

“hermeneutics of generosity and hospitality” have been present throughout the history of Christian encounter with religious others.

After the two overview chapters on “engaging religious difference” and “hermeneutics,” in the next four chapters L. turns to the complex history of Christian attitudes toward, and interpretations of, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, revealing that both hostile and generous hermeneutics are at work in each case.

In L.’s historical narratives, the negative understandings of Jews and Muslims are seen to result from how Christians interpreted them through particular ecclesial contexts—and not necessarily through biblical contexts. For example, traditionally Jews were viewed through a Christian supersessionist lens that regarded Muslims as successors of the Arian heretics. Modern biblical interpretation helps correct past distortions and biases and allows for Christians to approach their Abrahamic brothers and sisters with respect and fairness.

In the cases of Hindus and Buddhists, the Christian views of them have been informed largely by the biblical condemnations of idolatry. Earlier Christian missionaries often interpreted these religious traditions as a form of idolatry or devil worship without any deep engagement with their sacred texts and philosophical traditions. Still, modern appreciation for Hindu and Buddhist worldviews and religious commitments has fostered a more positive evaluation by Christians.

In the final chapter, drawing from the works of Bernard Lonergan and René Girard, L. invites the reader to a conversion of heart in viewing, understanding, and judging the religious other. The love of God and goodwill toward others should be the principal guidelines for all religious people—Christians and others—to walk as fellow pilgrims on the journey seeking the holy, the true, the good, and the beautiful (225–26).

L. persuasively demonstrates that Christian self-understanding is intrinsically linked to Christian interpretation of the Bible. This understanding can in turn alter Christians’ view of religious others. While the book is informative as far as it goes, an additional chapter on Christian interpretations of Chinese religious traditions would have enhanced the volume.

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Christ Child: Cultural Memories of a Young Jesus. By Stephen J. Davis. New Haven: Yale University, 2014. Pp. x + 417. \$45.

Some of our Christian forebears were not content to leave the early life of Jesus as blank as do the Gospels. Authors of the Apocrypha, for example, filled in the years of his youth with tales that leave one astonished about the purported wonders he performed. The Apocrypha appealed to the credulous and to those ignorant of the authority of the scriptural canon.

Davis’s volume examines one of these spurious texts, the *Paidika*. While Greek in origin, it has a murky history beginning with oral transmissions as early as the second

century and gains wonders over the next nine centuries. These nine centuries served to delimit and solidify the *Paidika*, and although a number of patristic authors deride it, many of the faithful passed on some of these stories.

D. has a particular interest in how human communities remember the past and transmit it to their own generations. Here he uses the narratives about the child Jesus that edified the faithful and bemused the informed. His monograph is meticulously annotated—it has some 110 pages of footnotes. While the interpretations, translations, and transmissions of the *Paidika* are many, D. succinctly explains what is peculiar about his book: it is “not so much about the Christ child himself as about *how* and *by whom* he was remembered” (197).

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Augustine and Apocalyptic. Edited by John Doody, Kari Kloos, and Kim Paffenroth. *Augustine in Conversation: Tradition and Innovation*. Lanham: Lexington, MD, 2014. Pp. x + 258. \$90.

The book gathers very interesting articles by scholars both younger (Jeff Biebighauser, Ellie Gebarowski-Shafer, Thomas Howe, Laurie Jungling and Rocki Wentzel, Kloos, and Gregory Wiebe) and more established (Kevin Coyle, Kevin Hughes, Travis Kroeker, Richard Landes, Karla Pollman, and Roland Teske). As part of a larger series that places Augustine in conversation with a range of interlocutors, the editors begin with the enduring recurrence of apocalyptic fervor, down to the early 21st century, when a group following the prophecy of evangelist Harold Camping declared that the world would end on May 21, 2011. “What is it,” ask the editors, “about human cultures and the human imagination that apocalyptic fascination persists, even in spite of the obvious failure of so many doomsday predictions?” (1).

While the mature Augustine was himself skeptical about our ability to know when the end of time would come, he was nevertheless aware of millennialist groups, and was keenly interested in the crises of human history against the deeper, more mysterious backdrop of God’s providential design. For this reason he is an excellent conversation partner for those preoccupied with the fragility of life and the struggle to maintain hope in the face of our constant vulnerability to catastrophe. Some authors of this volume place Augustine in the company of French phenomenologists Jean-Luc Marion and Jean-Louis Chrétien, philosopher Charles Taylor, and even novelist Cormac McCarthy. Others examine how Augustine’s historical, theological, and exegetical context affected his thinking in key texts, especially *City of God*. Multiple authors look at, for instance, how the sack of Rome informed not only Augustine’s attitude toward apocalyptic thinking but also that of his contemporaries.

In the end, this fine collection offers a promising contribution to a conversation that the editors hope will “bring new insight into human imaginative responses to