

BOOK REVIEWS

MYTH AND MYSTERY: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PAGAN RELIGIONS OF THE BIBLICAL WORLD. By Jack Finegan. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989. Pp. 335.

Finegan, well known for his illuminating books on the world in which the Bible took shape, presents here the beliefs of Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Zoroastrian, Canaanite, Greek, Roman, Gnostic, Mandaeen, and Manichaeen religions, describing our sources of knowledge about each, its geographical spread, its tenets, the factors that influenced it, and its relation to biblical writings.

Under Mesopotamian religion F. describes the beliefs of non-Semitic Sumerians, which were eventually adopted by Semitic Assyrians and Babylonians. These peoples venerated deified cosmic powers An (lord of the sky), Enlil (lord of the atmosphere), Enki (lord of the earth and waters below), Inanna (Venus), Nanna (moon), Utu (sun); and other deities: Beletili (mistress of the god), Ninurta (lord of earth), Nergal (god of underworld). Among these, two emerged as prominent national gods, Marduk (calf of Utu) in Babylonia, and Asshur (god of the fathers) in Assyria. The temples of these gods are located and described; the mythologies associated with them are set forth.

The Egyptians too venerated deified cosmic powers; Hapi (Nile-god), Re (sun-god), Osiris (constellation Orion), Isis (dog-star Sirius). Gods were associated with animals: Hathor (cow), Anubis (jackal), Bastet (cat), Horus (falcon); or with plants: Nefertem (lotus), Isched (willow). Egyptian belief distinguished aspects of the human person: its *kha* (mortal body), *ba* (soul), *ka* (double), and *akh* (spirit). Mythologies about the gods, especially Osiris and Isis, developed at various places (Heliopolis, Thebes, Memphis), where their temples were built. Pyramid Texts, Coffin Texts, and the Book of the Dead contain literature about the afterlife. Religious belief also ruled human life and society: *maat* (truth, righteousness, justice) was its ethical norm. Wisdom literature and prophetic literature flourished.

Zoroastrian religion grew up in central Asia, where it is known principally from the Avesta and Zand-Avesta. According to it two beings rule world history, Ahura Mazda (the good lord of Wisdom, dwelling in light) and Angra Mainyu (the evil spirit, dwelling in darkness). History is the record of the strife between them, which lasts for thousands of years until the final battle, in which three helpers born of Zarathustra will conquer evil, conduct the judgment, and renew the universe. Though the Avestan literature dates Zarathustra to 630-536 B.C., Greek tradition

traces him back to the second millennium (ca. 1700 B.C.). Cosmic dualism is a main tenet of this religion.

Canaanite religion emerged in the land of purple, Phoenicia (= modern Lebanon, Syria, and Israel). Canaanites inhabited Jericho, Megiddo, Beth-Yerah, Arad and other towns ca. 3000 B.C., where structured temples and cult-objects date from the early second millennium. Canaanite religion was influenced by Mesopotamia and Egypt, by the culture of Mari, and the beliefs of early Egyptian dynasties. Ashtoreth was a goddess imported from Mesopotamia (Akkadian Ishtar), who had a temple in Sidon. Baals were venerated, especially on high places, with the use of incense, infant sacrifice, self-laceration. There were prophets of Baal and Asherah, cultic prostitutes. Ancient Ebla had a pantheon of 500 dieties, at the head of which were Dagan (vegetation god), Hadad (storm-god), Shipish (sun-god). Ugarit too had its pantheon, at the head of which were Il-ib (god of the fathers [= El]), who dwelt on a cosmic mountain to the north, Dagan, Baal-Zaphon (= Hadad), etc. About these gods there grew up a considerable mythology preserved in many legends and poems.

Greek religion, influenced likewise by Mesopotamia and Egypt, venerated deified humans, believed to be immortal and possessing superior qualities. Chief among the Greek pantheon were the twelve Olympians: Zeus, Hades, Poseidon, Apollo, Artemis, Athena, Hera, Persephone, Ares, Aphrodite, Hermes, and Demeter. They were all thought to be subject to Fate. Greece eventually produced a criticism of belief in such gods among philosophers and historians (Xenophanes, Protagoras, Socrates, Plato). Rational thinking, making use of observation, analysis, and reflection, came to comprehend the laws of nature, yet recognized the divine order of things (the *Nous* behind the structured material universe). But they proved to be agnostic about the gods and their myths. Instead, virtue as wisdom was considered necessary to rule human life. Greek religion eventually produced mystery cults (e.g., the Eleusinian mysteries, the mysteries of Osiris and Isis).

Romans also venerated sacred powers, especially under the idea of *numen*, the expression of the divine will, personified in such deities as Janus, Jupiter, Saturn, Genius, Mercury, Apollo, Mars, Vulcan, Neptune, Sol, Liber, Tellus, Ceres, Juno, Luna, Diana, Minerva, Venus, and Vesta (Varro's list). Greek myths and gods were adopted and venerated in addition to the cult of household gods (*lares*, *penates*, and *manes*). Romans also imported Eastern cults and mysteries, Chaldaean oracles, Mithraism, and even came to worship their emperors.

Gnostic religion developed an anticosmic dualism, a system of estoric "knowledge" that aimed at the salvation of human beings. The visible world was considered the realm of evil and darkness, created by a demiurge, the lord of darkness, who was opposed to the supreme god, the

Unknown. Gnosticism incorporated elements of Judaism, Christianity, and Greek philosophy. The gnostic Christ was considered to be a being of light who only seemed to be in Jesus (Docetism). The tenets of gnosticism are known from patristic writers and now from the Nag Hammadi Coptic Library (codices discovered in Egypt in 1945).

Mandaean religion was a development of gnosticism; Aramaic *manda'* = Greek *gnōsis*, "knowledge." This religion flourished in the regions of the lower Tigris and Euphrates, mainly from the third to the seventh centuries A.D. Though related to gnosticism of earlier times, it developed an anti-Jewish and anti-Christian outlook. Jesus was regarded as the falsifier of original doctrine. It claims to stem from followers of John the Baptist.

Manichaean religion sprang from the teachings of Mani of Baghdad (ca. 216-277), who was influenced by Jesus, Zarathustra, and Buddha. He taught a form of reincarnation, and declared himself to be the paraclete, insisting on a dualistic explanation of the world and history. His teaching became known from the Pillars of Hercules in the West to China in the East.

F.'s enlightening book provides a concise, reliable description of these ancient religions. The only item that may call for some reconsideration is his explanation of the origins of Mithraism. One would do well to compare his account with that of D. Ulansey, *The Origins of the Mithraic Mysteries: Cosmology and Salvation in the Ancient World* (Oxford University, 1990).

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JOSEPH A. FITZMYER, S.J.

THE EARLY HISTORY OF GOD: YAHWEH AND THE OTHER DEITIES IN ANCIENT ISRAEL. By Mark S. Smith. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990. pp. xxxiv + 197. \$26.95.

In this masterful study, Smith, of the Dept. of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Yale, has made a major contribution to two areas of study: (1) the narrower field of ancient Israelite religion, and (2) the broader question of religion and culture. As regards the first, the representative view has pictured early Israelite worship of Yahweh (monotheism? monolatry?) as fairly self-contained and in tension with the religion, especially Canaanite, of the world around it. The danger of syncretism, "the union of religious phenomenon from two historically separate systems or cultures" (xx), was paramount. In the light of developments in four areas especially (Israel's cultural identity; the nature of Yahwistic cult; the role of the monarchy; and the tremendous interest in goddesses in Israelite religion), Smith mounts a thorough and convincing challenge to the traditional view.

Drawing on the vast background of Canaanite religion made available to us through the discovery of the Ugaritic texts, Smith considers Yahweh in relation to "El, the aged and kindly patriarch of the pantheon; his consort and mother-goddess, Asherah; the young storm-god and divine warrior, Baal; his sister and consort, Anat, likewise a martial deity; and finally, the solar deity" (xix). As might be expected, Yahweh and El, and Yahweh and Baal (and Baal's enemies, Sea and Death) receive extended discussion. Less expected, but likewise important is the discussion of Yahweh and Asherah; e.g., influence on the feminine figure of wisdom (94-95). Smith concludes this discussion with an excursus on gender language for Yahweh. Given the extrabiblical evidence for use of feminine images for gods as well as masculine images for goddesses, a certain reserve is called for. Smith concludes, "Israelite society perceived Yahweh primarily as a god, although Yahweh was viewed also as embodying traits or values expressed by various gendered metaphors and as transcending such particular renderings" (103). In each instance, Smith summarizes the biblical data, extrabiblical evidence, discussion of these among scholars, and offers judicious conclusions. The text reads clearly and smoothly, with most of the technical discussion, e.g. linguistic arguments, relegated to footnotes. The bibliography is enormous, making this a good book to consult first when seeking the *status quaestionis* on the various topics. This is facilitated by three indexes: texts, modern authors, and general topics.

The second area this study elucidates is that of religion and culture. The Israelites may have perceived themselves as a people different from the Canaanites, but the fact is unavoidable that culturally and religiously they shared a great deal in common (7). Early Israelite religion apparently included worship of Yahweh, El, Asherah, and Baal. Over time a monotheism emerged through two major developments, convergence and differentiation. By convergence, various deities and/or their features coalesced into the figure of Yahweh; by differentiation, some features of early Israelite cult were rejected as Canaanite and non-Yahwistic (xxiii-xxiv). Of particular importance in this process was the role of the monarchy. Against some biblical scholars for whom the monarchy was wholly negative, Smith shows that its force was both conservative, innovative, and important in the development of monotheism (xxiv-xxvi, 147-52). The final chapter, "The Origins and Development of Israelite Monotheism," offers a clear and summarizing conclusion. These issues are obviously of importance in our contemporary discussion of religion and inculturation. Any idea of a "pure Yahwism," (or a "pure Christianity") untouched by surrounding cultures is a chimera. Smith's explora-

tions into the “early history of God” can be very helpful as we seek today to sort through some of the same problems early Israel faced.

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FIRST AND SECOND SAMUEL. By Walter Brueggemann. *Interpretation Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*. Louisville: Westminster/Knox, 1990. Pp. x + 372. \$24.95.

Many people associate Brueggemann's name with fresh and stimulating biblical interpretation; this commentary certainly fulfills that expectation. It does more: it helps the reader imagine the narrative dynamics of David's Israel by continual reference to political realities known to contemporary American readers. In fact, B.'s appeal to the educated imagination—so different from other commentaries which inform and analyze—is probably the most attractive aspect of this commentary. Even more unique is the way in which the reader is led to imagine responses to theological questions which usually invite learned, deductive answers. It is the only commentary this reviewer has ever enjoyed “reading,” rather than merely consulting on occasion.

B. attends to the narrative flow and qualities of the text, to the movements of plot and development of character, to factors that retard the process or cause one to question the appearance of a simple story line. The major character of these books is David, and B. devotes 240 pages to his portrait: his rise to power, his reign, his family, and “memories” of David. David's story proves fascinating reading in the biblical text, and B. fully develops the complex portrait contained in a variety of types of literary material, which he describes with clarity.

“The Rise of David” is a literary “source” (1 Sam 16:1—2 Sam 5:10) described by many commentators; for B., it demonstrates the power of narrative to give succor and hope to an audience in search of a hero who might offer them an identity. When B. presents “The Family of David,” he interprets a narrative section (2 Sam 9–20, continued in 1 Kings 1–2) long studied by literary-critical analysis as the Succession Narrative. He broadens the scope of the story from a political explanation (how Solomon succeeded David) to a sensitive presentation of the interplay of familial-court dynamics and the pathos of a ruler whose family seems marred by his weakness and sin.

B.'s final section, “The ‘Memories’ of David,” proved most intriguing for me. Most scholars describe 2 Sam 21–24 as Miscellanies or Appendices, “interruptions” to the narrative flow from 2 Sam 20 to 1 Kings 1. Many see them as repositories of quaint information which should have

appeared elsewhere: odd narratives, lists of warriors, songs of David (including Psalm 18). B. recognizes their strangeness, but, unlike many others, he asks why they were included here. B. believes that these texts provide an alternative view of the larger David story, offering information about David's heroes whose crucial support has been overshadowed by David's fame. Religious interpretations at variance with the larger story also appear. E.g., David affirms that God is blameless to the blameless (2 Sam 22:26); to proclaim this, David implicitly claims that he is blameless, "yet Israel knows better" (343). If this verse concerns "moral symmetry," then it is ironic; but B. suggests that it actually points to the "free rescue" of a God who is not confined by such proportionality. So B. reflects on the application to David of a well-known psalm that does not explicitly reflect his life, and he suggests that these chapters consciously provide an alternative to the dominant view of David.

