *The High Road to Pyrrhonism* (San Diego: Austin Hill, 1980); Popkin, *The Third Force in Seventeenth-Century Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 1992); Popkin and Avrum Stroll, *Skeptical Philosophy for Everyone* (Amherst, MA: Prometheus, 2002).

²⁴ Richard H. Popkin, *The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Descartes* (Assen, NL: Van Gorcum, 1960); Popkin, *The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Spinoza* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979); Popkin, *The History of Scepticism: From Savonarola to Bayle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

²⁵ Mention should be made here of Benjamin Wiker’s much neglected *Moral Darwinism: How We Became Hedonists* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002), which does similar work. Also the work of Jonathan Israel has been important, showing specifically how Baruch Spinoza’s thought influenced virtually every aspect of Enlightenment intellectual debate. See, e.g., Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650–1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), and Israel, *Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man, 1670–1752* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

Enlightenment, particularly in his *After Virtue*.²⁶ He followed this with *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*²⁷ In his Gifford Lectures, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*, MacIntyre then looked at the nineteenth-century encyclopedic rationality, the Nietzschean postmodern genealogical project, and the ways in which tradition (in this case, Thomism) hearkened back to an earlier mode, escaping the problems of both modern and postmodern critique.²⁸ Talal Asad's work helped undercut the old assumptions about the neutrality of the secular order, mentioning the twin origins of "religious" and "secular" newly redefined in the modern period. He tackled these first in his *Genealogies of Religion* and then in his *Formations of the Secular*.²⁹

A major turning point in these sorts of studies occurred with the publication of John Milbank's *Theology and Social Theory* in 1990.³⁰ Ostensibly about the relationship of theology to the social sciences, Milbank's tour de force was an attempt at showing the inadequacy of the social sciences at explaining human behavior when compared with theology. Milbank's controversial volume challenged the methodological atheism inherent in the social sciences as modern science. In light of Milbank's work, questions arise concerning even the possibility of another way, even of Paul Hanly Furfey's "supernatural sociology" as a social science.³¹ Perhaps no line

²⁶ Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981).

²⁷ Alasdair MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988).

²⁸ Alasdair MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopaedia, Genealogy, and Tradition* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990). To MacIntyre's work might be added Stanley Hauerwas, *With the Grain of the Universe: The Church's Witness and Natural Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2001), Hauerwas, *The State of the University: Academic Knowledges and the Knowledge of God* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), and Gavin D'Costa, *Theology in the Public Square: Challenges in Contemporary Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005).

²⁹ Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); Asad, *Formations of the Secular*.

³⁰ John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006 [1990]).

³¹ E.g., Paul Hanly Furfey, "Why a Supernatural Sociology?" *American Catholic Sociological Review* 1 (1940): 167–71. On Furfey and his "supernatural sociology," see, e.g.: Nicholas K. Rademacher, *Paul Hanly Furfey: Priest, Scientist, Social Reformer* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017); William L. Portier, "Paul Hanley Furfey: Catholic Extremist and Supernatural Sociologist, 1935–1941," *Josephinum Journal of Theology* 16, no. 1 (2009): 24–37; George P. Graham, "Sociology and Faith: The Witness of Paul Hanley Furfey," *Catholic Social Science*

within these post-Weberian studies is as well-known as Milbank's "once, there was no 'secular.'"³² By denying the secular's often assumed perennial existence, Milbank is not denying its long history. Rather, he is attempting to point out the new meaning it achieves in modernity.³³ Writing further he mentions something that lies at the center of Jones's more careful and focused study, namely that, in the medieval period, "there was the single community of Christendom."³⁴

Shortly after Milbank's and Asad's works, William Cavanaugh published his 1995 article "A Fire Strong Enough to Consume the House': The Wars of Religion and the Rise of the State,"³⁵ which he later expanded in his book *The Myth of Religious Violence*.³⁶ Cavanaugh tackled that favorite myth of modern secular nation states, namely that the modern secular centralized nation state is necessary in order to keep the peace. The story he counters is well-known. The Protestant Reformation shattered Christendom, resulting in violent religious conflagrations erupting across the continent. Following the work of Asad and others, Cavanaugh shows how this story is anachronistic. Religion was only then being redefined in the modern sense. Moreover, as he demonstrates in fine detail, many of these conflicts defy this overly simplistic narrative, since the various sides in the battles were not easily divisible into Protestant versus Catholic; that is, they were not fighting over religious doctrines.

