

lacuna may reflect the persistently metaphysical key of Russian religious thought. As any good survey should, O.'s work indicates sources and concepts for further development, such as the kenotic, self-emptying "humanity of God" (*Bogochelovechestvo*). O. also highlights areas of concern, such as the highly gendered theologies of Sergei Bulgakov (1871–1944) and Pavel Evdokimov (1901–1970), whose positive aspirations in this arena may not have been adequately realized. O.'s ecumenical interests are abundant and impressive, given the often shrill ecumenical tone of his subjects. Graciousness, thoroughness, and an evident love for God characterize this highly readable opportunity to taste and see the variety of *God as Love*.

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*Grassroots Asian Theology: Thinking the Faith from the Ground Up*. By Simon Chan. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic 2014. Pp. 217. \$22.

In this thought-provoking work, Chan argues for an Asian theology from below. Asian Christians, C. insists, do not need "elitist" or academic theologies that purport to be contextual but end up irrelevant to their daily experience. He chastises liberationist theologies as failing to address the concerns of ordinary believers. The words of an unknown commentator—"Liberation theology opted for the poor and the poor opted for Pentecostalism" (27, 103, 162)—seem to capture better the *sensus fidelium* in Asia than in Africa and Latin America. C. champions Asian Pentecostalism as a better resource to address the core concerns of grassroots Christian communities.

C. examines the typical themes in systematic theology: theological methods (chap. 1), God (chap. 2), humanity and sin (chap. 3), Christ and salvation (chap. 4), the Holy Spirit and spirituality (chap. 5), and the church (chap. 6). In each of these subjects, C. skillfully dialogues with the historic Christian tradition, which supplements and informs his Pentecostal theology: the notion of *taxis* within the Trinity (50–52, 60–67), the inseparable connection between Pneumatology and Christology (133–36), and the church as *communio sanctorum* (188–97), to name a few. The priority of family, the relevance of honor and shame (rather than guilt and sin), and the engagement with deceased ancestors, because they engage with lived preoccupations of the ordinary people, should be theological loci for the construction of an authentic Asian theology.

A major criticism of the book is that the line dividing "elitist" and "grassroots" theologies is not as clearly demarcated as C. supposes; each side has made important contributions to theological discourses. C.'s preference for Karl Barth over Paul Tillich, or Watchman Nee over C. S. Song, reflects his theological orientation rather than giving a fair assessment of these "elitist" theologians. Furthermore, C.'s claim that the "hierarchy" of church and family found in Asian cultures is more nearly biblical may pose a problem for those who support a "Western" egalitarianism of discipleship.

Objections aside, C.'s book offers a fresh contribution to the literature on Asian Christianity by highlighting the spiritual experiences of the Asian people and their

contribution to the global church. Ecumenical in scope, it can be used as a starting point to bridge evangelical concerns with the wider Catholic, Orthodox, and mainline Protestant traditions.

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*Just Water: Theology, Ethics, and the Global Water Crisis.* By Christiana Z. Peppard. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2014. Pp. x + 230. \$28.

It is an oft-cited principle of doing theology or preaching (attributed to both Karl Barth and Reinhold Niebuhr) that the doer must practice her craft “with the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other.” As Peppard puts it, most newspapers of record fail to provide sufficient information when it comes to the problems of water scarcity, fracking, and the impact of agribusiness on fresh water supply. Thankfully, P. has produced a volume on the global water crisis that will serve theologians and preachers alike as a remedy to such oversights.

By turns informative, shocking, and witty, P. dives into this topic expertly and makes her arguments accessible to a wide range of readers. The volume’s most significant contribution is a linking of the three areas listed in the subtitle. In so doing, she has produced what should be required reading of anyone wishing to deal seriously with water (or food) as a central issue in Catholic social thought. To this end, chapter 4 stands out in a particular way as a clarion call for all who are eager to adopt a consistent ethic of life.

While theology is the primary topic in chapters 1, 4, 6, and 9, it is also an undercurrent in the remainder of the volume. Readers will be amazed at how deftly P. is able to connect theology and ethics with water, which, as she aptly claims, “charts human history” (19). In her introduction, P. notes that she has “tried to minimize supplemental discussion or extensive scholarly citation in the endnotes” (x). I suspect that some readers, particularly academics who may be experts on the issues discussed, may find this to be a weakness, though the text is thoroughly researched and well supported. That minor point notwithstanding, I cannot recommend this book highly enough to instructors—especially of Christian ethics—on the undergraduate level and to facilitators of parish reading groups.

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*Animal Suffering and the Problem of Evil.* By Nicola Hoggard Creegan. New York: Oxford University, 2013. Pp. xi + 206. \$55.

New findings in biology and evolutionary theory have proven to be both good and bad news for theologians wrestling with theodicy. On the good side, it has now become clear that symbiosis, cooperation, and compassion may be as deeply rooted as are competition