Despite the persuasiveness of B.'s narrative reconstruction, one may have minor reservations. His references to contemporary political situations provide excellent examples, but occasionally ancient and modern parallels may seem overly clear; when that occurs, the narrative ambiguity of the biblical text (which B. teases out with such finesse) is difficult to discern, and one might be led to facile comparisons. This reviewer is also uneasy about B.'s consistently sanguine approach to David's weaknesses as a graced individual who struggles with sin, in contrast to B.'s unyielding hermeneutics of suspicion with regard to institutions, especially the monarchy with its royal ideology. One might consider the individuals and institutions as parallel, both in their strengths and in their weaknesses. If David's sin in the case of Uriah sets off a cycle of sin in his family (a type of "social sin"), is there no reason to discuss the positive contributions of his reign as well? A desire for further conversation and questions is naturally elicited by B.'s very stimulating commentary.

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JOHN C. ENDRES, S.J.

L'UN ET L'AUTRE TESTAMENT 2: ACCOMPLIR LES ECRITURES. By Paul Beauchamp. Paris: Seuil, 1990. Pp. 450. Fr. 180.

A convincing explanation of the relation between Old and New Testaments has long vexed even the most skilled exegetes. Beauchamp here continues what he started in his first volume: attempting not exactly to show the intrinsic relationship between the Testaments, but rather to show how fulfilment of the Scriptures is to be understood. The question is only very slightly differentiated from the former quests. Needless to say, such an attempt is beset with the usual problem of finding types and

figures in the OT. But B. makes the quest more complex—and maybe to some more convincing—by beginning his search with a disquisition on the symbolic character of language. This, of course, quite rightly suggests that the work will bear the imprint of literary criticism in the largest sense of the term.

B. does not stress the usual type–antitype contrast, with its heightening of the second term, but rather the role of the reader, who sees in a second event, person, place, or thing a reminder of a past event. Such reminders come at moments of crisis in Israelite history.

Following ideas developed by Walter Ong, B. notes that when language is written it enables a culture to protect itself through the years, since it records both adherence to and falls from its written tradition. Writing spreads through space, but the very space itself allows memory to work rapidly in reconstruction. What I read here is that the written document enables one to see the ongoing dialogue between God and his chosen ones, the conflict between the design evident in the Scriptures and the disorder evident from the behavior of believers. By way of substantiating his thesis B. works his way through Lacan and de Saussure and concludes by affirming a transcultural energy of the letter—a point that this reviewer would like to see elaborated.

The first part of the book centres on the body in the creation account and all that emanates from that body. When B. turns his attention to the man, the woman, and the serpent, he develops the surplus of meaning present to the reader. This surplus is inherent in the words themselves, as *'arum*, applied to the serpent, has both the meaning of “wily” and “naked.” In this sense the snake becomes the interpreter of the passage. The expulsion from paradise is not a descent to gehenna but rather the first step on the road to the promise. The serpent, who really causes the expulsion, is later identified with Jesus, so that paradoxically the serpent is likewise the promise.

While this volume does not fit neatly into any particular literary genre, the unifying insight is the attempt to locate the controlling figures, tropes, and metaphors of the Bible and to conclude from them to the astonishing unity that has always characterized this book. The vehicles are mainly the Yahwist creation account, the Song of Songs, the Hexateuch, with passing allusions to Job, Revelation, and the Gospels.

Towards the middle of the book, B. turns explicitly to literary critics such as Todorov, Bakhtine, and Northrop Frye. That all three have influenced B.'s interpretation is reasonably clear. Nonetheless, beneath this sophisticated presentation I still sensed the old promise–fulfilment theme. But B. finds typologies that are seldom mentioned by commentators, e.g., the separation of the waters in Genesis and the parting of

the Reed Sea as preludes to understanding the baptism of Jesus, which itself is a type of the Passion; and the Exodus as an anticipation of the frequent references to newness in the NT. In most of these instances I would see an element of topology, but much more what Frye has called polysemous meaning and thematic development. In fine, B. maintains, in contrast to simpler presentations, that it is only through the foundational events of the OT that we shall come to the Christ portrayed by faith. I have but one question about this complex but stimulating book: Do the conclusions and the process by which they are reached apply to non-Christian readers?

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SPIRITUAL DIRECTION IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN EAST. By Irénée Hausherr, S.J. Translated from the French by Anthony P. Gythiel. Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 1990. Pp. xxxiii + 434.

As Christians around the world today hunger for a deeper, more personal encounter with God, we are witnessing a revival of the practice of seeking out guidance from holy, intelligent, and experienced directors. Here is a timely translation of one of the most authoritative works on spiritual direction, a classic study written in 1955 by a renowned patristics scholar and professor at the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome.

Hausherr states that his aim is "to set forth the theological and psychological principles that governed the praxis of spiritual direction in the ancient Christian East." He uses the term "spiritual direction" in a restrictive sense, referring to a relationship between a single master, informed and experienced in the ways of the Spirit, and one disciple who wishes to profit from such knowledge and experience.

H. allows the great spiritual giants of the desert to speak for themselves in his large collection of their "saving" words (teachings which lead to salvation), their stories, and their didactic examples. Many sayings illustrate the qualities or duties of the spiritual father or mother, or exemplify their function, which is to share in God's fatherhood, to cooperate in the process of "begetting" a disciple in the Spirit as a child of God. Others describe the duty of the disciple to have a director to whom faith and submission are given. Openness of heart is needed both in the director and the directee, especially in the important practice of manifesting, not merely one's conscience, but every thought, dream, mood, and obsessive feeling that would cast the Holy Spirit's light on even the deepest unconscious levels. H.'s concluding chapters deal specifically with the practice of the revelation of thoughts, the efficacy of spiritual direction, and the direction of nuns and lay persons.

Eastern Christians considered discernment (Greek *diakrisis*) as the major work of the director. There was a learning that God alone could impart, and it was totally independent of one's attainments in profane sciences. Because the Fathers so highly appreciated the spiritual knowledge of the Spirit, they generally rejected other kinds of knowledge as worthless in guiding a person in the ways of the Spirit. Discernment was best exercised in the context of spiritual friendship—a relationship closer than any other known in human love, since two persons striving to be totally guided by the Spirit meet each other at the deepest level of their being, its ground, where God dwells within them.

H. presents his material in objective, scholarly fashion, never editorializing or making pointed applications. Yet since he is addressing Western Christians, we may regret that he does not deal with some of the weaknesses found in the Western practice of direction, especially in the period before Vatican II, and that he does not explicitly stress some of the valuable insights from the practice of direction in the East that Western Christians might profitably adopt. For this reviewer, it is perhaps the element of loving friendship (in contrast to a relationship of teacher to student or superior to inferior) which is most needed in direction today. Eastern Fathers consistently teach that director and directee come together as persons mutually seeking to serve God by serving each other. Both seek to listen to what God or the deeper self is saying to each. Though the director or leader should be more experienced than the disciple, that must not separate the two into subject and object; the oneness of God's life through the Spirit must be maintained. The necessary openness of the director to the other brings a vulnerability that is a state of more or less constant readiness to suffer everything for the directee. Leadership in this sense is almost synonymous with exercising pure love toward the other.

The translator has added a valuable bibliography of primary and secondary sources, a list of the Mothers and Fathers cited, and a most helpful glossary with explanations of the terms, especially the Greek terms, they commonly used. We must be grateful to him for making available to Western Christians this classic of Eastern spirituality, which offers us subtle suggestions for developing direction along the lines of openness to the sole director, the Spirit, by soul mates journeying together in deepest spiritual friendship, such as Jesus commands us to have for one another.

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L'ENSEIGNEMENT SPIRITUEL DE JEAN DE DALYATHA, MYSTIQUE SYRO-ORIENTAL DU VIIIÈ SIÈCLE. By Robert Beulay. Paris: Beauchesne, 1990. Pp. 523. Fr. 330.

Does an obscure Syro-Oriental or Nestorian whose writings have remained unedited for over 1200 years merit such lengthy treatment as Beulay has given him? Could a committed Nestorian theologian ever be a mystic in the strict sense, granted that tradition's firm belief in an unbridgeable gulf between God's transcendent nature and our creaturely existence? B.'s very significant scholarly endeavor not only provides knowledge about an outstanding mystic but also expands our understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of mysticism in the patristic period; it should prove as well a helpful source for those seeking to determine the possible influence of Nestorian mystics upon the Sufis.

This is the second part of B.'s Sorbonne doctoral dissertation. (The first part, an historical overview of Syriac spirituality through the eighth century, was published in 1987 as *La lumière sans forme*.) The present work provides us with an in-depth, well-documented, and insightful study based on all the extant writings of John of Dalyatha, an eighth-century solitary whose life may be shrouded in obscurity but whose writings reflect deep mystical experiences and wide familiarity with the mystical views of Evagrius, Gregory of Nyssa, Pseudo-Dionysius, Pseudo-Macarius, Isaac of Nineveh, Joseph Hazzaya, and John of Apamea. B. shows in detail that John drew upon their ideas but incorporated them into his own original and often lyrical synthesis, adapting and altering them in light of his own mystical experiences. By indicating John's indebtedness to, but difference from, these authors, B. clarifies the underlying meanings and fundamental issues reflected in the technical terms various writers employed to describe a believer's ascent through various stages to the summits of mystical contemplation.

Though no systematic framework is explicitly stated in John's extant writings, he seems to link Evagrius' twofold division of *praktikē* and *gnōstikē* with Pseudo-Dionysius' threefold stages of purification, illumination, and union. John differs, however, in a number of noteworthy ways. E.g., he understands love to function both as a spiritual force inducing one to observe the commandments and then, in the mystical state, as an ardent desire to experience the grandeur and beauty of God. He also has a distinctive understanding of the personal relationships one enters into with each member of the Trinity, and of the indispensable role the glorified humanity of Christ plays in bringing one to a mystical vision of God's glory.

John believes the spiritual ascent begins with a radical conversion that prompts one to enter into solitude. Here one must actively struggle in

love to maintain a discerning watch over the senses and a continual recollection of God. In performing these and other ascetical practices (summed up as "the practise of purity"), the passions become more and more purified, until one is ready to enter the stage of sanctification and illumination, where grace illumines the mind to see the various levels of reality in different ways. B. discusses at length what and how one can know spiritually, first through concepts and symbols, and then in a state of union where no mental image is perceived. The sign of this latter state is the attainment of a freedom to be able promptly to repulse passionate impulses arising in one's heart. In this new mystical state John distinguishes two moments: an initial approach to the "cloud of divine light," and then an ever deepening penetration into it, where everything is known in God and everything is seen as God sees it. On this level one experiences the glory and beauty of the divine nature, but not the divine nature itself.

B. demonstrates impressive mastery over his subject. The vast amount of unedited material necessary for a doctoral thesis makes for heavy reading. Yet the book will be of value to everyone interested in mysticism from an academic point of view, especially the mysticism of the patristic period.

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REASON IN RELIGION: THE FOUNDATIONS OF HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION. By Walter Jaeschke. Translated from the German by J. Michael Stewart and Peter C. Hodgson. Berkeley: University of California, 1990. Pp. xvii + 464. \$49.95.

Jaeschke's greatest achievement has been to make sense of Hegel's posthumously published *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*. Previous editions had run together and reconciled Hegel's manuscript and sets of student lecture notes from the four occasions at the University of Berlin on which Hegel had delivered this series of lectures, thus creating a text that was not Hegel's and rarely made much sense at all. J.'s critical edition, an English version of which has been published by the University of California, painstakingly separated out the four versions of the lectures. It has made it possible for students of Hegel both to see something of the development of his thought and, perhaps even more importantly, finally be able to study a text with reasonable confidence that it approximates Hegel's original intention.

In the present work, a set of substantial essays, J. claims that Hegel's purpose in his work on religion is to find a way to reintroduce the idea of God into theoretical philosophy, to have once again both a philosophy

of religion and a philosophical theology. Hegel's philosophy of religion, in other words, like so much of his work, is an answer to Kant, in this case to Kant's rejection of philosophical theology in favor of "ethico-theology," i.e., the assertion of God as a necessary hypothesis for the smooth running of the Kantian ethical system.

