

erudite, but Manent wears his learning lightly. He writes with a gallic charm or with an *esprit de finesse* that is able to convey philosophical richness as well as be a good read." Steven B. Smith, Yale University.

The "City of God" or the "City of Man"? This is the choice St. Augustine offered 1500 years ago--and according to Pierre Manent the modern west has unequivocally and irreversibly chosen the latter. In this subtle and wide-ranging book on the Western intellectual and political condition, Manent argues that the West has rejected the laws of God and of nature in a quest for human autonomy. But in declaring ourselves free and autonomous, he contends, we have, paradoxically, lost a sense of what it means to be human.

Pierre Manent is Professor of Philosophy at l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales in Paris.

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GAUCHET, MARCEL. *The Disenchantment of the World. A Political History of Religion.* With a foreword by Charles Taylor. Princeton University Press, 1997. 272 Pp. 0-691-00105-7.

Marcel Gauchet has launched one of the most ambitious and controversial works of speculative history recently to appear, based on the contention that Christianity is "the religion of the end of religion." In *The Disenchantment of the World*, Gaucher reinterprets the development of the modern west, with all its political and psychological complexities, in terms of mankind's changing relation to religion. He views Western history as a movement away from religion society, beginning with prophetic Judaism, gaining tremendous momentum in Christianity and eventually leading to the rise of the political state. Gauchet's view that monotheistic religion itself was a form of social revolution is rich with implications for readers in fields across the humanities and social sciences.

Marcel Gauchet is Professor at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales.

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