In the wake of these studies, a number of others have emerged attempting to show the neglected theological origins of modernity. Charles

Review 8 (2003): 111–21.

³² Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory*, 9.

³³ Milbank clarifies his meaning further: "Once, there was no 'secular.' And the secular was not latent, waiting to fill more space with the steam of the 'purely human,' when the pressure of the sacred was relaxed. Instead there was the single community of Christendom, with its dual aspects of *sacerdotium* and *regnum*. The *saeculum*, in the medieval era, was not a space, a domain, but a time—the interval between fall and *eschaton* where coercive justice, private property and impaired natural reason must make shift to cope with the unredeemed effects of sinful humanity" (*Theology and Social Theory*, 9).

³⁴ Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory*, 9.

³⁵ William T. Cavanaugh, "A Fire Strong Enough to Consume the House': The Wars of Religion and the Rise of the State," *Modern Theology* 11, no. 4 (1995): 397–420. Cavanaugh followed this with "Killing for the Telephone Company: Why the Nation-State is Not the Keeper of the Common Good," *Modern Theology* 20, no. 2 (2004): 243–74. See also Cavanaugh, *Theopolitical Imagination* (London: T&T Clark, 2002).

³⁶ William T. Cavanaugh, *The Myth of Religious Violence: Secular Ideology and the Roots of Modern Conflict* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Taylor's *A Secular Age* is perhaps the most visible and commented-upon of these more recent studies.³⁷ For Taylor secularization is not the complete disappearance of "religion," but rather the relegation of any religion to simply one among many. In this group of newer studies belongs Michael Gillespie's *The Theological Origins of Modernity*.³⁸ Focusing on intellectuals from the Renaissance and early modern periods, Gillespie attempts to trace specific theological origins of modernity, as his title implies. The specter of nominalism figures prominently in both Taylor's and Gillespie's accounts.

Eric Nelson's *The Hebrew Republic* joins a growing scholarly interest in Jewish theological sources of the early modern politics that gave rise to modern secular states, thus again showing theological developments as essential to the emergence of modernity.³⁹ One problem with these studies is their failure to recognize the secularizing trend in the theologies they identify, like Erastianism or Gallicanism. This is one area where Brad Gregory's *The Unintended Reformation* has an edge on these earlier studies.⁴⁰ Gregory understands the secularizing trends already present in the theological positions of the Protestant Reformers, as when he writes: "By rejecting the Roman church's authority and much of medieval Christianity, the Reformation pushed the Republic of Letters in a secularizing direction: instead of being a network focused *on* the renewal of Christendom, it became a refuge *from* divisive, disruptive, and embattled religious affairs."⁴¹

Many of these studies, however, are grounded in the work in political history that envisions the medieval world as one of increasing tension between church and state. This is especially true of Cavanaugh's narrative and has been true of much of my own work as well.⁴² Much of this is indebted to the scholarship of Joseph Strayer.⁴³ This is perhaps one of the

³⁷ Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

³⁸ Michael Allen Gillespie, *The Theological Origins of Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

³⁹ Eric Nelson, *The Hebrew Republic: Jewish Sources and the Transformation of European Political Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010). See also the contributions to *Political Hebraism: Judaic Sources in Early Modern Political Thought*, ed. Gordon Schochet, Fania Oz-Salzberger, and Meirav Jones (Jerusalem: Shalem, 2008).

⁴⁰ Brad S. Gregory, *The Unintended Reformation: How a Religious Revolution Secularized Society* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

⁴¹ Gregory, *Unintended Reformation*, 335.

⁴² E.g., Jeffrey L. Morrow, *Three Skeptics and the Bible: La Peyrère, Hobbes, Spinoza, and the Reception of Modern Biblical Criticism* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2016).

