

The Future of Religion

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by Richard Rorty and Gianni Vattimo
(Santiago Zabala ed.);
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This is the result of a dialogue between the well-known Rorty, a neo-pragmatist, non-Christian but Jesus sympathizer, Prof. of Comparative Literature and Philosophy at Stanford U., and Vattimo, who teaches theoretical and hermeneutical philosophy at U. of Turin, and declares himself to be a post-metaphysical Christian. Zabala, who writes an introductory essay and chairs the discussion is researcher in philosophy at the Pontifical Lateran U. of Rome.

- The essay by Zabala is "A Religion without Theists or Atheists".
- Rorty contributes, "Anticlericalism and Atheism", and Vattimo, "The Age of Interpretation".
- Then there is an excellent dialogue on "What is Religion's Future after Metaphysics".

I found the philosophical/ theological context pretty demanding; references to (the usual suspects): Hegel, Kant, Nietzsche, Schleiermacher, Heidegger, Derrida, Croce, Dewey, Gadamer, and much talk of 'onto-theology'. The focus is rather on the Roman Church, and for Rorty, the state of authoritarian religion in the USA, but nevertheless the cap fits fairly generally. I found new and arresting ideas, as well as the familiar arguments, but this dialogue I found fascinating -- and with a wonderfully simple and direct conclusion.

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