

reviewer agrees that (most of) *Haer.* 3 presupposes the *Demonstration's* arguments, and it therefore postdates the shorter treatise (68–69).

Haer. 2–5 have a tripartite organization: one God, one Christ, one economy of salvation for the human (103). In *Haer.* 3–5 the discussion of all three topics is governed by the hermeneutical rule that the gospel proclaimed by the apostles must accord with the OT (chap. 3). By using this approach B. crucially reintegrates Irenaeus's theological themes, naturally dominant in his book, with the biblical interpretation lying at their heart. He rightly points out that the OT and the gospel reflect the single work of God in Christ, thus refuting Valentinian soteriology by the complete revelation of Christ in the cross and the salvation of the flesh, and refuting Marcionite limits of the canon to the gospel by Irenaeus's emphasis that the gospel can only be understood in the light of the OT (139).

Reading this volume will demand a good deal from the “students and general readers” in its audience. This is not B.'s fault. The gap between Irenaeus's objectives in his own context and the later adaptations and use of his work is long-standing. Despite its apparent familiarity, Irenaeus's work still grows “strangely unfamiliar” on closer reading (206) because it seems turned upside down. It requires patient reading. The book maps out a path that clarifies Irenaeus's thought.

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His Hiding Place Is Darkness: A Hindu-Catholic Theopoetics of Divine Absence. By Francis X. Clooney, S.J. Stanford, CA: Stanford University, 2014. Pp. xvi + 187. \$24.95.

“Keep your mind in hell, and despair not.” This was the word that the early 20th-century ascetic Silouan of Athos reported receiving from the Lord in response to his struggles with pride. It was later used to describe the work of love—being failed and forgiving, failing and being forgiven—by the philosopher Gillian Rose. This dictum provides a fruitful counterpoint to the chorus of voices assembled in this volume, which is both a deeply honest confrontation of the pain of loving a God who “is real enough to be absent” and a therapy for a particular sort of religious and theological pride (ix).

Clooney's book is rich in covering a number of topics in relatively few pages while remaining eminently readable. Its engaging quality is brought about, in part, by a structure that echoes its central argument: theology must wait upon and be generated from the experience of a poetic and dramatic encounter. C. does this by presenting readings of poetic laments over the absence of the divine beloved. These are taken from the biblical Song of Songs and its medieval Christian commentaries, which are juxtaposed to readings of similar laments in the ninth-century CE Hindu text, the *Holy Word of Mouth*, and its early commentaries. This pairing is motivated by C.'s conviction that readers adhering to one tradition will not have their particular loves adulterated but rather discomfited and ultimately chastened by unsettling

of their religious imaginations in the encounter with loves proper to another tradition. C. examines Hans Urs von Balthasar's ideas of the theo poetic and theodramatic, especially his consideration of Gerard Manley Hopkins and the contemporary poetry of Jorie Graham. What emerges here is an argument for a "homeopathic" mode of theology. As treatment for the longing of the religious reader bereft of the divine beloved's presence and for any vertigo felt by the believer in a pluralist context, C. proposes not to (dis)solve and eliminate the problem but to intensify and exacerbate those very discomforts.

When the garden of love's delights is devastated and transmogrified into a vale of weeping, the theologian faces two temptations. The first is to refuse to "keep one's mind in hell" by denying the reality of the damage. But what every lover invariably learns is how to be left. The beloved may fly away across a continent or an ocean, or he may put just as many miles between you without leaving the room; he may desert you for the arms of another or grow cold to caresses altogether; and, should your love somehow elude or endure all this, an inevitable and unendurable parting remains: the beloved's descent into hell and his ascension into heaven. The authors of the *Song* and the *Holy Word* knew this, as did the commentators in each tradition, who take the laments of the texts' respective lovers to be valid and pious. Laudable and salutary in this respect is C.'s refusal to garnish this state of affairs, to constitute the case of the divine beloved as an exception to this rule, assert the omnipresence of the beloved, and blame the bereft lover for her sense of loss.

It is not clear, however, that C. resists the temptation to despair, the urge to make an over-hasty accommodation to the wasteland of weeds that we now find instead of paradise. Although C. argues for a delay of theology's usual requirements (systematization, conceptual clarity, conclusion) "lest they stifle the theo poetic and theodramatic sense of the truly new" (114), he allows the immediacy of present experience to set boundaries on theological investigation and excludes hope for the "newest" thing of all: an end. It is notable in this regard that C. turns to the past and not the future to find consolation for the women of the *Song* and the *Holy Word* in their lonesome gardens, interpreting their memories of joys experienced but now lost as a "making present" of the beloved in his absence. Again, in his reading of Graham's poem "The Taken-Down Lord," C. seems too willing to bracket indefinitely any awareness or anticipation of Easter Sunday for the good he takes to reside in suffering the silence and desolation of Holy Saturday.

None of this is to deny the book's worth but rather to characterize its contributions. It is a proposal of and a propaedeutic to a particular mode of doing theology; it pleads for patient waiting, slow reading across traditions, and attention to the dramatic and poetic. As such, it is a worthwhile addition to the perennial debates—especially in the context of Catholic theology in North America—about what theology is and how it should be done.

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