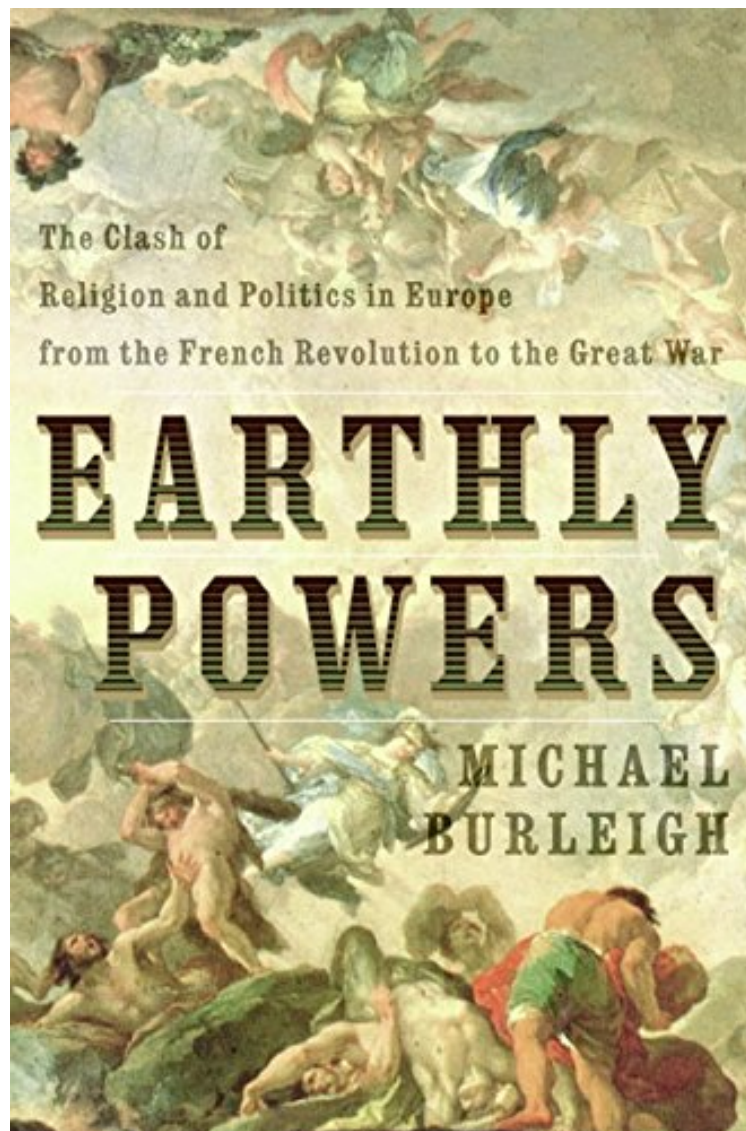


(Ebook free) Earthly Powers: The Clash of Religion and Politics in Europe, from the French Revolution to the Great War

Earthly Powers: The Clash of Religion and Politics in Europe, from the French Revolution to the Great War

Michael Burleigh

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Michael Burleigh : Earthly Powers: The Clash of Religion and Politics in Europe, from the French Revolution to the Great War before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Earthly Powers: The Clash of Religion and Politics in Europe, from the French Revolution to the Great War:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. "Vast in pervarsity" By MJSThis was one of the first books I

purchased for my Kindle in 2008 and I've finally gotten around to finishing it. No one can accuse Mr. Burleigh of being light on details although I'm sure that he's accused of many things. (He probably wouldn't have it any other way.) Burleigh sets out to explore the "clash" between religion and politics from the French Revolution to World War I. The clashing often takes the form of strange mash-ups in which religions take on distinctly political forms or issues or when the politics takes on the manifestations of religion. It's fascinating to see the Jacobins of the French Revolution create their own cleric-free religion handily called "The Cult of the Supreme Being" or a Roman Catholic priest get kicked out of the church for creating a political role for the Holy See. Some of the collisions between religion and politics Burleigh unearths are amusing - like the utopian socialist writer who imagines a world in which "fairies" cure the jilted of their broken-hearts. Others are just plain disturbing. Humans can't live without some sort of religion, Burleigh seems to be saying, even if we have to make up something truly bizarre to fill the gap. Burleigh has done his research and has his views, some of which had me nodding my head such as "there is surely something mad about all-consuming political passions" and some that had me wondering what planet he inhabits. I don't care what it's "set beside", the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre is not a "modest affaire". I don't know why Burleigh felt the need to do the written equivalent of a drive-by in referring to Beatrice Webb as "ghastly" but I admit to being as amused by that as by the phrase "harpy pawnbroker consort". I get the feeling that if someone declared this book "vast in perversity" (to quote the Vatican's description of a work cited here) Michael Burleigh would be pleased indeed. Burleigh isn't shy about sharing his opinions but his quirky erudition made this worth the ride for me. I disagreed with many of Burleigh's "conclusions" but for me that's part of the enjoyment of reading a book like this - it's like having a debate with a very opinionate acquaintance. This is not an easy read and it is not for everyone. If you're interested in the topic I'd recommend you read a few pages with 's Look Inside feature before buying. Burleigh loves obscure verbs and occasionally presents a quote in the original language without providing translation. (Why he does this sometimes and not others in the same language is a mystery.) Hence my 3-star rating: this is an interesting book that does not transcend its topic. Recommended for those interested in the topic. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

