

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.

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*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 Bigirimwami—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.

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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