The first chapter examines the Kantian position in considerable detail, insofar as it led to Hegel. In J.'s view it is Hegel who reinvents speculative theology, but it is in Kant that the starting-point for Hegel's conclusions is to be found. Indeed, Hegel himself saw things this way. Kant's "victory of non-philosophy," to use Hegel's judgment, was both to convince many of the impossibility of a philosophical theology, particularly through his refutation of the ontological argument, and at the same time further to undercut the philosophical approach to God by successfully asserting the moral "proof." In the later part of this chapter, J. outlines the reaction to Kant which set in within ten years of his death. He focuses on Fichte's insertion of concrete content into Kant's abstract postulate of God, on Schelling's more frontal attack on the moral concept and the doctrine of the postulates as a way of reintroducing God through the back door, on Hegel's early historical work on the development of the moral concept of God, and on Jacobi's mystical plea for the location of the idea of God in "non-philosophy."

The second chapter examines Hegel's attempts at a metaphysical renewal of God and religion during the so-called "Jena" period, i.e., through the completion of *The Phenomenology of Spirit* in 1806. Religion is freed from ethicotheology, it is distinguished from both art and philosophy, and the history of religion is absorbed into the philosophy of religion. Most significantly of all for the final development of Hegel's thought, dogma comes to be seen as expressing metaphysical truth, though not as determining that truth.

In his central chapter J. turns his attention to the Berlin lectures. Arguing for the priority of the lectures over the *Encyclopedia*, J. sees the four lecture series as four attempts to demonstrate the possibility of the philosophy of religion as a science. Through a developmental analysis of Hegel's manuscript and the lecture notes (*Nachschriften*) that provide access to the three further versions of the series, J. demonstrates Hegel's conviction that the philosophy of religion can demonstrate "the presence of reason in religion." Religion in its highest form—Lutheran Protestant Christianity—is the perfect exemplification of the "self-consciousness of freedom." The final chapter invites participation in the controversy over the value of Hegel's religious thought that erupted so soon after his death and culminated in the late work of Schelling with the finally nonphilo-

sophical cry that Hegel's speculative retrieval of the idea of God is inadequate to the longing of the human ego.

J. is clearly of the opinion that subsequent history's overall lack of interest in Hegel's speculative philosophy of religion is not to be explained on philosophical grounds. Rather, the apparent aridity of his idea of God left it unpalatable to those who wished to believe. Indeed, J.'s protest that Hegel "did not rest content with the negative knowledge of a nonactual God," but "went on to conceive God as the idea and religion as the self-knowing of this idea in human being" nicely illustrates the difficulty of accumulating specifically religious capital from Hegel. Only Hegelians can rest content with this God.

I believe almost every word in this fine book. As befits the person who knows most about Hegel's philosophy of religion, J. ranges with deceptive ease across this notoriously difficult material, and seems to have been extraordinarily well served by his translators. It is possible that J. is a little too willing to take Hegel's side, particularly in the posthumous controversy, but on the other hand J. is quite correct that Hegel's speculative philosophy of religion has never been philosophically answered, for all that it has been countless times rejected out of hand. Perhaps the one place that J. seems a little too smooth, even overanxious, is in his assertion of the priority of the unpublished *Lectures* over the treatment of religion in the published work from the same time. While he should certainly know better than almost anyone else, it is possible that the ease with which he comes to this conclusion makes overlarge claims for the admittedly remarkable textual work on the *Lectures* for which he was responsible.

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SPIRIT AND EXISTENCE: A PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY. By Michael Gelven. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1990. Pp. 264, \$29.95.

The reader discovers that this book offers a distinctive approach to the topic of spirit when the first chapter begins with a description of a human experience of self-disgust. This experience cries out against the awfulness of the beast, a merely animal existence of flesh without meaning. Gelven, the author of a commentary on Heidegger's *Being and Time*, serves up a series of fresh, stimulating meditations on the theme of human spirituality. In a work which eschews the scholarly apparatus of footnotes, bibliography, and index, he attempts to grasp the fundamental meaning of spirit, without any primary concern with whether there is a thing called 'a spirit' or 'a soul.' He explores flesh and,

especially, spirit as ways of being, not entities which exist independently. He provides a many-faceted phenomenology of experiences where the uniqueness of human life as higher in quality than other animals shines through. While largely ignoring traditional metaphysical disputes, G. is concerned to overcome the reductionist allurements of materialist mechanism and hedonism, and he warns against the presupposition that "matter" (an extremely mysterious notion) is understandable, while "spirit" is not. The paradoxes of spirituality are essential for grasping its meaning.

The question posed is: What does it mean *to be spirit*? The plan of attack is to describe carefully various ways in which spirituality manifests itself. This generates the claims that to be spirit is to be important, to radiate with inner light, to worship, to suffer, to acknowledge mystery, to become enrapt, to be redeemable, to submit to adventure, to be able to laugh, to be noble. Some of these portrayals manifest classic traits, many are striking in their novel brilliance. Importance is a predicate of spirit, because being spiritual is being true to one's genuine worth, not squandering one's existence on what is trivial. This importance can be understood only by reference to a greater reality. Spiritual persons sacrifice their life, if need be, for the sake of the whole. Such persons think of themselves as belonging to a more noble reality, beyond their private existence, which is served solely because it is worthy of being served, but which enhances and ennobles their existence in virtue of this belonging. The spiritual are not only important, they are also true, radiating an illumination which guides others.

Suffering manifests spirit and attracts us to those who have endured a great deal. We honor the courage of those who have reached beyond self-pity and self-protection actually to *offer* their suffering. Also indicative of spirit is the simple trust that there is redemption, that human existence can be elevated to a destined status by powers humans do not themselves possess, that the story of a person's life can make sense and one's existence matters. G. is especially insightful in exploring the spiritual traits of adventure and humor. As a predicate of spirit, adventure means letting the world influence us as the ultimate ground of our meaning. Adventurousness is the willingness to be profoundly changed by what the world has to teach us. As spiritual, the adventuresome are rarely bored, since they do not see the events of the world as essentially entertaining, but as what can and does alter their existence. In true humor the universality of human foolishness is fondly appreciated and celebrated as one's own. Laughter springs from our being rational and marks the unfamiliar violation of our expectations as to rational behavior.

After describing spirit through its crucial predicates, G. suggests three possible ways of uniting them in a definition of the *essence* of spirit; the candidates for this essence are nearness, transcendence, and gratitude. To be spiritual is to draw near to that which brings full realization to persons, the sacred, which grounds the possibility of the precious. To be spiritual is to go beyond the intelligible to a higher plane or to reveal hitherto unrealized dimensions of the everyday world. To be spiritual is gratefully to acknowledge that one is favored simply in terms of who one is rather than what one does, that spirit means mattering to some power which *bestows* existence. G. finally concedes that no decision among the three candidates need be made. "We can perhaps suggest what spirit means: *spirit is transcendent gratitude for drawing near*" (257).

This book will not find its audience among those who march to the cadences of analytical rigor or metaphysical system-building. It will entice, and perhaps enchant, those reflective persons who enjoy free flights of the spirit emboldened by an imagination which clothes insight and is tempered by the rewards and scars of experience. It offers adventures in spirituality, not arguments for spirituality. The hints of metaphysics and forays into ontology here await the craft of another day. This panorama of spirit is for adults who are playful.

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DAVID J. CASEY, S.J.

HUMAN IMMORTALITY AND THE REDEMPTION OF DEATH. By Simon Tugwell, O.P. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1990. Pp. xii + 196. £12.95.

De novissimis in the manuals often suffered from brevity of treatment, content detached from the rest of dogmatic theology, and, even more, from doctrinal assertions that demanded better historical understandings. Much of this has been remedied by recent studies that more clearly demonstrate the centrality of eschatological thinking (e.g., Ratzinger's *Eschatology: Death and Eternal Life*). Yet there remains a need for a scholarly history of Christian eschatology; Tugwell's book admirably begins to fill that requirement. It is the result of ten lectures and seminars at the University of Bristol on an initial hunch that the notion of immortality might be overrated, especially as it is perceived by "conventional orthodoxy." Stressing as the essential Christian doctrine that our final disposition lies with an immortal soul and an eventual resurrected body introduces, T. insists, a false problematic.

In Part 1 selected probings into pre-Christian classical texts reveal what it was like for the ancients to breach the limits imposed by mortality.

Some (like Homer and Euripides) tell stories or produce tragedies that give aesthetic shape to heroic endurance when facing death. Even Plato's *Phaedo* is a cautious text: it advances an argument for the immortal status of the soul on the ground that life in this world is so bad that death is the best thing that can happen to us. Immortality is achieved by internalizing our break with this world for the world of forms. Such a view (a far cry from what Middle Platonists and Christian popularizers did with it) consigns one to a rather aimless life with the risk of boredom. Lastly, the ancients attempted to minimize pain and death by securing some privileged space, as Epicurus did with his austere hedonism or the Stoics with their highminded moral superiority. Despite all the insights, there is a gloomy pessimism about human survival in the pre-Christian world.

Part 2 is an impressive collection of patristic and scholastic texts illustrating what happens when Christians test the limits of mortality. There is no hint that there is anything innately immortal; that belongs to God alone. Even when faced with the meaning of bodily resurrection, we are dealing with a notion different from substantial survival. The Christian break with the ancient world is not to be found in a belittling of this life or high moralizing, but in acceptance of death as an extraneous evil, with the hope that we can be redeemed. Even the early Fathers recognized the Christian point as they employed Greek philosophy: Christ's life underpins and makes sense of our lives; he is the medicine of immortality and the antidote to death (Ignatius of Antioch).

As the orthodox position on eternal life developed, numerous controversies sidetracked dogmatic theology, and T. walks us through the documents with deliberate care. E.g., there is the chronology for the resurrection of the dead (corpses on this earth do make us pause, *pace* some recent thinking). The interim state is also a fascinating study in either theological juggling or doctrinal development: from "waiting-rooms" for the dead to real progress in a perfection already achieved. Furthermore, why are there two judgments? And what happens at the general judgment? Questions like that make us wonder whether we have really advanced much in our grasp of these notions. And finally, the embarrassment about eternal bliss caused by John XXII and the subsequent dogmatic correction in *Benedictus Deus* is seen in a new light with T.'s presentation of Benedict XII's unpublished theological treatise on the matter in the Vatican library.

A short appendix provides a commentary about the 1979 letter of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith "On Certain Matters pertaining to Eschatology" in relation to T.'s 1988 position on an interim state

between death and resurrection. T. considers the Congregation's restrained claims an affirmation of the possibility of his "split screen" hypothesis: from *our* perspective souls need to be spoken of as independent of the body (the dead are both in heaven and in their tombs). "What we must not do, I submit, is imagine that such talk adequately describes the situation of the saints *as it appears to them*" (176).

This is a lively book written in contemporary theological language; T. knows how to translate medieval language, and for this alone he deserves our thanks. There are some points about which one might quibble: e.g., whether T.'s hypothesis on an interim state ends up in two realities; and whether T. rightly reads John 11:35-38 as expressing Jesus' indignation and outrage at the death of Lazarus, instead of his angry reaction to the accompanying Jews. A sample of T.'s style is a better conclusion: "Christian doctrine is not concerned to give us gossip about the details of what life in heaven is like for those who are there. We could not understand it if we were given such gossip" (177). The original message of Christianity is of a different sort: "... not resurrection versus immortality, but hope versus hopelessness" (113). Now the theological virtue of hope awaits further examination.

St. Paul Seminary, Minn.

JEROME M. DITTBERNER

SAKRAMENTENTHEOLOGIE: EINE PERSONALE SICHT. By Lothar Lies. Graz: Styria, 1990. Pp. 375. Ö.S. 420.

Ever since Schillebeeckx began to publish on the theology of the sacraments, theologians have expended much effort to find renewed understanding of the mystery of our sacramental universe. Karl Rahner in Germany, Bruno Brinkman in England, David Power in the U.S., Louis-Marie Chauvet in France, to mention only a few, sought to bring new insights to bear on our tradition. Such a widespread search is testimony to extensive dissatisfaction with the classical understanding developed in the Middle Ages.

Lies, professor of theology at Innsbruck and known for his Origen studies, here makes a significant contribution to our new understanding. He, too, is critical of the classical perception. Calling the sacraments "receptacles" or "containers" of grace was an appropriate answer to the Waldenses, who saw them as means to communicate the personal holiness of the ministers. Calling them "instruments" of grace was a suitable response to the Reformers, who denied that God was the principal agent in them. Such definitions were correct in upholding aspects of the tradition in face of its denial, but they are not sufficient to describe the

riches of God's saving actions. Lies's theory is that the sacraments should be regarded as personal encounters between God and human beings, encounters in which persons communicate through symbols that speak both of God's saving deeds and of the self-giving of his people.