The Roots of Secularism By Giannuzzo Historian Michael Burleigh does a good job of explaining the change in European culture from a faith based to a secular society. Although he is clearly a cultural conservative and he does take an occasional pot shot at the dominant left/liberal school of contemporary historical analysts, he is fair in pointing out the flaws and failings of the Christian Churches of the era, including and especially his own Catholic Church. He explains a confusing era in European history. I drew a number of conclusions from his book. In the first place, the horrific description of what took place during the French Revolution especially the persecution and slaughter of the Catholics in the Vendee shows that mass murder is not limited to religious fanatics. Secularists and atheists can do just as good a job. Secondly, a deranged form of Nationalism seems to have been the real root of the terrible anti-semitism of the 20th century. Finally, the secularization of modern Europe was inevitably based on modern social organization, and it is ultimately a positive thing. Roman Catholicism in particular has benefited from its loss of temporal power and separation of church and state is an absolute necessity for human progress. My only complaint is that Burleigh's presentation is sometimes difficult to follow. His subject is vast and sometimes his writing is too compressed. He also digresses a bit from his main theme to discuss, for example, the paintings of David or the novels of Dostoevsky. Although often his digressions are useful in giving a sense of the period. All in all a good job. It would probably be more rewarding for those who have some knowledge of the period. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

prelude to world wars in Europe By Customer provides reasons for diminished religious thought in 18 19th century Europe

In this masterful, stylish, and authoritative book, Michael Burleigh gives us an epic history of the battles over religion in modern Europe. Examining the ways in which politics and religion have influenced each other over the last two hundred years, he reveals that throughout history the two realms have interacted in complex and sometimes lethal ways -- just as they still do today. The overall effect was a widespread increase in secularism and a demystification of the power of politics. With dazzling scope, Burleigh encompasses the philosophies of the Enlightenment and the influence of thinkers like Maistre and Bonald and Lamennais, painters like Zoffany and David, the Catholic Emancipation hero O'Connell, as well as the pseudo-religious aspects of Marxism. While the nineteenth century saw the replacement of the confessional by the liberal state, it also saw the birth of ideological fanaticisms that would achieve enormous power in the twentieth century. As the state began to colonize areas of existence where it previously hadn't ventured, it laid the foundations for both the soft totalitarianism of the modern bureaucratic welfare state and the more sinister police states of Communists and National Socialists. The most violent and repressive of these systems mimicked many of the functions of religion. Although liberalism was eventually restored to the continent in 1945 and 1989, many of the themes that Burleigh highlights here, notably the need for civic religions, have assumed a terrible relevance as Europe reacts to the threat of Al Qaeda. *Earthly Powers* is a magisterial history that sheds new light on the momentous struggles between church and state, from the French Revolution to the totalitarian movements of the twentieth century. Written with astonishing breadth and sophistication, this is a uniquely powerful portrait of one of the great tensions in modern history, one that continues to be played out on the world stage today.

From Publishers Weekly Starred . Given the continuing discussion of religious values and secular ideals in American life (most recently in "the war on Christmas"), as well as the international crises brought by the perversion of faith into political ideology and of politics into religious fanaticism, this first in a two-volume work is most timely. In a masterful survey of European history, British historian Burleigh (*The Third Reich*) demonstrates that religion and politics are rarely directly opposed, but instead influence, shape and feed off each other in complex ways. Thus, the violent secularist ideologies of Jacobinism, communism and Nazism, he says, were actually surrogate religions that worshipped nation, class and race, while some 19th-century churches involved themselves in the radical politics engendered by industrialization and dispensed with the belief in a literal Hell and Day of Judgment. Burleigh's lengthy introduction is perhaps not the best place to start (with, for example, a discussion of the phrase "immanentizing of the eschaton"), but readers who persist will find this a fascinating, enjoyable and beautifully written book, whose planned sequel, on the tumultuous religious-political conflicts of the 20th century, should be eagerly anticipated. 16 pages of bw photos not seen by PW. (Mar.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From *The New Yorker* Burleigh, a historian of the Third Reich, says that he originally intended to write an account of "political religions," such as Bolshevism. But he came to feel that a study of the intertwining of politics and religion specifically, Christianity in Europe, from the French Revolution through the First World War, was a necessary preface. He argues that the influence of the Enlightenment has been overrated, and that religion has thoroughly informed even such avowedly secular movements as the Jacobins' "civic cults" and "eschatological" Marxism. Burleigh intends his book as a corrective to what he sees as our risky forgetfulness about "the ways in which Christianity permeates our culture" and has shaped European civic values. As an intellectual history, the book is digressive but compelling, with sudden detours for the novelist Mary Ward's financial problems or Dostoyevsky's gambling, but its definition of Christian influence is often uselessly broad: must every appeal to transcendence, brotherhood, or national martyrdom hark back to the Bible? Copyright 2006 *The New Yorker*

From *Booklist* Burleigh's purpose is to explore the "politics of religion and the religion of politics" in Europe from the Enlightenment to World War I, which he does by examining the various secular "myths and monuments of the classical European nation states" that have supplanted Christianity by appropriating elements of religiosity. Showing overlap and similarity between groups channeling religion's messianic energy and wealth of inspirational metaphor into political ends--Jacobins, Marxists, nationalists, even the early Salvation Army--Burleigh argues that the fundamental tension between civil religion and politicized faith is key in preventing either from veering into dangerous extremism. But Burleigh, gratefully, is no polemicist. As in his much-praised *Third Reich* (2000), this account's true strength is in navigating the untidy nuances and subtle gradations of historical change that elude less discrete commentators. As with many books portraying this time period, one occasionally senses the real action happening offstage, when the surrogate religions of communism, fascism, and nationalism clash in World War II. Happily for readers, Burleigh plans to follow this absorbing book with a sequel. Brendan Driscoll Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved