

increasing power. Not only does H. cogently argue against prior interpretations of Barth's homiletics as simply an abstract, universal, "neoorthodox" caricature, but she also demonstrates the degree to which Barth's "Sermon Exercises" contextualize the preacher's particular witness within a given community by using a dialectical method that involves transcendent critique. This method also has realizable implications for hearers today. H. offers a rich reinterpretation of Barth's early approach to homiletics in Germany that insists on the "Godness of God" by unsettling the recipient while affirming human agency in the preacher's call to prophetic witness in which theology is political by definition.

H. opens by describing Barth's overarching theological themes in juxtaposition to the Nazi influences circling within the political, ecclesial, and academic spheres during the Weimar period (chaps. 1–2). Next, she considers the rhetorical scope of the Third Reich and German Christians' homiletical practices in which theology and nationalism increasingly intertwine (chaps. 3–4). Finally, H. analyzes Barth's "Sermon Exercises" course in which he identifies nine criteria for authentic preaching in the midst of Germany's "state of emergency" (chaps. 5–6).

H. highlights Barth's critiques of those natural theologies or orders of creation that reinforce the status quo, thereby separating law from gospel. Instead, Barth offers a robust homiletic in which theological existence is spiritual resistance to ultimate ideological claims by offering a historical, contextual, and dialectical theology that bridges "heaven and earth," "God and human beings," "God and the community," as well as "the preacher and community" (234). Thus, by offering a historical and theological analysis of Barth's preaching classroom in Bonn, Hancock offers an important contribution both to the fields of practical theology in its homiletical theories and to ethics, systematics, and historical theologies in their retrieval of Barth's theology as witness in proclamation, life, and service to the church.

Autumn Alcott Ridenour  
Merrimack College, North Andover, MA

*Cross and Kremlin: A Brief History of the Orthodox Church in Russia.* By Thomas Bremer. Translated from German by Eric Grits. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013. Pp. xii + 178. \$26.

This translation of the 2007 German original offers a concise and approachable summary of the history, theology, and practice of Orthodox Christianity in Russia over the past millennium. Bremer emphasizes the intersection of church and state and pays particular attention to the ways both took their present form in response to a series of engagements with the "West." These emphases are nicely situated within a broader discussion of the Orthodox intellectual tradition in the post-Byzantine world. One of the great contributions of the book is the way B. positions present-day challenges and debates within the long history of Russian Christianity. He notes, appropriately, the extent to which certain partisans within the Orthodox community hopelessly seek to

return to the “way things were” prior to the Bolsheviks or even prior to the dismantling of the church’s institutional authority at the time of Peter the “Great.” B. also introduces readers to the ways Orthodox Christianity has become an intrinsic characteristic of Russian national identity, particularly as a signifier of difference vis-à-vis the West (both the Christian and secular West).

The most problematic portion of the book concerns B.’s brief engagement with Samuel Huntington’s “Class of Civilizations” thesis. Rather than challenge the bigoted and positivist assumptions that undergird Huntington’s evaluation, B. simply identifies a few public statements by Russian clerics against Western secularization to explain why Russia is a “delayed nation” according to an assumed Western European standard. In doing so, he fails to acknowledge not only the embedded biases of such an approach but also the rich and vibrant intellectual engagement with the Enlightenment (e.g., democracy and human rights) critical to Russian thinkers such as Bulgakov and Solovyev. Indeed, contemporary Orthodox theology (particularly in the United States) is very much engaged with these questions precisely because of the Russian contribution.

George E. Demacopoulos  
Fordham University, New York

*On the Left Bank of the Tiber.* By Gerald O’Collins, S.J. Leominster: Gracewing, 2013. Pp. xvii + 310. \$23.31.

As his title suggests, this second volume of O’Collins’s autobiographical memoirs covers the 32 years, 1974–2006, he was on the faculty of the Gregorian University in Rome. His years there coincide almost perfectly with the long pontificate of John Paul II. Like the earlier volume, this one tells us about O’C.’s daily routine as well as the many high points in what he calls his “dreamlike adventure” on the left bank. For persons unfamiliar with clerical Rome outside the Vatican, O’C. serves as an excellent guide to its nooks and corners. They may well be surprised at how on the one hand Rome seems to operate almost autonomously from the Roman Curia, but on the other hand the Curia is an ever-present reality. For those already familiar with this scene, O’C., with deft hand and warm heart, refreshes our memory of it.

The book opens with chapters describing life at the Gregorian, the many visitors O’C. entertained in Rome, students and the various ecclesiastical colleges in Rome, and “Italy and the Italians.” Of broader scope is the chapter on “Three Popes”—Paul VI, John Paul I, and John Paul II. Although O’C. provides a positive assessment of much in John Paul’s pontificate, he especially singles out for criticism the canonization of Josemaría Escrivá, the founder of Opus Dei, as a process riddled with irregularities. He goes on to specify three “shadows” of broader import—the increased centralization of the Church under John Paul II, the pope’s intervention in appointing a vicar for the Society of Jesus after the incapacitating illness of the order’s superior general, Pedro Arrupe, and his negative stance toward liberation theology.