

Netland and Knitter (he finds both of them wanting). Others offer critiques of and alternatives to the pluralist hypothesis in general, particularly as articulated by Hick.

For those acquainted with recent scholarship in the theology of religions, the volume treads familiar ground, in most cases rehearsing arguments that have been in the air for the better part of 30 years. There are, however, gems. In addition to Netland and Knitter's fine introductory statements (chap. 1), Stewart's general introduction helpfully explores a wider range of options than is generally acknowledged in the theology of religions project; Paul Rhodes Eddy executes an insightful diachronic analysis of Hick's intellectual development; and essays by Hick, Tilley, S. Mark Heim, Keith E. Yandell, and R. Douglas Geivett offer useful, concise summaries of distinctive proposals developed at greater length elsewhere. Like the religious plurality that is the subject of discussion, the essays in this volume fit together only awkwardly, but that does not render them unworthy of serious regard. One special virtue: most essays offer complex arguments in an accessible style, suitable for undergraduate students.

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*Christianity in a Nutshell.* By Leonardo Boff. Translated from the Portuguese by Phillip Berryman. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2013. Pp. viii + 119. \$18.

Boff declares that this book will be his swan song. It is a remarkable achievement in which he sums up the "minimum of the minimum" of Christianity—what has taken him 60 published books to explore and explicate.

To explore the divine Mystery, B. provides a meditation on contemporary science and its explanation of the origins of the world and of humankind. "This means understanding the cosmos in evolution and expansion, and for believers, [how it is] sustained by the ongoing creative power of God" (1). He traces the growing complexity of order and finally the breakthrough of life and consciousness toward the unification of the human species through the process of globalization. It is an ambitious project. Readers familiar with the work of Thomas Berry, Brian Swimme, and others will find a compatible soul mate in B.'s meditation on cosmogenesis and in the marvelous Mystery that originates and dwells in every wave, string, vibration, singularity, and constant of the universe. B. declares, "God creates the universe as a mirror in which God sees the divine Self and also a vessel to receive God" (2).

B. has an implicit critique of the static categories of Greek cosmology and the hierarchical ordering of the universe and hence of humankind. "God knows a becoming," he avers, "and thereby initiates a history" (2). Readers will find herein a number of provocative articulations. B. proclaims, for instance, that the "supreme work of the Spirit was lovingly identified with Mary. . . . He was internalized in her. He became Mary, allowed her to become Spirit, for she identified with Him" (35). In attempting to provide a feminine face of God, B. seems to incorporate Mary into the perichoresis of the Trinity itself.

B.'s meditation on the Jesus story and its consequent undermining of the power of empire and of rigid, patriarchal religion is especially helpful. B. has the capacity clearly and poetically to trace this story through the ages—through the fidelity of the poor, through the glories of Christian art and architecture, and through the stellar witness of the mystics.

The volume is noteworthy for presenting B.'s lifetime of theological reflection in a compact and accessible form.

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*A Council That Will Never End: Lumen Gentium and the Church Today.* By Paul Lakeland. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2013. Pp. xxxiii + 158. \$19.95.

In this little masterpiece, Lakeland imaginatively reveals the depth of *Lumen gentium*, critiques the narcissism and intransigent clericalism that prevents the fulfillment of Vatican II, and builds a case for a theology of humility for the Catholic Church.

Exploring the “unfinished business” of *Lumen gentium*, L. deftly sidesteps the long-running standoff between those who argue for a hermeneutic of continuity for the council and those who urge a hermeneutic of reform (xv). The council, L. explains, was embraceive rather than exclusionary. It welcomed dialogue and learning from all peoples of faith: all are broken and vulnerable, all are on this journey together to heal the world and realize the kingdom of God.

L.'s acute insights draw on sources that range from the short story “Revelation” by Flannery O'Connor to the profound commentary on *Lumen gentium* by Karl Rahner and Yves Congar. Unfolding the dimensions of the parable of the Good Samaritan, L. says that the Church has too often been self-centered, replete with clericalism, and preoccupied with its own virtue. The point of the parable is not about dismantling righteousness as such; rather it expands our very notion of neighbor. All are neighbor. Our neighbor is whomever we meet along the road, whoever is hungry, naked, and bruised. But we need to see ourselves dialectically: both as victim left for dead and as the Good Samaritan. If we do not see ourselves as needing help, if we do not embrace humility, we inevitably retreat into a smug narcissism and lose focus on the saving action of Christ.

L. finished his text just three or four months after the election of Pope Francis. But the new pope could well be seen as an embodiment of L.'s thesis for a contemporary ecclesiology that is more humble, more global in its perspective, and brushing shoulders with the poor. The Church, L. affirms, must attend to internal reform so that it can freely evangelize, realize its mission to engage the world, and be attentive to God's grace active in the world itself.

L. concludes with a fine image for this new time with Pope Francis when both the “bishop's palace and the stock market will be displaced by the stable at Bethlehem”