⁴³ E.g., Joseph R. Strayer, *On the Medieval Origins of the Modern State* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970).

most important boons from Jones's study. *Before Church and State* promises to break us free from the anachronistic trap of reading contemporary church–state conflicts back into medieval Christendom, where such concepts, let alone conflicts, would have been completely unintelligible. Jones's work requires us to relearn the vocabulary of our medieval forebears in order to understand what they were about. This is important for Catholics especially since what they were about tells us something about what we are about.

Hope for the Future Based on Jones's Vision of the Past

In 1980, Monsignor Eugene Kevane wrote an unabashedly Catholic reading of this history, stretching from classical antiquity to the contemporary period after the Second Vatican Council in a forgotten volume entitled *The Lord of History*.⁴⁴ Kevane entitles his seventh chapter "Modernity as Apostasy from God." In a way, as Jones's work clarifies, this is a telling description. The implications are that modern atheism and secularism are, in a certain sense, Christian heresies. With meticulous detail, Jones documents the unified Christian world of thirteenth-century France. One gets the sense that the sacramental vision was not unique to France and her workings with the papacy, but obtained throughout Christendom. It was a theological and political whole. What modern secularization does is keep the legal structure in place—at least some of it—and jettison the theology that rendered the law and social order intelligible.⁴⁵

Jones powerfully makes the case for a coherent unified sacramental Christendom that explains both why clerics and religious were so concerned with temporal matters and why lay rulers were so concerned with excommunications, penance, and the like—matters we would consider religious. Priests, bishops, popes, and religious were concerned with temporal matters as well as spiritual. The same was true of the laity,

⁴⁴ Eugene Kevane, *The Lord of History: Christocentrism and the Philosophy of History* (Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 1980). A new edition of this volume has just been published in 2018 by Emmaus Road. For briefer treatments of the history of secularization within the history of philosophy and theology, see Pope Saint John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio* §§45–48 and Pope Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi* §§42–44.

⁴⁵ Jones phrases it this way: "The modern Sate remains 'secular' only in the medieval sense. Or perhaps another way to put it is that the modern 'secular' remains profoundly 'religious.' It is the bottom tier of exteriorized and highly specified law within the Christian dynamic divorced from the upper tier of interiorized and harmonized law. . . . The spiritual power is reduced to its function in the lower tier, to its preaching and its example of upright living, and canon law becomes little more than the bylaws of religious clubs" (444–45).

be they princes, kings, or members of parliament. This was the case because both lay and clerical authorities were concerned with the “business of the peace and the faith,” and both temporal and spiritual realities were united there. Understood along these lines, there was no battle between church and state, precisely because there was no concept of “church” that excluded the laity, nor was there a concept of “state” as separable from the spiritual order administered through the sacraments via the priesthood. Thus, what appears to modern historians as conflicts between church and state were instead attempts by the temporal rulers to ensure justice by ecclesiastical rulers, and vice versa; the two distinct authorities or “swords” were inextricably bound in the unified “business of the peace and the faith.”

This vision of society, unified as it was and centered on the sacraments, has its attractions. But there is no going back. Jones’s account does not deny the rise of secular states, nor the real situations in which we find ourselves today. He helps us have a better understanding of the past. He builds on the insights of Asad, Cavanaugh, MacIntyre, Milbank, and Taylor. But in deftly challenging the work of Strayer and others, without denying their gains, Jones has brought the conversation to a new place, which promises to explode prior paradigms. What we must do now is think through the implications Jones’s narrative has for us today, as well as for our future. Promising, I think, is the fact that the social structure Jones describes “was predicated not on war, but on the peace of differentiated relationships. . . . Peace was possible precisely because difference made Charity—duty, gift, love—possible” (50).

