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Leo Strauss
and the Crisis of Rationalism

Another Reason, Another Enlightenment

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Translated by Robert Howse

CORINE PELLUCHON is Full Professor in Philosophy at the University of Franche-Comté in France. In addition to her book on Leo Strauss, which was awarded the François Furet Prize in 2006, she has written several other books.

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How can Leo Strauss's critique of modernity and his return to tradition, especially Maimonides, help us to save democracy from its inner dangers?

In this book, Corine Pelluchon examines Strauss's provocative claim that the conception of man and reason in the thought of the Enlightenment is self-destructive and leads to a new tyranny. Writing in a direct and lucid style, Pelluchon avoids the polemics that have characterized recent debates concerning the links between Strauss and neoconservatives, particularly concerns over Strauss's relation to the extreme right in Germany. Instead she aims to demystify the origins of Strauss's thought and present his relationship to German and Jewish thought in the early twentieth century in a manner accessible not just to the small circles devoted to the study of Strauss, but to a larger public. Strauss's critique of modernity is, she argues, constructive; he neither condemns modernity as a whole nor does he desire a retreat back to the Ancients, where slaves existed and women were not considered citizens. The question is to know whether we can learn something *from* the Ancients and from Maimonides—and not merely about them.

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