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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
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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.

With "The Dupuis Case" O'C. takes us into the workings of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in his most intriguing chapter. O'C. was not only a long-time friend and colleague of Dupuis, but, as the case against Dupuis escalated, he gladly agreed to be Dupuis's official adviser/advocate before the CDF, to little avail. These are the most revealing and saddest pages about life on the left bank.

John W. O'Malley, S.J.
Georgetown University, Washington

Rwanda before the Genocide: Catholic Politics and Ethnic Discourse in the Late Colonial Era. By J. J. Carney. New York: Oxford University, 2014. Pp. xi + 343. $74.

Much has been written about the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, both the events leading up to it and the event itself. Understanding just how it could have taken place continues to intrigue us and has given rise to a host of explanations framed by colonialism, racial discourse, and tribal conflict. Carney's book makes a signal contribution to this discussion by focusing on the role the Catholic Church played in the midst of the events that shaped modern Rwanda, from the beginning of the 20th century through the political turmoil of the 1950s and 1960s, when Rwanda emerged from colonial rule. The special lens is the role of the White Fathers (Missionaries of Africa) who were Rwanda's principal evangelizers.

C. had generous access to the White Fathers' archives in Rome and Rwanda and has used them masterfully to develop the narrative within which the ethnic discourse of Hutu versus Tutsi was to develop. He gives us a highly nuanced picture of how the situation developed both internally and through influences from the wider world. By focusing on the two significant bishops—White Father André Perraudin and Aloys Bigirumwami—and the Nyakibanda Major Seminary where the struggles played themselves out in more intense form, we get a clearer sense of the crucial role the Church played (and failed to play) in those critical years.

Along with an important rereading of this history, C. also provides thoughtful commentary on church–state relations in the postcolonial era in Africa, with lessons for places well beyond.

Robert Schreiter
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The Atheist's Primer. By Michael Palmer. Cambridge, UK: Lutterworth, 2012. Pp. 169. $18.95.

Many of the recent acerbic criticisms of theistic belief have been more concerned with religion and its aberrations than with the question of God. When the existence of God does come up—for example, in arguments from science against creationism—the