

non-Catholics, including those of other faiths and non-believers. Catholic schools are not preparing children for careers in the conventional sense, but rather for vocations: for the form of loving service to which each will be called in his or her adult life. One of the most important possible vocations, Jones and Barrie remind us, is that of the teachers themselves.

The book ends with a very useful list of the pithy definitions that are included through out it, and a bibliography. Perhaps in a second edition, the book titles might be supplemented, for example, by websites and DVDs.

Jones and Barrie write self-consciously in the tradition of the three 'As' - Aristotle, Augustine and Aquinas - and explicitly acknowledge their evident debt to two great twentieth-century developers of this tradition, Elizabeth Anscombe and Fr Herbert McCabe OP. The latter would have appreciated the style as well as the content of *Thinking Christian Ethos*. In the best tradition of Dominican writing it makes profound thinking on a vital topic available to a wide range of readers.

MARGARET ATKINS CRSA

**SOCIAL RADICALISM AND LIBERAL EDUCATION** by Lindsay Paterson,  
*Imprint Academic, Exeter, 2015, pp.310, £19.95, pbk*

The trouble with educational theory is that it is always just that, a theory. Quite how educated someone is, is never clear. I have known many people who have successfully managed to slough off most of what they learned at university, and many others whose knowledge seems to be inexplicable in terms of their educational qualifications. Histories of education are always histories of aspirations, intentions and desires. The budgets for education can be examined, the availability of subjects, the time spent in institutions, the numbers who attended schools of various sorts can be examined but all we have at the end is a history of teaching, or theories of teaching but not a history of education. What have we actually learned? What do we actually know?

This book is about aspirations, in particular the left wing attitude to liberal education for the working classes in Britain. It begins with Matthew Arnold, and continues to the present day and since it is a history of attitudes, it concerns itself with individual writers. What it does not try to do is explain the effect of these writers and their thoughts. So it is a history of theory, and theorists, which means in effect a history of names. The names are familiar to me, not that I read them in great detail, but I read *The Listener*. This was the BBC magazine which published transcripts of talks on the radio, with a certain amount of original material, until it finally became defunct in 1991. Anyone who

read *The Listener* would know who R. H. Tawney, G. D. H. Cole and Harold Laski were, even as late as the eighties, even though they were all dead by then. The demise of *The Listener*, was for financial reasons, but in fact the culture it represented, the culture of improvement, has itself vanished. This is in part because it has become the norm. Universal education is not a particularly left wing idea. Everyone wants some form of education for their children. What is questionable is whether they would want some form of liberal education, or even understand the phrase.

This is where a study of the roots of the aspirations becomes of value. What did the left wing proponents of a widespread liberal education actually want? Tawney, Cole and Laski were in fact not just theorists. Tawney and Laski taught in the Workers Educational Association, Cole initiated sociological studies from Nuffield College in Oxford. They could see the effects of a liberal education in people's lives. At the same time, they could see through their political involvement that the commitment to a liberal education, was something of a paradox for the left. One purpose of a liberal education was to preserve civilisation, and to share with those who had been excluded from this education the capacity to share in that preservation. The sharing was left wing enough, and more radical than we would imagine now, when many forces in society through to the thirties openly objected to widespread education, except of the most basic kind. An educated workforce seemed like a contradiction. Yet to preserve is to conserve. Could the working classes be initiated into a culture which for centuries had been essentially aristocratic? One answer was to accept that there were certain values in an aristocratic culture which were worth sharing. This could be spun as the idea of a leisure, out of which a free commitment to aesthetic and moral values would emerge. Liberal education means an education for freedom as opposed to a servile education after all. Yet could everybody be free? Don't we always need servants of some sort? So the idea of a new aristocracy, an elite emerges as the ideal, at which point the left was in danger of destroying its own commitment to equality.

Yet a liberal education of some sort remained an aspiration of the left until well after the Second World War. Raymond Williams and Richard Hoggart are the key names here, both aware of the paradoxes of a liberal education for the masses, yet still passionately committed to the idea. From the eighties, the right wing commitment to a functional education, and to universities as a business has been the greatest threat to a liberal education, but this book is about the left and its attitudes to a liberal education. Pierre Bourdieu, the French sociologist, is taken as the enemy of liberal education as a concept. 'The doubts about liberal education on the left . . . are in some sense versions of the ideas most influentially expressed by Bourdieu. All challenge the claim that some version of inherited culture could be universally valid.'

There is a difference between denying that a universal culture could exist and arguing about what it should be. The development of the internet has allowed a continuous struggle between factions, with voices arousing counter voices, television can be make as many obscure references as the writer likes, but there will be someone to explain the reference in a blog. In this world high culture is intermixed with the low in a sort of dance. The recent BBC production of *Henry VI*, parts one and two, and *Richard III*, are marked by particularly lurid violence on the grounds that this is the style of *Game of Thrones*, books and a television series, set in a fictional mediaeval world, which could be described as pseudo-Shakespearian. So actual Shakespeare assimilates itself to pseudo Shakespeare. Yet this world cannot function without some people reading Shakespeare, and in fact the adaptations of Shakespeare, versions set in Californian schools, or used as plots for science fiction films, only work because some people read Shakespeare. We may not have a universal culture now, but we certainly have an interactive one, and in that culture, the great thoughts still have a place, even if it is a shared place.

EUAN MARLEY OP

**T&T COMPANION TO LITURGY** edited by Alcuin Reid, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, London, pp. xix + 561, £100.00, hbk

What's in a name? This new volume belongs to a series from the publisher, all entitled 'T&T Clark Companion to . . .'; as such, perhaps, the name was beyond anyone's control. To the casual bookshop or Amazon 'browser', such a name probably conjures up the image of an encyclopaedic volume tracing the historical and theological development of Christian worship in all its forms, and possibly of its associated art and architectural setting. However, this is very far from being the case. Rather, as the editor clearly states in his introduction, it is intended as a 'companion to liturgical studies in the Western Catholic tradition at the beginning of the twenty-first century', a rather more restricted canvas than the volume's title would initially suggest. It seems a pity that some sort of subtitle was not allowed for the sake of clarity.

The result of the choice of focus on the modern Catholic tradition is a volume which is, almost inevitably, somewhat unbalanced, at least in terms of 'Liturgy' in the broad sense. The total absence of references to the Orthodox and other Eastern Christian liturgical traditions is a real loss in such a volume, and one not wholly countered by the single concluding contribution 'An Anglican Perspective' by Benjamin