Lies's "personal view" is grounded in sound anthropological assumptions. Human beings cannot achieve full personhood without communication with others. Such a relationship, however, is authentic and fruitful only when one person "creates space" (an act of *Raum geben*) in himself or herself for another, without absorbing or destroying the freedom of the other. Such intimate and intense communication cannot be through signs, which are too primitive and mechanical to convey meanings conceived in the depth of persons. Symbols alone will do. Further, Lies's theory is grounded in traditional trinitarian theology. In God there is a communication of persons: each is fully present to the others in a mysterious unity, yet without any loss of personality. There is neither fusion nor separation among them. This is the patristic and scholastic doctrine of *perichōrēsis*, or *circumīncessio*: the inseparable union of distinct persons.

On these anthropological and trinitarian bases Lies constructs his vision. When we speak of the sacraments, we speak of direct, immediate, person-to-person encounters between God and human beings. No lesser understanding will do, since, as Scripture testifies, God has always visited his people in person, not through instruments. The partners who meet receive each other mutually, give room to each other in their very being without any loss to their personality, exchange freely. The "language" of this communication is in symbols, expressing both the corporeal nature of our human existence and God's gracious descent into our visible, tangible universe. The symbols in such meetings follow a pattern, most prominently displayed in the Eucharist but present in all others. This pattern is familiar to theologians, even if its application to every one of the sacraments is not. It includes the great moments of *anamnēsis*, *epiclēsis*, *koinōnia*, *prosphora*, and *eulogia*: recall of God's saving deeds, invocation of his Spirit, communion with him and his assembly, an offering of the people, and thanksgiving praise.

The genre of the book is that of "reflective theology," or "theological meditation." There are few references to sources, but Lies speaks from a fund of knowledge that he has in firm possession—and that he presumes also on the part of the reader. A thorough evaluation of his position will require time. Obviously it must have taken years to formulate; it deserves a similarly considered response. Yet, even after a first or second reading (one is hardly enough), it exhibits an admirable balance between a clear and simple intuition (sacraments are personal encounters between God

and human beings) and an explanation based on rich, complex humanistic and patristic sources (the need for symbols and the doctrine of *perichōrēsis*).

Apart from scholarly analyses, I can see other ways of testing L.'s theory. One is by preaching it, since it could be easily translated into terms that are intelligible to the faithful at large. I would expect an overwhelmingly positive response from them. Another way of testing it would be to see if, in the practical order, it could have a positive impact on the administration of the sacraments (canon law), and in particular on the development of our worship (liturgy). I think it could open up new horizons. Still another way of testing the theory would be to ascertain if it has the capacity to transcend ancient quarrels and present differences among divided Christians, bringing them closer together in wonder before God's mysteries. L. affirms that it has such a capacity and I agree with him. This well-thought-out and far-reaching "personal view" deserves the attention of the theological community, irrespective of language boundaries.

Catholic University of America

LADISLAS ORSY, S.J.

RECONCILIATION AND JUSTIFICATION: THE SACRAMENT AND ITS THEOLOGY. By Kenan B. Osborne, O.F.M. New York: Paulist, 1990. Pp. vi + 304. \$14.95.

Though they did so in very different ways, the Reformation of the 16th century and the Council of Trent both stressed the relationship between the sacrament of penance and the justification of the sinner through the grace of Jesus Christ. Among the results was a pair of currents which have exerted lasting influence on the sacramental structures of the Roman Catholic Church and the churches of the Reformation. Osborne calls his readers' attention to this fact at the very outset. He is not surprised to find that on the part of the same churches the lack of a consensus on justification has correlated historically with a similar lack of agreement regarding sacramental reconciliation. He thinks that present ecumenical growth in a shared understanding of justification may provide at least the occasion for a less divisive theology of the sacrament in question. This book is the result of his effort to make good use of that opportunity.

Beginning with current NT exegesis, O. centers in on the forgiveness Jesus brought as well as "the power" of the Church (and not simply its leaders) to "isolate, repel and negate sin." Then he works his way through the centuries up to the present. In the process he shows not only what the reconciliation of sinners on the part of the Church involved in various

periods, but also how well or poorly that reconciliation celebrated the justification of sinners through God's prevenient grace. More specifically he tests the process of ecclesial reconciliation at a given time by asking whether (and how well or poorly) it integrates the theology of the absolute gratuity of grace and that of the full efficacy of Jesus' sacrifice. To put it another way, he is repeatedly concerned as to whether the human works involved in this or that process of ecclesial reconciliation are *or even can be* open to a Pelagian interpretation.

Toward the end of the book O. devotes special attention to contemporary issues such as the frequency of confession, general absolution, private confession to a priest, and the age for first confession. In this regard he finds that the Roman Catholic Church at present is confronted with very serious issues. These might conceivably lend themselves to resolution. But that would be conditioned by a change not only in much pastoral practice but also in the prescriptions laid down by church authorities with regard to the sacrament of reconciliation. Both would have to make that celebration express more clearly than at present the divine act of justification, salvation, and deification. The sacrament would have to be more a celebration of God's readiness to forgive infinitely more than seventy times seven times, as well as to do for sinners because of Jesus Christ the great things which eye has not seen nor ear heard (253). The renewal of the sacrament of reconciliation following Vatican II should have stressed this more; that it has not explains to no small degree the problems that renewal has encountered. Thus O. ends by stressing the theme with which he began: justification.

The obvious strength of this book is O.'s insistence that the God of Jesus be celebrated in the ecclesial rites of reconciliation as the God of grace. This concern has led to a far-reaching assessment carried out in the light of a twofold Christological criterion. Churchly discourse and practice dealing with the reconciliation of sinners are measured in terms of how open they are *or even can be* to the charge of diminishing the absolute gratuity of grace and the full efficacy of Jesus' sacrifice. When, e.g., in a particular rite a repenting sinner is expected or required to do something, that often seems enough in O.'s eyes to warrant the suspicion of possible Pelagianism.

To be sure, God's forgiveness through Jesus and in the Spirit cannot be bought or won through anything a sinful race, group, or individual does. The contrary impression must not be given in preaching and sacramental rites. Both are appropriately tested with this in mind. Indeed all Christian discourse and practice need to be critiqued in the light of that criterion, asking whether they encourage the placing of ultimate reliance, trust, and hope in the God of Jesus Christ and nowhere else.

But that same criterion in its application should not stop there; it must also look for and promote the proclamation-celebration of something else. For the absolute gratuity of grace as well as the full sufficiency and efficacy of Jesus' sacrifice involve both divine claims and empowerment for more rather than less on the part of disciples. In efforts to resolve issues regarding the sacrament of reconciliation with help from the theology of justification this needs to be highlighted more than it is in the present work.

Catholic University of America

CARL J. PETER

REFORMING THE CHURCH TODAY: KEEPING HOPE ALIVE. By Hans Küng. Translated from the German by Peter Heinegg, with Francis McDonagh et al. New York: Crossroad, 1990. Pp. vi + 198. \$18.95.

Most of the contents of this book have already appeared in print between 1969 and 1989, some of them as articles in various journals but most of them as parts of books and as articles in the *Concilium* series. A few others have apparently been authored for this collection.

Part 1, "Staying in the Church," provides Küng's apologia for remaining a Roman Catholic despite the many serious reasons that would drive him out. Though the first two essays in this section were published in 1971 and 1980, they would still seem to explain his "I'd-rather-fight-than-switch" attitude today. On the whole, both are carefully, clearly, and convincingly composed and could be urged as evidence that Küng continues to attack current institutional Catholicism from the inside for sincere and honest motives. A third essay, "Catholics and Protestants: An Ecumenical Inventory," which maintains that an increasing number of Christians do not feel at home in any of the Christian churches and are inclined to form a sort of "third denomination" without belonging to any church, does not seem to contribute very much towards the cause of Christian unity. Published first in 1978, it attempts to show that the changes since Vatican II should be favoring the ecumenical movement. As in so many other instances, one can agree with Küng's basic ideas without accepting his analysis of the situation. For instance, you can readily concur that Vatican II set up clear criteria to prevent excesses in Marian devotion without agreeing with his notion that the conciliar rejection of a separate document on Mary was inspired by this motive. A study of the *Acta synodalia* from the Council clearly reveals that such a superficial way of addressing the problem was not what won the debate to make Vatican II's Marian teaching the final chapter of *Lumen gentium*; that outcome resulted from serious theological, pastoral, and ecumenical considerations.

This is but a single example of what appears to be typical of Küng's "selective" use of sources in summoning his arguments against alleged abuses in the institutional Church. Even when you espouse his major objectives of reform and renewal, the means he proposes are frequently questionable or clearly objectionable. Often they run the risk of becoming counterproductive by losing an essentially Catholic character altogether. His analysis of a reformed Marian devotion could easily lead to a puritanical removal of much in popular piety that would alienate many of the faithful who need direction but who are not indulging in superstitious beliefs and practices. And even when they are, we ought to correct, not destroy. *Abusus non tollit usum*.

Another section that calls for special attention here is entitled "Solving Problems" and contains an essay "Discussion on the Future of Pastoral Care." Included in it, to Küng's credit, is "Collapse or Awakening? Bishop Moser's Answer," which is a series of critical comments upon Küng's article, "Pastoral Care on the Brink of Collapse." Moser, the predecessor to Walter Kasper, the current Ordinary of the Diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart, calls into question some of Küng's proposed solutions, such as making celibacy optional for Roman Catholic priests. In his reply, Küng points out that, although his letter was not addressed to Moser, he feels he must take a public position a second time. His position becomes even clearer, but he does not adequately demonstrate how some of his solutions would avoid creating greater problems.

About the only advantage this reviewer can imagine in having such a collection of Küng's reforming ideas over the past 25 years is the convenience of their availability in a single source. While we might all benefit from Küng's assessment of what's wrong with the institutional Church today, I for one do not find his program for reform very promising, and so not very helpful in keeping my hope alive. For that I look elsewhere.

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FREDERICK M. JELLY, O.P.

A TEACHABLE SPIRIT: RECOVERING THE TEACHING OFFICE IN THE CHURCH. By Richard Robert Osmer. Louisville: Westminster/Knox, 1990. Pp. xi + 298. \$14.95.

Osmer's title comes from a phrase John Calvin coined to express his experience of moving from Roman Catholicism to Protestantism: "God, by a sudden conversion, subdued and brought my mind to a teachable frame" (52-53). O. sees mainline Protestant churches in the U.S. at a crossroads today. He suggests "conversion to teachableness" as the

starting point for the “restoration of a church that can teach with authority” (5) and attempts “to reopen the question of the church’s teaching office in mainline Protestantism” (x).

The teaching office stands, for O., between “rampant individualism” and “counter-modern authoritarianism,” which, he claims, characterize much of American culture. The mainline Protestant churches now face several problems: declining membership, loss of their role as a dominant shaper of values in an “increasingly pluralistic society,” and an “ambiguous relationship to the traditional civic faith of American life” (5–6). The restoration of a teaching authority in the Church, as understood in classic Protestantism, holds promise for a renewed, more authentic Christian witness in our society.

What does O. mean by “teaching office”? Derived from Latin *officium*, the term refers either to the function, i.e. the tasks to be done, or to the position to which the responsibilities are attached. O. chooses the first meaning, since the “teaching function” of the Church is a ministry which belongs to the “being” (*esse*) of the Church (13–14). Its purpose is to bring about in Christians a “teachable piety” open to the communication of God’s truth in Scripture, ministerial leadership, and theology. The roots of a teaching office are found in the NT. O.’s discussion of “emerging catholicity and the *magisterium*” (73–83) includes a brief overview of the stages of historical development of the teaching office in Roman Catholicism. However, he neglects to highlight sufficiently the importance of foundational contributions to this development from the patristic age.

The model envisioned by O. reflects, rather, the teachings of Luther and Calvin. Luther did not write any work that set forth a systematic discussion of his thought in regard to a teaching office. Instead, he developed a “set of emphases”: the infallibility of the gospel, the necessity of a Christological interpretation of Scripture, and the existence of “various penultimate authorities” ordered under Scripture as it bears witness to the gospel. For O., Calvin is “*the* Protestant theologian of the church’s teaching ministry.” The chapter on Calvin’s thought and practice is one of the liveliest. Calvin’s insights regarding a “constellation of authorities” in the Church, the influence of the humanistic tradition on his thought, and the importance he gave to catechetical instruction present a rich and varied composite of his theology. Indeed, in regard to a teaching office, “Calvin’s theology is practical . . . [and his] practice is theological” (135).

