

The Edge of Words: God and the Habits of Language. By Rowan Williams. London: Bloomsbury, 2014. Pp. xiii + 204. \$23.99.

This product of Williams's 2013 Gifford Lectures approaches natural theology by examining the properties of human speech, more specifically, representative language, which attempts "to embody, translate, make present or re-form what is perceived" (22). W. points to the open-ended character of representative language, including its capacity for erroneous and fictional expressions, as a signpost to the possible "hinterland of meaning"—the ground of intelligibility that eludes yet provides the basis for our comprehension (173). Special illustrations of the creative horizons of language appear in chapters devoted to "excessive language" (e.g., poetry and dystopic fiction) and to silence, which expresses the gap between our experience and our abilities to articulate that experience. W. offers this reflection on language, not as a proof for the existence of God, but to draw the reader's attention to a paradox of human existence consistent with revelation.

One of the most striking aspects of W.'s argument concerns the material character of language. The starting point for his analysis of language as embodied is Phoebe Caldwell's description of her work with autistic persons; those interested in disability ethics will find chapter 4 particularly intriguing. W. insists that a focus on language must not lead to a denigration of the physical. "The material world we inhabit as material speakers," he argues, "not only produces makers of its own image but produces makers of alternative worlds: matter, so far from being dead or passive, 'proposes' its own transformation" (123). Such an embodied natural theology of language, therefore, raises important questions for both systematic theology and environmental ethics.

With its exceptionally broad range of dialogue partners (e.g., in literature and science as well as in classical and contemporary philosophy and theology), W.'s brief and elegantly written volume will serve professionals and graduate students or advanced undergraduates in theology/philosophy, as well as the educated reader interested in natural theology or in the philosophy of language.

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No Turning Back: The Future of Ecumenism. By Margaret O'Gara. Edited by Michael Vertin. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2014. Pp. xxvi + 253. \$29.95.

This is a work of love: Margaret O'Gara's love for the ecumenical movement to which she dedicated the majority of her scholarly work, and the love of Michael Vertin, her husband, who brought this collection, begun by O'Gara, to publication. It is also a work of immense scholarly erudition. Much of O'G.'s work was done in response to specific topics that arose in the many ecumenical dialogues in which she played a leading role. It is a great service to bring them together. This volume continues and amplifies the mutual gift theme of her first volume, *The Ecumenical Gift Exchange* (1998).

Part I offers an insight into the actual dynamics of ecumenical dialogues, emphasizing the relational quality that engenders perseverance through the underbrush of long-standing conflict and misunderstanding. Part I also reveals the painstaking and patient effort ecumenists bring to the task of recognizing areas of convergence revealed through each dialogue partner's precise knowledge and love of their own tradition. O'G. suggests that the deep friendships formed through the lengthy dialogue process offer a window into the kinds of communal relationships that could be born in the "full, visible unity" to which ecumenists still aspire.

Part II delves more deeply into particular theological and structural issues that have been, and continue to be, obstacles to this unity. Different issues and areas of commonality arise in each dialogue: peacebuilding with Mennonites, Scripture and tradition with Evangelicals, and ordination of women with Anglicans, to name only a few. Agreement on common faith can allow for considerable diversity. Mutual appreciation of Petrine ministry, for example, does not require accepting its every historical manifestation. Learning before teaching is a thread throughout the book—communions learning from one another, accepting gifts that they may have lost, and repenting for sins against the other. O'G. is realistic about the official fruits of the dialogues so far. Although the dialogues have reached remarkable areas of consensus in many areas, only two have been officially accepted. More work remains to be done.

The concluding essays outline tasks for future ecumenists, highlighting, for example, both old business and the new business of emerging issues of the gospel and culture, moral theologies, and the ordination of women. Moving forward, O'G. argues that all theologians will be called to be ecumenists, doing theology in this wider and challenging context.

"Theology is worth a life!" (237) concludes the last essay, written very shortly before her untimely death. The collection is a fine testimony to the truth of that conviction in O'Gara's life.

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The Holy Trinity in the Life of the Church. Holy Cross Studies in Patristic Theology and History. Edited by Khaled Anatolios. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014. Pp. xvii + 253. \$30.

This excellent collection of essays stems from a 2008 Conference at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. The contributions rightly focus upon the doctrine of the Trinity, not as a detached theological treatise, but as the triune generating and sustaining mystery of the life of the church.

Due attention is given the liturgical matrix of Christian life in the Trinity, especially in the sacraments of baptism and Eucharist. Among notable contributions one might highlight Joseph Lienhard, S.J., on "The Baptismal Command (Matthew 28:19–20) and the Doctrine of the Trinity," as well as John Behr on "The Trinitarian Being of the Church."