

at the center of contemporary debates between liberal pluralists and postliberal particularist thinkers (and M. beautifully captures the state of the field in chapter 5), M. shows how Ricoeur navigates a midpoint between the collapse of difference and untranslatability. We offer not perfect communication, but an imperfect “linguistic hospitality,” as we try to translate across texts and traditions. And in chapter 6, M. examines the contemporary project of comparative theology as a liminal space that enacts such hospitality.

In addition to surveying the field and working toward the reduction of religious violence, M. also uses Ricoeur’s theories to proffer new purpose to interreligious dialogue and the various practices of theology in a multireligious world. On the one hand, through comparative theology and interreligious dialogue we come to an awareness that our interpretive humanity is one among many ways of being in the world. But, through Ricoeur, M. is able to present an even more novel purpose for interreligious dialogue. In pursuing a stance for the reduction of religious violence, she suggests that the point of dialogue is to become aware of those places where *our* narrative inflicts wounds on *others*.

Much has been written on interfaith learning and theologies of religious difference, but few have considered Ricoeur as an ally in this field. Simultaneously introducing readers to theologies of religious pluralism, comparative theology, interreligious dialogue, and the theological methods of liberal, postliberal, and comparative theologies, as well as examining Ricoeur through a new lens, this volume offers truly new strategies for our interreligious world and our interfaith theology.

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*Mystery of the Church, People of God: Yves Congar’s Total Ecclesiology as a Path to Vatican II.* By Rose M. Beal. Washington: Catholic University of America, 2014. Pp. xii + 281. \$65.

Congar is a multifaceted thinker whose many focal points can serve as the linchpin that holds together the elements of his ecclesiological vision. Beal brings unpublished archival materials into dialogue with Congar’s early published works to make a credible case that his studies on diverse topics were united in representing various components of what he intended to add up to a “total ecclesiology.” Such an ecclesiology, unlike the apologetic approaches of the time, would address the mystery of the church in all its dimensions, including its mission, full range of members, various traditions, need for reform, and eschatological nature. B. demonstrates that this organizing vision, detectable in Congar’s published works, emerges much more clearly both in extensive lecture notes and in draft materials for an unfinished treatise on ecclesiology.

B. focuses this useful study on Congar’s works from the early 1930s up to 1954. Throughout, she emphasizes how archival materials help clarify points in Congar’s published works that might otherwise be confusing. For example, his critiques of

“hierarchology” can best be understood within a context that emphasizes his concern for the continuing importance of the hierarchy even as he shifts his concentration to the laity. These unpublished materials also bring out the dialectic in Congar’s thought between neo-Scholastic categories and a more historical and dynamic biblical approach. B. shows how this dialectic underlies the development of his published thoughts connecting ecclesiology with reform, eschatology, and mission.

Congar applied neo-Scholastic categories (Aristotle’s four causes—efficient, material, formal, and final) to the church. B. treats Congar’s use of the causes with great ambivalence. She demonstrates in detail how he creatively employed these categories in groundbreaking ways. Unlike his neo-Scholastic counterparts, Congar would often begin with the church’s final cause, a tendency that aided him in generating ideas about the eschatological nature of the church and (what would come to be labeled) the universal call to holiness. Reflection on the church’s efficient causes helped Congar incorporate the roles of laypeople and charisms into the picture of what makes the church work. Congar located the Holy Spirit and the hierarchy in both the efficient and formal causes of the church, though in different ways. Such an analysis facilitated Congar’s thought concerning the Holy Spirit’s having a distinct mission, an idea related to change in the church. In addition to the connections B. makes, I suggest that Congar used the causes to affirm simultaneously the church’s holiness and sinfulness.

After detailing Congar’s innovative efforts with the four causes, however, B. only grudgingly concedes the usefulness of these categories for him. She emphasizes instead how outmoded, narrow, and limiting they were, almost as if Aristotelian categories have become forever contaminated by neo-Scholastics. B. correctly emphasizes that the four causes became useful to Congar’s project of a total ecclesiology only after they were brought into interaction with biblical and historical approaches. What struck me much more than the inherent limitation of the categories, though, was Congar’s brilliant appropriation of them into a new dynamic context.

The final chapter brings in some historical drama. Why did Congar never complete the treatise on ecclesiology that would express his lifelong organizing vision? B. visits the time of the Second Vatican Council to argue two main points. First, *Lumen gentium* so well represented the new direction for which Congar had worked so hard that he no longer needed to complete his treatise. Second, *Lumen gentium*’s historical and eschatological approach rendered obsolete the neo-Scholastic terms and categories. Given her subject matter and focus, B. legitimately situates the council within a straightforward “before and after” narrative, though the perspective of 50 years later could have justified also a more complicated story.

The merits of this book are many. The cross-treatment of unpublished archival materials with Congar’s early published works makes a valuable contribution to Congar studies. In addition to situating his early works within an overall plan, it offers us an interesting intellectual portrait of the early Congar. By demonstrating in many specific and detailed ways how Congar’s ecclesiological thinking anticipated much of the teaching of *Lumen gentium*, B. also helps us understand it.

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