O.’s discussion culminates in his proposal of a “new theological paradigm” for the mainline Protestant churches, as they “struggle to discern their role in the new religious America.” This is nothing other than what he sees as “a distinctive form of theological reflection,” namely *practical*

theology. He calls for an interrelated activity that draws on the resources of professional theologians in seminaries and universities, congregations engaged in practical theological reflection and lay education, and representative leaders and bodies who engage in teaching and education on behalf of the denomination as a whole (178–81). He argues for the creation of such an “educational ecology,” which could result in “a vision of what it means to be a Christian and a community of faith in this contemporary world” (181).

O.’s enthusiasm for his subject is compelling. Surely, his proposal for the recovery of an authoritative teaching office in the mainline Protestant churches will threaten or meet with disapproval from some of his readers. Much of what he says, however, will encourage others, especially theologians in seminaries, who lament the intrusion of secularistic individualism and extremes of conservative authoritarianism into the life and thought of the churches. Roman Catholics who read the book will find in it more than one insight that can be instructive and enlightening, as they, too, seek to grapple with questions of authority and the teaching office in their Church today.

Mundelein Seminary, Ill.

AGNES CUNNINGHAM, S.S.C.M.

THEOLOGY AND CRITICAL THEORY: THE DISCOURSE OF THE CHURCH. By Paul Lakeland. Nashville: Abingdon, 1990. Pp. 271. \$18.85

Lakeland is convinced that contemporary Roman Catholicism can be illuminated by recourse to Habermasian critical theory in a way not possible within the coordinates of the premodern conceptualities still often appealed to, and definitely not rivaled by some of the more nihilistic postmodern revisionist proposals, e.g. deconstruction. Selectively marshalling basic constructs from Habermas’ theory of communication action, discourse ethics, and theory of modernity, and understanding these constructs to function at once as diagnostic tools and potential therapeutic agents, L.’s primary focus is on the actual functioning of the Catholic Church; reflection on its nature and mission play a subsidiary role.

After an introductory sketch of the intellectual background of critical theory, L. lays bare some key features of Habermas’ theory that will prove important in his analysis of the Church’s social reality, self-understanding, and relation to modernity. This analysis has two major foci: ecclesiology and ethics. While the concentration in focus is partly explained by L.’s specific area of competence, one suspects that the selection is also tactical. The strategy is an interesting one in that L. examines (and ultimately criticizes) features of Roman Catholicism often thought to be its strongest suits. He has much of interest and value to

esting question of the status of the text vis-à-vis Habermasian theory. Given the sequential order of chapters, it would be understandable if L.'s text were read as an *application* of Habermasian critical theory to that limited field of social reality, discourse, and praxis that defines and is defined by the Roman Catholic Church. Nonetheless, a forgivable misreading is still a misreading. The real logic of the book is not so neatly academic. It is the logic of real engagement with specific problems within a specific faith community. Habermasian constructs are not so much theoretically foundational as tactically appealed to for the light they can throw on specific problems. The tactical character of L.'s book is perhaps best symptomized by the limited number of Habermasian constructs in operation in the text. The work might best be characterized in Althusserian fashion as an example of theoretical praxis.

L. combines clarity of style with force of argument. While undoubtedly the exposé of the structural weaknesses of the Church will be painful to many and a challenge to all, there is nothing in the text that smacks of iconoclastic relish. Despite the critical tone, a high standard of fairness is observed. Occasionally, however, a reverse hierarchical impulse peeks through, when L. is tempted to prioritize the laity over the clergy and political involvement over the Church's sacramental life. One wonders whether the suggested lack of parity is faithful to the Habermasian lessons L. is anxious for us to learn. Since no critically extra-textual appeal is hermeneutically innocent, it should come as no surprise that Habermasian criticism-rehabilitation of Catholic self-understanding and its foundations raise questions. Guided by critical theory, L. is not at all uncomfortable about subjecting Catholic tradition and even Scripture itself to ideology critique and radical historicization. Clearly, many would be less sanguine and would wonder whether L. has revised the basis of Catholic self-identity. Similarly, the question will be raised whether the role allotted the magisterium becomes purely procedural when the principles it preserves are all but vacuous. Again, does the Habermasian description of the Church exclude all other descriptions? There is something appropriate about ending with questions. They respond to the interrogative thrust of a book which welcomes conversation and is prepared to suffer argument.

Yale University

CYRIL O'REGAN

GILKEY ON TILlich. By Langdon Gilkey. New York: Crossroad, 1990. Pp. xvi + 215. \$24.95.

The fact that, over twenty-five years after his death, books are still being written on Paul Tillich deserves more than passing consideration. Gilkey argues convincingly that it is Tillich's mediating genius that still fascinates readers, his ability to uncover significant unities between

diverse areas of life, culture, and history and thereby elucidate them. For the same reason Tillich can still appear alien to neophytes, and therefore puzzling. His widespread influence comes from his standing "next to" or "within sight of" nearly everyone.

G. has reworked and added to several articles and addresses occasioned by the 1986 centenary of Tillich's birth. The core of this book generally corresponds to the outline of Tillich's *Systematic Theology*. G.'s introduction, however, treats of Tillich's earlier political writings, in which it becomes clear that Tillich's theological concerns as a religious socialist never left him. G. demonstrates the drive to unity that underlies the ontological character of Tillich's thought. His most original chapter is one on the role of the theologian in contemporary culture. There G. applies a kind of Tillichean analysis to several problematic areas of our current situation, among them the noncommunication of academic disciplines as symptomatic of the disintegration in our culture, the ecological crisis, the rise of fundamentalism, and the Western encounter with the religions which constitute the substance of non-Western cultures.

G. is an unabashed, self-confessed Tillichean. He is self-consciously autobiographical, when he writes that it is Tillich's theology, "almost alone," with which American theologians must wrestle in order to discover and define themselves, whether in differentiation or agreement, more usually a good bit of both. As first a student and later a colleague and friend of Tillich's, G. sprinkles his book with illuminating anecdotes. More important, as one who has lectured on Tillich's theology for most of his career, he is able to clarify areas in which Tillich has often been misinterpreted. G. explains what Tillich meant by his more encompassing use of the terms "reason," "religion," and "culture." He shows that philosophy and theology permeated the entire system, that it was not a matter of philosophy raising questions and theology offering answers. Tillich has been misrepresented as dismissing the Jesus of history in favor of the Christ of faith. Tillich distinguished between the Jesus of history in whom people experienced new being and the reconstruction of Jesus based on historical inquiry. The first is essential to Christianity, Tillich maintained; the latter is not.

Although the influence of Tillich's thinking on Catholic theology is pervasive, perhaps for that reason it often goes unnoticed. All the more reason to introduce new generations of Catholic scholars to his system. No serious study of 20th-century or American theology can ignore him. Yet newcomers are not the only ones who find themselves getting lost in the forest of polarities, oblique allusions and learned asides. Gilkey proves a trustworthy guide and knowledgeable commentator in what is undoubtedly one of the best introductions to Tillich available.

Saint Louis University

RONALD MODRAS

THE IMMUTABILITY OF GOD IN THE THEOLOGY OF HANS URS VON BALTHASAR. By G. E. O'Hanlon, S.J. New York: Cambridge University, 1990. Pp. xiii. + 229. \$49.50.

That God, to be God, cannot change or be subject to mutation of any kind has long been a theme in Christian theology. But however consistent this teaching, it has not been held universally in the tradition. Modern theology has been especially receptive to the notion that God, to be God, must not only cause change but must also be subject to it.

Many considerations have been cited for this strain on the tradition. Most weighty is the claim that the doctrine of God's immutability is merely a foreign and adventitious import from Greek philosophy during the time of Christianity's early Hellenization, which bears no essential relationship to the revelation of God's nature as received by the Church in her Scriptures. But this essentially historical claim, however valid it might be on its own terms, has been urged for perhaps more telling reasons: the impact of evolution in the 19th century, the increasing sense of the essentially historical nature of human consciousness first adumbrated by Hegel and later confirmed by the sociology of knowledge, and a growing appreciation for the essential goodness of dynamic change in the metaphysics of Whitehead.

One sign of how deeply these objections have struck at the root of the received tradition is the attention being devoted to the problematic of God's immutability in such thinkers as Barth, Rahner, and Pannenberg. In fact, one cannot find any towering figure in 20th-century theology who has not both struggled with this important issue and also emerged from the struggle with a quite new understanding of what it means to claim that God is immutable. Among such figures stands Hans Urs von Balthasar, whose entire thought is permeated with a sense of the importance of this theme.

For this reason, we are fortunate to have O'Hanlon's very fine monograph. It lucidly summarizes Balthasar's position in all its subtlety. O.'s analysis is not confined to those works (primarily the *Theodramatik* and *Mysterium paschale*) that explicitly wrestle with divine immutability. He shows familiarity with the whole range of Balthasar's writings and can draw on other, more implicit soundings of this theme with admirable dexterity. Not content with merely outlining Balthasar's position, he also places it in conversation with other important, and frequently divergent, positions in contemporary theology and philosophy of religion (those of A. Kenny, P. Geach, J. Kvanig, A. H. Williams, etc.). Such an inventory of other options in this debate gives O. the necessary perspective to conclude with his final assessment of Balthasar's thought on the subject.

O. rightly stresses that Balthasar wants to avoid collapsing the meaning of divine immutability to a merely philosophical code word for the Bible's notion of God's fidelity to his covenant. There is, in other words, something valuable in the term "immutability" as applied to God that Balthasar wishes to retain. But in his struggle to understand the value of that term, coupled with the necessity of understanding God's act of creation and the totality of his revelation in the historical being of Christ, Balthasar is continually forced to concede an intratrinitarian "eventfulness," a liveliness and vitality in God which the traditional term "immutability" cannot convey.

O. has correctly limned the basics of this position and explained their effect on Balthasar's doctrine of creation, incarnation and eternity. He has also seen the *inner principle* that generates and governs Balthasar's treatment of this theme: the priority of theological categories over philosophical ones. "Ultimately truth is mystery, the mystery of love with its creative freedom and originality which enjoys a primacy over knowledge. . . . [Balthasar] wishes to suggest that akin to the reserve and discretion which preserve the creativity and freedom of love within the trinitarian relationship of the omniscient Father and Son, there is a divine 'latency' with respect to the creation which allows us also to share in the Son's surprising of the omniscient Father" (160). In other words, the eternal and ceaseless trinitarian acts of interpersonal disclosure ground the possibility for the disclosure of God to his temporal creation. The eternal God has disclosed himself in a universe of his own creation, where each new event somehow constitutes a surprise, something new, and this gives hope that change is not merely a degradation from being to becoming but a grounding in the very newness of God.

This study of a subtle and difficult theme is one of the most important secondary works on Balthasar's thought to have appeared in any language.

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EDWARD T. OAKES, S.J.

WHY NARRATIVE? READINGS IN NARRATIVE THEOLOGY. Edited by Stanley Hauerwas and L. Gregory Jones. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989. Pp. viii + 367. \$29.95; \$19.95.

The readings in this volume document the increasing attention being given to narrative by theologians and ethicists, especially during the 1970s and 1980s. The editors declare that the collection may "illumine the significance of narrative for theology and ethics," while its diversity may raise questions about the usefulness of the category of narrative in future discussions (2).

The essays have been organized into three sections, each with its own focus. Section 1 traces “the discovery of narrative’s significance for contemporary theology and ethics”; Section 2 explores “the significance of narrative for particular topics”; while Section 3 revisits earlier discussions and presents “distinctive theological conceptions of the significance of narrative.” Even this brief survey of the book’s divisions reveals what a heterogeneous collection of essays it contains, and this heterogeneity poses a formidable problem for the reader. Rather than illuminating the significance of narrative for the theological enterprise, it seems to tip the scales toward “asking whether appeals to ‘narrative’ are so diverse that the notion has outlived its usefulness” (2).

One way to approach such a diverse collection is to address the two matters suggested by the title: (1) *Why* narrative? and (2) *Why narrative?*

The first question, “*Why* narrative?” is answered in a number of ways. MacIntyre finds narrative essential to rebuilding “the tradition of the virtues for ethics,” and since virtues imply a concept of selfhood coherent through time, their articulation requires a vehicle (i.e., narrative) capable of following the self through time. Of course, human beings are not isolated creatures but inhabit communities whose social identities and common histories are also story-shaped. The self is also part of a tradition whose stories define the good. At both levels, narrative is an essential means for defining virtue. In his seminal essay, “The Narrative Quality of Experience,” Crites made an even more comprehensive claim for narrative. “The form of active consciousness . . . is in at least some rudimentary sense narrative” (72). Grounding his claim in an analysis of Books X and XI of Augustine’s *Confessions*, Crites asserts that this temporal framework of human experience leads to the creation of mundane stories and sacred stories. Narrative is then the vehicle most appropriate to human experience itself.

