

philippine studies

Ateneo de Manila University · Loyola Heights, Quezon City · 1108 Philippines

Medieval Theocracy: La Theocratie: L'eglise Et Le Pouvoir Au Moyen Age

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Philippine Studies vol. 10, no. 2 (1962): 326—327

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Fri June 30 13:30:20 2008

medical treatment or surgery, the right of the patient to know the nature of his illness and the risks involved in the treatment, the obligation to inform the patient who has an incurable disease or whose death is imminent. He also treats of the moral obligation to summon a non-Catholic minister for members of other religious beliefs, and, finally, the ethical problems connected with the ever-increasing practice of hypnosis.

The author still defends the position that corneal transplantation is immoral since the donor would be deliberately incurring a severe handicap—the constant lack of depth perception in his daily activities. Since there is no such severe handicap in renal transplantation he admits it as probably permissible and explains how he can hold such apparently contradictory doctrines in this disputed matter of transplantation.

The problem of the uterus damaged by multiple cesarean section is treated in such a general way that we might almost say that the author did not want to go into it. Yet it is a problem that recurs often enough to merit fuller treatment.

This new edition has all the fine qualities of the previous ones while adding many virtues of its own. The attractive cover and fine printing make it as pleasing to the eye as it will be satisfying to the mind. It is another proof that the Catholic theologian has done exceptionally well by the medical profession in offering them highly competent guidance in a field that is as difficult at times as it is noble and rewarding. Every priest and physician and nurse is indebted to the author; every professor of medical ethics will feel a special debt of gratitude.

G. W. HEALY

MEDIEVAL THEOCRACY

LA THÉOCRATIE: L'ÉGLISE ET LE POUVOIR AU MOYEN AGE.

By Marcel Pacaut Paris: Aubier, 1957. 302 pp.

M. Pacaut begins by defining theocracy as the doctrine that sovereignty in temporal affairs belongs to the Church. The nuances he immediately adds make it clear that he is not interested in defining the abstract essence of a theory but in investigating the actual interactions between Church and State in the Europe of the ninth to the fourteenth centuries.

Church and State are presented as two poles, each in a state of continuous evolution; as a result, the patterns of tension between them shift constantly. The events that ensue are extremely complex. It would be inaccurate to characterize this period as one of war between Church and State. It would be more historical to point out alternating phases of compromise and open hostility between theocrats and anti-theocrats with churchmen and temporal lords present in both camps. Thus Charlemagne should be numbered with the theocrats for his essential role in the establishment of the Papal States. On the other hand, the anti-theocrat Louis of Bavaria counts among his supporters the most brilliant ecclesiastics of his day.

M. Pacaut describes the history of theocracy in his chosen period as a kind of symphony in which various themes modify each other and blend. He gives particular importance to three themes: personal character, political expediency, legal and theological theory. One of these three is always predominant. At times an incident occurs in which all three are strongly present as when, at Canossa, an enigmatic emperor kneels in the snow before a humble but ruthless Pope.

The theoretical dimension is important because this is a period which respects thought as a powerful ingredient of action. This is also the Europe that calls itself Christendom and both camps argue from scripture and tradition. It is to the endless nuances of doctrine that M. Pacaut mainly devotes his attention. But he always treats them as thought immersed in history, never as pure theory.

M. Pacaut has given us 218 pages of insight into the history of ideas, supported by 58 pages of documentation.

ROQUE FERRIOLS