Cavanaugh writes:

If we understand the unity of body and soul, we must understand that what is really at stake is not body-power versus soul-power, but competing types of soul/body disciplines, some violent and some peaceful. Christians must understand that the state’s control of the body is a control of the soul as well. The church must see that its own disciplinary resources—Eucharist, penance, virtue, works of mercy, martyrdom—are not matters of the soul which may somehow “animate” the “real world” of bodies, but are rather body/soul disciplines meant to produce actions, practices, habits that are visible in the world.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ William T. Cavanaugh, *Torture and Eucharist: Theology, Politics, and the Body of Christ* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 197. Cavanaugh’s own account is hampered by his reliance upon the work of Strayer, thus the throne-versus-altar debate he sees in the thirteenth century is anachronistic: “By the end of the thirteenth century,

The stakes are high. Our task is none other than the evangelization of our culture, which appears to be in tatters. We must bear in mind, however, that the purpose is not merely earthly, the re-forging of an authentic culture, but heavenly, the evangelization of our neighbors within this decaying culture. The ultimate goal is to remove obstacles to their sanctification, their divinization, and our own. But not only that. We need to put them, and us, in direct contact with “the God whose light shines even in an age of metaphysical winter; indeed, the God whose perennial light as Creator shines even in the face of modernity.”⁴⁷ As Jones’s narrative implies, this would mean entering fully into the Church’s rich sacramental life, which provided the context for medieval society in the thirteenth century, and must again for us today. Here, in the sacraments and the rich sacramental life of the Church, including her liturgical calendar and disciplines, we have great hope. For here, in the Church’s sacramental life, we encounter that grace which is able to transform our own tattered lives, and thus the world. As David Fagerberg so eloquently writes: “The Christian mysteries are explosions that transfigure everything that lies within their blast radius; they cannot be restrained within the walls of the temple.”⁴⁸ The place to begin is with our vocation, and thus with ourselves, as Scott Hahn’s Jones-inspired argument powerfully lays out in his *The First Society*.

Few saw the perils we face as deeply and darkly, and yet with a robust hope, as did Pope Saint John Paul II. And so, I end by returning to his quotation with which I began this review essay, but in its lengthier context:

In our times evil has grown disproportionately, operating through perverted systems which have practiced violence and elimination on a vast scale. . . . The evil of the twentieth century was not a small-scale evil, it was not simply “homemade.” It was an evil of gigantic

it had become common to distinguish the international church from the secular politics within which it operated. Church and state had become more or less autonomous jurisdictions, parallel institutions legally separated. The church had attempted to meet the power of the rising state by stressing its own jurisdictional power. The first treatises on the church as an organization were written only in the early fourteenth century, with the purpose of establishing the church as an ‘ecclesiastical kingdom’ parallel to the secular polity” (219). Cavanaugh is relying upon Strayer, specifically Strayer’s article “The Laicization of French and English Society in the Thirteenth Century,” *Speculum* 15 (1940): 76–86. Strayer’s reading of this history is no longer tenable in light of Jones’s study.

⁴⁷ Thomas Joseph White, O.P., *Wisdom in the Face of Modernity: A Study in Thomistic Natural Theology*, 2nd ed. (Ave Maria, FL: Sapientia Press, 2016), xx.

⁴⁸ David W. Fagerberg, *On Liturgical Asceticism* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2013), 194.

proportions, an evil which availed itself of state structures in order to accomplish its wicked work, an evil built up into a system. At the same time, however, divine grace has been superabundantly revealed. There is no evil from which God cannot draw forth a greater good. There is no suffering which he cannot transform into a path leading to him. . . . The suffering of the Crucified God is not just one form of suffering alongside others, not just another more or less painful ordeal: it is an unequaled suffering. In sacrificing himself for us all, Christ gave a new meaning to suffering, opening up a new dimension, a new order: the order of love. . . . It is this suffering which burns and consumes evil with the flame of love and draws forth from sin a great flowering of good. . . . All human suffering . . . contains within itself a promise of salvation. . . . This applies all forms of suffering, called forth by evil. It applies to that enormous social and political evil which divides and torments the world today: the evil of war, the evil of oppression afflicting individuals and peoples, the evil of social injustice, of human dignity trodden underfoot, of racial and religious discrimination, the evil of violence, terrorism, the arms race. . . . In the love that pours forth from the heart of Christ, we find hope for the future of the world.⁴⁹

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⁴⁹ John Paul II, *Memory and Identity*, 167–68.