Hauerwas and Burrell argue that narrative can provide “an alternate pattern for rationality in ethics” since “narrative and explanation stand in intimate relationship” (159). Often disagreements about moral issues involve an unacknowledged clash of narrative explanations so that the clearest way to assess the proposed moral positions is to situate them in their implied narrative worlds. Like MacIntyre, Hauerwas and Burrell believe that character and moral meanings make sense in a narrative context. In addition to constructing moral worlds and their concomitant emotions, narratives can also deconstruct such worlds. In her essay on Samuel Beckett, Nussbaum argues that Beckett has put narrative to just such subversive use. In fact, his narrative “genealogy of love” in the *Molloy* trilogy intends to call into question the Christian account of the same phenomenon.

But "Why *narrative*?" Ford argues that narrative provides just the "middle distance realism" perspective needed by the Christian community for "worship, revelation, history, eschatology and ethics" (191). Neither captured by the inner world of the individual nor overly generalized, middle distance realism "does justice to the ordinary social world of people in interaction" and can, therefore, undergird theology, ethics and liturgy. A lively conversation between Julian Hartt, on the one hand, and two of his former pupils, Crites and Hauerwas, on the other, focuses the issues rather dramatically. At stake is the nature of narrative vs. metaphysical truth claims and the indispensability of narrative to the development of those claims.

The most useful chapters for this reviewer were the final two. Thiemann attempts to ground his assertion that God is a God of promise in a reading of the Gospel of Matthew. For the only time in the volume we encounter someone working with a real narrative rather than talking about narrative. In the following chapter, Goldberg provides a penetrating critique of Thiemann's effort. Goldberg's chapter, "God, Action, and Narrative: *Which Narrative? Which Action? Which God?*" seems like a breath of fresh air, because it illustrates what is at stake in the choice of narrative. In addition, Goldberg's critique raises issues that will be familiar to New Testament scholars but ignored in Thiemann's reading of the Gospel of Matthew.

It is difficult to assess the value of a volume like this. It will most likely elicit both of the responses envisioned by its editors. Some will discover the rich significance of narrative for theology and ethics, while others will find the appeals so diverse that they may conclude that "the notion has outlived its usefulness." In either case, the reader will have encountered substantial and thoughtful contributions to an important discussion.

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WILLIAM R. HERZOG II

MARX AND THE FAILURE OF LIBERATION THEOLOGY. By Alistair Kee. London/Philadelphia: SCM/Trinity International, 1990. Pp. xii + 302. \$21.95.

Many critics have accused liberation theologians of being too Marxist. Kee criticizes them for not being Marxist enough, and believes they have failed because they have not made full use of Marx's critique of religion.

Kee first seeks to establish three main components of Marx's critique of religion, which correspond roughly to three stages in young Marx's development. The first focused on religion as "reconciliation." In his

formative years, Kee argues, Marx was deeply influenced by religion and never abandoned its positive values (e.g., service to humanity). But then in his university years, influenced by the Young Hegelians, he became sharply critical of religion in practice, seeing it as an instrument of social control and as an attempt to reconcile people to an alienated society.

Marx then developed a second criticism, the pivotal one in Kee's estimation. He viewed religion as "reversal." Feuerbach used the technique of reversal or inversion to argue that the qualities we attribute to God are really only projected attributes of human nature. But whereas Feuerbach treated these as products of mind or consciousness, Marx recognized that alienated human conditions create religion. Even Marx, however, in Kee's judgment, failed to carry through this critique adequately.

Marx's third criticism, religion as ideology, came about through his conversion to historical materialism. Marx considered religion as a source and form of false consciousness. As such, religion is used to legitimize the status quo and to cover over the injustices created by dehumanizing productive systems. Kee views Marx's historical materialism as a form of determinism and argues that it was not based on historical verification but on Marx's own ideological faith.

Kee knows Marx's writings, writes clearly, and provides challenging interpretations. On some of the interpretations, however, Marxist scholars will have very divided views. Was Marx profoundly influenced by religion as a youth, or did his schoolboy essays simply fulfill school requirements? Was Marx a determinist? Most Marxist scholars believe otherwise, arguing that Marx should not be interpreted by his "formula" summaries.

Kee next proceeds to measure liberation theologians' use of Marx against his own interpretation of Marx's critique of religion, claiming that liberation theologians have recognized and used the "moral" criticisms of Marx (his criticisms of religion as reconciliation and as ideology) but have failed to address Marx's fundamental "ontological" critique of religion as reversal.

Kee evaluates the writings of several liberation theologians in respect to their use of Marxism. Gutiérrez shows the influence of Marxist thought in his use of "praxis," his criticism of development theory, and his recognition that liberation must come through historical change. He also makes some use of Marx's critique of religion, but he fails to respond to Marx's criticism of religion as the reversal of reality. Segundo uses a method derived from Marx but does not apply his own method properly and misrepresents Marx, failing also to treat Marx's second critique, Kee judges that Sobrino does a shoddy job of trying to distinguish two phases

of the Enlightenment and, like the others, does not address Marx's criticism that theology by its very nature is an inversion of reality.

Miranda (who, unknown to Kee, now rejects Marx) gets higher marks for his use of Marx. Miranda recognizes the human alienation created by capitalism, sees that God can only be approached through a quest for justice, and accepts something that approaches a biblical form of historical materialism. But even he does not apply Marx's critique to contemporary Christianity and to liberation theology itself. Leonardo and Clodovis Boff, while having much to commend them, likewise fail Kee's test, the procrustean bed of Marx's second critique.

Kee repeatedly criticizes liberation theologians for not using Marx's "religion-as-reversal" critique. In his discussion of Marx, however, Kee claimed that to his knowledge a real study of this critique "has never been undertaken" (61). Many Marxist scholars would certainly dispute this, but assuming it is true, one can hardly criticize liberation theologians for not carrying out what Marxist scholars—and in Kee's judgment, even Marx himself—have failed to do.

In his closing chapter Kee suggests that a true use of Marx's critique would show the bankruptcy of most historical religions. Traditional Christianity simply perpetuates alienation; the supernatural is a hopelessly obsolete concept. Only by going back to religious experience, which Kee asserts means the human search for transcendence, can religion hope to have any future. Only by accepting historical materialism—presumably on faith, since Kee earlier argued it was unscientific and not verified historically—can religion realize its true essence. Finding converts to such a faith may prove difficult.

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ARTHUR F. MCGOVERN, S.J.

LIBERATION THEOLOGY AT THE CROSSROADS: DEMOCRACY OR REVOLUTION? By Paul E. Sigmund. New York: Oxford University, 1990. Pp. viii + 257. \$29.95.

From its inception the theology of liberation has sought to be a contextual theology responding to the socioeconomic and cultural reality of Latin America. To achieve this objective, it deliberately engaged representatives of the social sciences as interlocutors, in addition to the more familiar dialogue of theology with philosophy. Sigmund reverses this process in an interesting and lively way; here a social scientist seeks out liberation theology as a dialogue partner. A professor of politics at Princeton, S. has published widely on Latin American politics. He approaches the topic of liberation theology as a sympathetic critic.

S.'s major thesis is that liberation theology has moved from an initial

emphasis on revolutionary social change to a gradual development of democratic institutions. He develops that thesis by means of history, theology, and politics combined in a variety of ways. After a survey of the relationship of the Catholic Church to politics, he devotes chapters to the beginnings of liberation theology (with special attention to Gutiérrez's *A Theology of Liberation* and the 1968 Medellín conference of Latin American bishops) and to a study of revolution and counterrevolution in Chile. Moving on to the development phase of liberation theology, which S. refers to as its "Marxist phase," he gives a few pages each to the work of Jose Míguez Bonino, Hugo Assmann, Juan Luis Segundo, and Enrique Dussel. Segundo will be surprised to hear that all his work "combines longwindedness with a lack of analytical precision or systematic argument" and to read about "the confused and impenetrable nature of his prose" (63-64). Most attention, however, is given to the writings of José Comblin (not usually considered a liberation theologian), who presents a penetrating critique of Marxism which S. vigorously applauds.

In a chapter on "Christology and Community," S. states that the systematization of liberation theology began in 1976 with the books, especially the Christologies, of Leonardo Boff and Jon Sobrino. This ignores the fact that Boff's Christology was published in 1972, and was one of the first books published in liberation theology, very shortly after Gutiérrez's *A Theology of Liberation*. Thus, the "spiritual base" that S. sees as lacking in the beginning of liberation theology was actually there from the start. One should also mention that the Claretian priest Segundo Galilea published two excellent books on contemplation and a spirituality of liberation in 1972 and 1973, again shortly after Gutiérrez's book.

S. then moves to a discussion of "the battle" of the Puebla conference in 1979, the recent histories of El Salvador and Nicaragua as test cases of liberation, and the North American and Vatican responses to liberation theology. In a concluding chapter he explicitly states his basic objections to liberation theology: "... I believe that the liberation theologians are wrong in holding (a) that the primary source of oppression is capitalism and of liberation is socialism, (b) that the poor have a superior insight into religious truth, and (c) that liberalism is to be rejected by biblically oriented Christians" (182). The rest of the final chapter contains exhortations to conversion on these three issues.

It is quite difficult to comment on the many controversial issues the book raises and to provide an overall appraisal. There are some factual errors. E.g., *Octogesima adveniens* of Pope Paul VI is repeatedly referred to as an encyclical letter; actually it was an apostolic letter, which is considerably less important. I have referred already to the dubious

statements about a lack of spirituality in the early phase of liberation theology. The frequent insulting remarks about Segundo seem to be based on the difficulty of condensing Segundo's thought into a few pages, as S. does with other authors.

Perhaps my reaction to the book is best expressed by Segundo's description of the "mass person," who tends to seek simplistic and immediate solutions to very complex problems and issues. This simplistic approach is seen in the very subtitle of S.'s book, *Democracy or Revolution?*, since the trend to at least formal democracies has reached almost all Latin American nations in the past decade. But perhaps the best way for the reader to evaluate this judgment is to read a book also just published on these topics, *Liberation Theology and Its Critics: Toward an Assessment*, by Arthur F. McGovern (cf. *TS* 52 [1991] 164-66). This author's careful description and evaluation of liberation theology and his clear and well-researched but complex analyses and criticisms of Latin American political, socioeconomic, and cultural realities will provide a more balanced, nuanced, and profound diagnosis and prognosis for both North and South Americans in the coming millennium. As Gutiérrez continually reminds us, the real issue and the real task is not theology; it is the actual liberation of the continually growing masses of the poor throughout the hemisphere.

Fordham University

ALFRED T. HENNELLY, S.J.

THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN CATHOLIC WOMEN. By James K. Kenneally. New York: Crossroad, 1990. Pp. x + 286. \$24.95.

A survey of the place of American Catholic women in the broader feminist movement. Kenneally presents as a unifying thesis the paradoxical tendency of Catholic women to assume public roles and engage in public debate concerning nearly all facets of female emancipation in the face of clerical insistence on the private sphere of the home as women's proper place. He argues convincingly that Catholic women persistently stepped out of the domestic sphere assigned to them not despite, but because of their religious experience. Certainly, clerical expressions of opinion regarding women's place deterred all but the most rebellious from accepting, much less openly seeking, public roles and functions.

By the time of John Carroll's death in 1815, "the relationship between the institutional church and American women had begun to assume the form it would take for the next 150 years." This form was an ideal of woman as a daughter of Eve, and therefore prone to sin and in need of male guidance; or as a daughter of Mary, and therefore pure, fragile, in need of male protection. In either case, women belonged in the home and

could best achieve sanctity within its precincts, fulfilling the duties of a wife and mother. Catholic women from Carroll's time and after, whether religious or lay, are depicted as engaging in "an unending struggle for dignity and independence" as they alternately defied the domestic ideal or adapted it to support their public activities. In so doing, they derived inspiration from their faith and developed a distinctive spirituality. Activities engaged in outside the home or convent were many and varied. K. details women's contributions to wartime mobilization from the Revolutionary War through World War II; to the writing of fiction; to education, health care, and a myriad of other charitable works; to trade unionism; and to the twin feminist causes of suffrage and equal rights.

