

meet the needs of a generation of aspiring scholars. At the secondary and college levels especially, the number of available non-industrial public and private schools proved woefully inadequate in countering the influence of the more affluent Hampton-Tuskegee institutions. In the end, Anderson concludes that irreplaceable time and opportunity had been lost. With very few public elementary schools available, almost no high schools, and only a handful of colleges offering a liberal curriculum, blacks could do little to escape forces which sought to shape their education in ways that subverted their long-held aspirations. As Anderson concludes, "They entered emancipation with fairly definite ideas about how to integrate education into their broader struggle for freedom and prosperity, but they were largely unable to shape their future in accordance with their social vision."

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**Phyllis Stock-Morton.** *Moral Education for a Secular Society: The Development of Morale Laïque in Nineteenth Century France.* Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1988. x, 231 pp., \$21.95.

*Moral Education for a Secular Society* is competent, if slightly old-fashioned history. It is a reliable guide to moral, social, and political theories popular in France over the past 250 years. Anyone inquiring into Victor Cousin's spiritualism will find it readably presented here. Solidarity,

the Opportunists' moral/political theory of the 1890s, was finally clarified for me. While describing and interpreting these schools of thought, Stock shows their practical educational and political implications. These substantial accomplishments are complemented by her analyses of moral education theory and of theories about connected subject matters in the Republican curriculum—civics, hygiene, literature, history, philosophy, and so on. She includes valuable discussions of the religious beliefs and practices against which so much Republican educational theory was a reaction. And, of course, she summarizes the century-long French experience of official moral instruction in state schools.

Stock's writing reminded me many times of Gabriel Compayré's early (1882) comparative history of educational doctrines. Compayré, himself a great philosophical and psychological theorist of Republican education, made much of Enlightenment social contract theory, of Rousseau's vision of a civic religion, of the Revolution's (non-revolutionary!) morality, of Cousin's materialism (disguised under the label "spiritualism"), of the immense logical force of neo-Kantian moral theory, and of the attractions of the social sciences. Stock covers all of this ground, but with less understanding than Compayré of the Roman and Greek roots of French moral-rhetorical forms.

Toward the end of her text we are in the crucible of the 1890s and early 1900s, the times of Durkheim and the Dreyfus Affair, of the separation of

church and state (1905), and of the rise of the French Socialist Party. Stock's writing on these political and religious developments, and on the social and economic changes underlying them, is old-fashioned. It is old-fashioned because it fails to demonstrate how the modernization of France interfered with (or at any rate influenced) moral education theory and practice.

Despite some well-written pages on the practice of teaching *morale laïque* in the 1880s, 1890s, and early 1900s, Stock leaves unanswered practical and contextual questions. On the practical side, one wonders how Republicans, whether civil servants or politicians, *evaluated* moral education in state schools after 1882. Some Republicans wondered, as Stock writes, if alcoholism and crime rates really had declined when moral education became obligatory. But surely Republicans asked, too, about the impact of moral education on such deeper social "ills" as strikes, mass demonstrations, and violence? Was official moral education found to be a practical and reliable way of keeping the poor in place? And what of the connected policy question of how France could be kept united and peaceable? Why was public moral education thought to be a means appropriate in achieving that objective? If it was not such a means, why was it then retained down to the 1980s?

On the contextual side, Stock's title claims French society was "secular" by the late nineteenth cen-

tury. She argues that society's cement was now the state, not the church; that positivist grounds of knowledge had replaced those of Christian faith; and that naturalist social theory (Durkheim's, for example) had replaced traditional ideas and practices of obligation. There is nothing new in this analysis; but worse, does it beg the question? Is secularism merely a set of counter-religious and counter-traditional attitudes or beliefs? Or is it rather a set of social practices that point to deeper changes in economy and society? Is secularism a necessary outcome of urbanization, or of capitalist enterprise in its multitudinous twentieth-century forms? These questions are value-laden; it is surprising that Stock, fascinated with values, chose not to deal extensively with them.

Still, *Moral Education for a Secular Society* is a well-written and reliable intellectual history. I don't think Ms. Stock need be held responsible for practical questions left hanging. Those are for further much-needed research. Her book responds to David Pinkney's proposal of 1958 that North American historians of Europe ought to write interpretations and arguments rather than original, empirically powerful studies. It's the price we pay for living this side of the Atlantic.

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