



Between Science and Religion: The Engagement of Catholic Intellectuals with Science and Technology in the Twentieth Century

Phillip M. Thompson

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In exploring the role of Catholic intellectuals in engaging science and technology in the twentieth century, this book initially provides a background context for this evolution by examining the Modernism crisis in the first chapter. In order to unpack the subsequent evolution, Thompson then concentrates in separate chapters on the distinctive contributions of four specific Catholic intellectuals, Jacques Maritain (1882–1973), Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881–1955), Bernard Lonergan (1904–1984), and Thomas Merton (1915–1968). All of these intellectuals experienced some degree of official restraint in their efforts but through their distinctive intellectual trajectories, they contributed to a different engagement of the Church with science and technology. In the final chapters, the book first reviews the changes within the institutional Church in the twentieth century toward science and technology. Finally, it then applies some key ideals of the four intellectuals to anneal and extend John Paul II's approach of "critical openness" to suggest how the Church can now engage science and technology.

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