Facts derived principally from secondary sources bear out the contention that there was among American Catholic women an inexorable progression toward the ideal of a "new woman" even as bishops steadfastly, though not uniformly, denounced the concept as irreligious and subversive. By the end of the 19th century women struggling to organize unions, gain the vote, and educate their daughters beyond high school "began to receive support from the institutional church." Women's activities and ambitions, in most cases overtly related to faith and piety, counter the assumption that Catholics were disinclined by virtue of their religion to discard the Victorian ideal of true womanhood and to take on that of the "new woman."

Female Catholic voices were to be heard on both sides of feminist causes in the 19th and on into the 20th centuries. There was, and continues to be, sharp disagreement over the interpretation of feminist goals, appropriate tactics, and spirituality. Nevertheless, K. argues, most Catholic women attached great importance to the drive toward the emancipation of women and would have concurred with the end-of-the-century observation that working out one's destiny as a woman was one of the greatest reform movements of the age.

It is intriguing to ask in what respects the experience of Catholic women may have differed from that of other women in American society. Answers to this question are implicit in the story of working-class Catholic immigrant women moving from factory work to unionism, thus lending to the women's movement a blue-collar element which Protestant suffragists tried in vain to achieve. Membership in religious communities cut across class lines to involve women from the immigrant poor. Brief biographical sketches in each chapter reveal the extent to which Catholic women from all classes achieved distinction and made their mark in the women's movement.

Inevitably, outstanding women broke down stereotypes by their action in the public sphere, a process which became evident before and after

World War I and passage of the suffrage amendment. The era between the wars was one when "many Catholics had reconciled the new Catholic woman with the church." Ultimately, World War II set in motion trends for Catholics as well as for other women which no amount of reaction or rhetoric could reverse. The war and women's participation in it triggered among Catholics fundamental changes in the perceptions of women's roles and set the stage for even more dramatic change in perceptions and attitudes. The decade of the 1960s accordingly became a "turning point" in the history of American Catholic women.

The strengths of K.'s approach lie in his objective characterization of successive phases of Catholic feminism. Along the way he rescues numerous women from obscurity: barely one-sixth of those for whom he provides biographical sketches are to be found in standard biographical reference works. Unfortunately, where monographic literature is poor or nonexistent, as for Black and Hispanic women, gaps remain. Assessment of certain developments such as women's higher education is distorted by too narrow an application of his thesis. Hints of ways Catholic women adopted a spirituality supportive of an active life in the public sphere are undeveloped. Exploration of the theological sources of early Catholic feminism is tangential. Still, these are defects one must expect in a comprehensive synthesis. It can only be hoped that future scholarship will pick up where this book leaves off, filling out the dimensions of American Catholic feminism and placing it in the broader context of the Roman Catholic Church and American society.

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KAREN KENNELLY, C.S.J.

BUDDHIST EMPTINESS AND CHRISTIAN TRINITY: ESSAYS AND EXPLORATIONS. Edited by Roger Corliss and Paul F. Knitter. New York: Paulist, 1990. Pp. iv + 109. \$8.95.

THE EMPTYING GOD: A BUDDHIST-JEWISH-CHRISTIAN CONVERSATION. Edited by John B. Cobb, Jr. and Christopher Ives. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1990. Pp. xix + 212. \$14.95; \$29.95.

Masao Abe is unquestionably one of the leading figures in the ongoing Buddhist-Christian dialogue in North America and in Western Europe. Hence it is not surprising that an essay he originally wrote for a Buddhist-Christian conference in Hawaii in 1984 should figure so prominently in both of these books. In the first, *Buddhist Emptiness and Christian Trinity*, it is only one of three essays, each with a response from another conference member, on the general theme of a possible paradigm shift in the understanding of ultimate reality within these two religions. In the second work, however, Abe's essay in a revised and expanded form is the

focal point for responses from one Jewish and six Christian theologians; furthermore, Abe here offers a rejoinder to each of his critics in the final essay. The first work has the merit of showing the progression in Abe's own thought and setting forth the views of the other contributors: namely, Hans Küng as the respondent to Abe, Michael von Brück and his respondent Paul Ingram, and Roger Corliss and his respondent Durwood Foster. The second work is much more focused and clearly argued. The respondents to Abe here are Thomas Altizer, John Cobb, Catherine Keller, Jürgen Moltmann, Schubert Ogden, and David Tracy.

Since there is no way even to hint at all the topics covered in these two books, I must content myself with two summary remarks which may tease others into reading the two sets of essays. First of all, Abe is clearly a very skillful debater who continues to learn from his dialogue partners even as he keeps honing his own position. For example, in the rejoinder to his critics in *The Emptying God* he keeps coming back to the distinction between the vertical/religious and the horizontal/sociohistorical dimensions of human experience—i.e., the dimension in which past, present, and future coexist and all sense of the self as an autonomous reality is absent, in contrast with the dimension of experience in which movement forward in time and the self as an entity in dynamic relationship with other entities comes strongly to the fore. Yet, says Abe, the human being exists at the *intersection* of these two dimensions of human experience; hence, one can and should experience both time and timelessness, the fully related self and the nonself, simultaneously. In my judgment, this is an important step forward in the Buddhist-Christian dialogue, since in principle one should be able to authenticate within one's own experience both Buddhist and Christian praxis. But progress was thus made only because Abe showed such "wisdom and compassion" in dealing with his critics.

Secondly, as the essays by von Brück in the one book and by Tracy in the other make clear, the Buddhist-Christian dialogue should focus not on a comparison between the Buddhist notion of emptiness and the generic Christian notion of God, but rather on the similarities and differences between Buddhist emptiness and Christian Trinity. For Buddhist emptiness seems to correspond quite closely to what Christian mystics have traditionally understood by the Godhead or the divine nature. Yet the distinction between person and nature within God is much more clearly evident when there are three persons who share a common nature rather than when there is only one person who alone is that nature. Ogden, for example, takes issue with Abe precisely on the grounds that God as unipersonal or the "universal individual" cannot be self-emptying in the manner claimed by Abe. But Moltmann claims that

the triune God (somewhat like dynamic *Śūnyatā* in Abe's interpretation) is by nature self-emptying love, albeit self-emptying love as realized in and through the divine persons in their relations to one another and all their creatures.

Thus, while Abe will surely have to come to terms with the personalist overtones of dynamic *Śūnyatā* insofar as it exhibits wisdom and compassion to all sentient beings, Christian thinkers, as Tracy recommends, will have to reflect more carefully on the traditional distinction between person and nature within God. In particular, Whiteheadians, who otherwise share so many philosophical presuppositions with Buddhists, should inquire further into the relationship between God and creativity so as to explore whether or not this, too, admits of a trinitarian reinterpretation.

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JOSEPH A. BRACKEN, S.J.

CHRIST AS THE COMMON GROUND: A STUDY OF CHRISTIANITY AND HINDUISM. By Kathleen Healy, R.S.M. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University, 1990. Pp. xiv + 218. \$24.95.

Based on several visits to India, this book is Healy's attempt "at a thoughtful integration of what [she has] learned firsthand about the spirituality and culture of the Hindus from the Hindus themselves, about Indian Christians from themselves, and about what each can offer to the other today in spiritual interpretation" (xiii). H. traveled extensively and consulted widely, and the breadth of her conversations with "theologians, philosophers, swamis, gurus, sannyasis and 'ordinary people'" is impressive. Written in an accessible, journalist style, the book organizes the fruits of these consultations (and extensive background reading) with a deep respect for Indian culture, an urgent sense of compassion and social justice, and lively theological thinking (strongly influenced by Raimundo Panikkar)—all for the sake of reflection on the future of Christianity in India, and with the hope that the book will guide Indian Christians in envisioning a future Indian Christianity that would be acceptable to Hindus too, millions of whom "worship Christ, but often view the Christian church as 'Churchianity'" (xiv).

Looking for Christ "beyond Christianity" and seeking mutual spiritual fecundation of Hinduism and Christianity, H. sets forth her vision clearly and sharply: "Christians have no monopoly on the Christ who existed from the beginning" (8); "Christians today must die to themselves in order to know more fully the Christ who reveals himself to the Hindu: the non-Mediterranean, the universal Christ" (27); the Church must be decentralized, made less clerical (62), in brief must "renounce a type of

a likely Western Christian audience to rethink itself in light of an evolving global religious scene, it could have been more effective.

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FRANCIS X. CLOONEY, S.J.

LITERATURE AND RELIGION: PASCAL, GRYPHIUS, LESSING, HÖLDERLIN, NOVALIS, KIERKEGAARD, DOSTOYEVSKY, KAFKA. By Hans Küng and Walter Jens. Translated from the German by Peter Heinegg. New York: Paragon, 1990. Pp. x + 308. \$22.95.

"What happened to religion in the modern period? What happened to modernity because of religion?" In this collection of essays, originally lectures, theologian Küng and literary critic Jens attempt a "diagnosis of modernity." As Küng explains, the pressures of modernity, evident in the Reformation and the Enlightenment, resulted in a paradigm change, a "new basic model of the world, society, the church, and theology" (5).

The eight writers here considered span what might loosely be considered the Continental tradition of Reformation theology. Thus it is not surprising that even Jewish and Catholic writers, e.g., Kafka and Pascal, come off sounding a bit like Martin Luther. Küng strikes the note early; in his opening chapter on Pascal, it becomes evident that of the four "great powers" of modernity—science, technology, industrialization, and democracy—Küng is most concerned with democracy, by which he means nonauthoritarian, noncentralized, nonchurchly power.

The subtext of Küng's own problematic relationship with "political reactionaries and . . . Roman agents" shadows, indeed, shapes his argument. Throughout he returns, sometimes directly, to his struggle against a medieval and regressively autocratic Church. In his essay on Novalis he injects this comment: "Indeed, isn't the Roman church today being led once more by men from Poland, Bavaria, Italy, and Spain, who, despite their clever strategies of adaptation to modern times, are oriented to that medieval, then Counter-Reformation, antimodern model of Christianity?" (157).

Though Küng and Jens contribute equally to the volume's sixteen essays, Küng's preface and voice sets the generally polemic tone. The strength of Küng's essays is at the same time their weakness. They read like lectures, offering an interesting, wide-ranging overview of intellectual history, syncretic, discursive, and thus, inevitably reductive. His approach is historiotheological. Reading him, it becomes clear that the tradition of Western thought is, from another point of view, a theological narrative, an investigation of grace—the naming of God and the definition of human potential in time and space.

In contrast to Küng's broader reading of history, Jens modestly reads the texts at hand. As a consequence his essays are less evangelical, if we

may put it that way, than Kūng's. In addition, Jens's essays shed more light on the sorts of historical differences Kūng investigates abstractly. For instance, while Kūng spends a number of pages defining the specifically religious nature of Kafka and his work, Jens addresses the issue directly through Kafka's texts: "There is no doubt that Kafka . . . had no answer to give—no solution, no end result. The novels end as they began: open. The surveyor is as close to the Castle in the first line as in the last" (283).

Modernity actually interests Kūng less than what he thinks will follow it, particularly the possibilities for "homo religiosus" in a postmodern era. Nonetheless, whatever else might be said about the postmodern period, it is a time when the act of writing itself, or the illusion of authorial objectivity at least, has been seriously questioned. Thus, to write about theology and literature, both of which have come under heavy criticism as imperialistic and culture-bound discourses, one must have either great irony or appropriate humility. Kūng's irony, however, is of a different kind, and might simply be called naivete. The volume's title provides an example: Kūng's taxonomy of religion, itself never clearly defined, compresses varieties of religious experience into one dominating historical form, while attributing to various discourses (theology, history, literature) atemporal unities. Kūng's strategy, then, only replicates his critique of the Roman Church—to which he attributes an absolutist, appropriative point of view which subsumes differences in false unity and in which overarching authority denies individual distinction and uniqueness.

In addition, it must be said that Jens's close literary analysis offers genuine insights into the texts, increasing the pleasures of reading them—a mark of good criticism. However, Kūng's issues and, particularly, his insights into religious experience, no longer have the power to persuade, as they did, for example, in *Why I Am a Christian*. Though the Rome he fears may once again hold sway, the issue of authority in the Church seems somehow dated, since few people assume any more that religion and authority are equivalent terms. Interestingly, despite his feeling for democracy Kūng seems most at home with a one-Europe, one-world view; perhaps, like Marx, he hopes that at some distant time the historical (thus inconveniently visible) church structure will wither away. His facile leap beyond the "rebellion against the Kafkaesque world" (277) to a postmodern unity of religious experience is a hope surely not shared by many. Kūng's call for a theocracy of a "reconciled, peaceful humanity" (160) provokes the same critiques brought against utopias since Thomas More: the good place is a no place, a fantasy place.

theology. He calls for an interrelated activity that draws on the resources of professional theologians in seminaries and universities, congregations engaged in practical theological reflection and lay education, and representative leaders and bodies who engage in teaching and education on behalf of the denomination as a whole (178–81). He argues for the creation of such an “educational ecology,” which could result in “a vision of what it means to be a Christian and a community of faith in this contemporary world” (181).

O.’s enthusiasm for his subject is compelling. Surely, his proposal for the recovery of an authoritative teaching office in the mainline Protestant churches will threaten or meet with disapproval from some of his readers. Much of what he says, however, will encourage others, especially theologians in seminaries, who lament the intrusion of secularistic individualism and extremes of conservative authoritarianism into the life and thought of the churches. Roman Catholics who read the book will find in it more than one insight that can be instructive and enlightening, as they, too, seek to grapple with questions of authority and the teaching office in their Church today.

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AGNES CUNNINGHAM, S.S.C.M.

THEOLOGY AND CRITICAL THEORY: THE DISCOURSE OF THE CHURCH.
By Paul Lakeland. Nashville: Abingdon, 1990. Pp. 271. \$18.85

Lakeland is convinced that contemporary Roman Catholicism can be illuminated by recourse to Habermasian critical theory in a way not possible within the coordinates of the premodern conceptualities still often appealed to, and definitely not rivaled by some of the more nihilistic postmodern revisionist proposals, e.g. deconstruction. Selectively marshalling basic constructs from Habermas’ theory of communication action, discourse ethics, and theory of modernity, and understanding these constructs to function at once as diagnostic tools and potential therapeutic agents, L.’s primary focus is on the actual functioning of the Catholic Church; reflection on its nature and mission play a subsidiary role.

After an introductory sketch of the intellectual background of critical theory, L. lays bare some key features of Habermas’ theory that will prove important in his analysis of the Church’s social reality, self-understanding, and relation to modernity. This analysis has two major foci: ecclesiology and ethics. While the concentration in focus is partly explained by L.’s specific area of competence, one suspects that the selection is also tactical. The strategy is an interesting one in that L. examines (and ultimately criticizes) features of Roman Catholicism often thought to be its strongest suits. He has much of interest and value to

say regarding the Church's ethics and social teaching. But I shall focus in this review on L.'s analysis and critique of post-Vatican II ecclesiology, in an attempt to suggest in one sample area the richness of his analysis.

Though L. recognizes the tensional ecclesiological field of Vatican II and offers a lucid analysis of the strain between the more institutional-hierarchical construal and that understanding summarized and grounded by the symbol of "the people of God," the specificity of Vatican II, he insists, consists in the latter. The ecclesiology guided by this symbol admits of Habermasian translation. Specifically, it connotes a vision of the Church as both a community of communicative action (i.e., action guided towards understanding rather than effectiveness and control) and a discursive community where everyone *in principle* is part of the conversation in which the Church addresses the world but also itself. Unfortunately, however, the Church since Vatican II provides every reason not to presume that it either fundamentally understands itself or acts in a Habermasian way. Lay people, L. contends, are provided only limited admittance to its conversation, and women not at all.

The marginalization and exclusion theme is amplified further. With respect to teaching as well as organization, L. believes that the present situation is that of promise frustrated and renege. The tendency of the magisterium to insist upon itself as the sole focus of authoritative teaching makes the status of the lay theologian problematic. L. finds the move questionable on a number of Habermasian grounds: the claim to authority is self-referential, involves an implicit refusal to submit to canons of competence and rationality where the latter involves argument, contestability, and persuasion. Re-envisagement of the relation-difference of the magisterium and lay theologian supplements critique. In an interesting and provocative suggestion, L. contends that if both can be said to teach or engage in a fundamental way in what Habermas would call "theoretical discourse," they differ in the following important respect: whereas the lay theologian is engaged in experiment and exploring new thought possibilities for and ways to apply the Christian message, the role of the bishop lies in preserving the rules of discussion that govern the process of tradition. If I read L. correctly, preserving the rules involves two operations: calling to mind the basic principles of the Christian community; and overseeing the procedural rules of discourse in the Church so that discourse is neither blocked nor subverted.

L.'s concluding chapter makes clear that Habermas has not assumed the role of a replacement Scripture or canon. L.'s positive estimate does not blind him to Habermas' deficits, and he agrees with the kind of correction and supplementation provided by Peukert. The book in no way represents a species of Habermasian gnosis. This raises the inter-

esting question of the status of the text vis-à-vis Habermasian theory. Given the sequential order of chapters, it would be understandable if L.'s text were read as an *application* of Habermasian critical theory to that limited field of social reality, discourse, and praxis that defines and is defined by the Roman Catholic Church. Nonetheless, a forgivable misreading is still a misreading. The real logic of the book is not so neatly academic. It is the logic of real engagement with specific problems within a specific faith community. Habermasian constructs are not so much theoretically foundational as tactically appealed to for the light they can throw on specific problems. The tactical character of L.'s book is perhaps best symptomized by the limited number of Habermasian constructs in operation in the text. The work might best be characterized in Althusserian fashion as an example of theoretical praxis.

L. combines clarity of style with force of argument. While undoubtedly the exposé of the structural weaknesses of the Church will be painful to many and a challenge to all, there is nothing in the text that smacks of iconoclastic relish. Despite the critical tone, a high standard of fairness is observed. Occasionally, however, a reverse hierarchical impulse peeks through, when L. is tempted to prioritize the laity over the clergy and political involvement over the Church's sacramental life. One wonders whether the suggested lack of parity is faithful to the Habermasian lessons L. is anxious for us to learn. Since no critically extra-textual appeal is hermeneutically innocent, it should come as no surprise that Habermasian criticism-rehabilitation of Catholic self-understanding and its foundations raise questions. Guided by critical theory, L. is not at all uncomfortable about subjecting Catholic tradition and even Scripture itself to ideology critique and radical historicization. Clearly, many would be less sanguine and would wonder whether L. has revised the basis of Catholic self-identity. Similarly, the question will be raised whether the role allotted the magisterium becomes purely procedural when the principles it preserves are all but vacuous. Again, does the Habermasian description of the Church exclude all other descriptions? There is something appropriate about ending with questions. They respond to the interrogative thrust of a book which welcomes conversation and is prepared to suffer argument.

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CYRIL O'REGAN

GILKEY ON TILlich. By Langdon Gilkey. New York: Crossroad, 1990. Pp. xvi + 215. \$24.95.

The fact that, over twenty-five years after his death, books are still being written on Paul Tillich deserves more than passing consideration. Gilkey argues convincingly that it is Tillich's mediating genius that still fascinates readers, his ability to uncover significant unities between

SHORTER NOTICES

THE STUDY COMPANION TO OLD TESTAMENT LITERATURE: AN APPROACH TO THE WRITINGS OF PRE-EXILIC ISRAEL AND EXILIC ISRAEL. By Antony F. Campbell. Wilmington, Del.: Glazier, 1989. Pp. viii + 504. \$19.95.

Despite the title, this is anything but a dry study guide. Campbell aims to show the interdependence of literary issues (such as source and redaction study) with religious and theological issues. In an engaging fashion that makes narratives come alive, he introduces serious students to the Pentateuch, the Deuteronomistic History, the major Prophets, plus Jonah and Job. What he does best is to demonstrate the theological "discussion" embedded in discrete texts, by synthesizing the meticulous research of source and tradition critics, and then viewing their results through a theological "lens." His lens, moreover, is thoroughly "catholic": it reveals the faith concerns reflected in various traditions and theologies and shows how later authors incorporate earlier materials in new literary complexes, with their own theologies.

The presentation of sources in 1-2 Samuel demonstrates their proclamatory liveliness in a way reminiscent of Hans Walter Wolff's "kerygmatic" approach to Pentateuchal traditions, showing how they addressed people of their day and were later reappropriated when life-conditions posed very different issues. C.'s presentation of the Priestly Document is sympathetic, avoiding needless technical dispute or a condescending viewpoint so common since Wellhausen. Copious footnotes, however, engage various scholarly perspectives, and appendices present helpful information that is omitted in many textbooks, e.g. the text of the Priestly Document (87) and the text of the Yahwist (114). Students will be well directed to further reading by sugges-

tions at the conclusion of each chapter. All can profit from chapter 4, "Reflections on Method in the Pentateuch," especially by C.'s argument that textual phenomena often obscured by contemporary translations must be discussed if one really strives to be faithful to the biblical text (120). These remarks on the goals of biblical scholarship should prove helpful to those buffeted by fundamentalist objections. The book should prove particularly useful for divinity students and for teachers of the Old Testament.

JOHN C. ENDRES, S.J.

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DINAH'S REBELLION: A BIBLICAL PARABLE FOR OUR TIME. By Ita Sheres. New York: Crossroad, 1990. Pp. vii + 148. \$17.95.

Sheres uses other biblical stories to interpret the account in Genesis 34 of Dinah's rape by a stranger and her brothers' revenge. Dinah's story recalls Eve's by presenting Dinah as a symbol of Israelite women, a rebel who "went out" from a safe place and suffered brutal consequences from her choice.

Dinah's story also evokes the courtship stories of Rebekah and Rachel, but here differences matter as much as similarities. Originally, S. argues, Dinah's tale was an account of love among young people "ready to merge politically, culturally and religiously" (89). But redactors manipulated the courtship story, turning Shechem into a rapist and using circumcision as a reason to exclude and kill strangers. The result is a nationalistic mortality tale that warns women to stay home and teaches all Israelites to beware of strangers.

S. proposes that this ancient story can serve as a parable for current land struggles in Israel. Dinah's rebellion, consists of going out "to see the daughters of the land" in search of a husband,

a daring act required by the failure of her father Jacob to find her a husband because she was unloved Leah's daughter. Dinah's openness to strangers reflects values intrinsic to the Hebraic tradition, but which today, like Dinah's courtship, are overshadowed by extreme nationalistic tendencies.

S.'s book is provocative in its imaginative and symbolic appropriations of the story and in its intertextual explorations of the passage. However, it is less successful in establishing a critical basis for the appropriation. S. asserts a deuteronomistic redaction of Genesis without providing evidence and appears to have confused the deuteronomists with the priestly writers. Her reconstruction of the text's history places too much weight upon the first line, from which she constructs an entire scenario. S. has created a provocative midrash, not a compelling reading of the passage.

KATHLEEN M. O'CONNOR

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THE FEMININE UNCONVENTIONAL: FOUR SUBVERSIVE FIGURES IN ISRAEL'S TRADITION. By André LaCoque. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990. Pp. xvi + 144.

Do not be put off, as I almost was, by Christopher Seitz's citation, both on the cover and in the Foreword, of LaCoque's own assertion (in relation to a proposed male authorship of the book of Judith) that "the best advocates for a cause are those who are not self-serving." Seitz goes on to suggest that L. wishes the assertion to be applied to himself as male-author also, since the subjects of his monograph are four women. Seitz's comment is, in my opinion, both patriarchal and condescending. It implies that those in power can better represent the powerless than the powerless can represent themselves. It thus reinforces the power of those who already have power. I proceeded hesitantly beyond the opening comment,

however, and was rewarded for my perseverance.

L. has produced an informative, imaginative, and insightful volume. He presents recent sociological insights into the status of women in the ancient Near East, which provide a context for the subsequent presentation of his four models: Susanna, Judith, Esther, and Ruth. Susanna is "a woman purer than the 'specialists' in legal purity"; Judith is "a woman single-handedly defeating the most powerful dictator of antiquity"; Esther is a young Jewish woman who "saves her people from genocide"; and Ruth is a young Moabite woman who "is the genetrix of the messianic line" (117-18). L. makes a convincing case that these texts are subversive and that each of the women is equally subversive. God uses the unconventional—the women and their methods—to bring about Israel's liberation. Fortunes are reversed because God is lord of history.

L. incorporates insights on the four women from different exegetes at different times in history. He suggests, moreover, why only two of the stories were accepted into the canon; and he explains the appropriateness of the stories in postexilic Israel, showing how they perform a surrogate function for other biblical texts from earlier periods. In a relatively brief monograph L. has competently and skillfully delineated a very significant role for certain of Israel's women who are intended as "models to follow."

ALICE L. LAFFEY

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MATTHEW'S GOSPEL AND FORMATIVE JUDAISM. By J. Andrew Overman. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990. Pp. ix + 174.

One strand of recent research understands Matthew's Gospel as the product of a Christian-Jewish community in dialogue and conflict with emerging Rabbinic Judaism. Overman advances

that perspective, viewing the framers of the Gospel's traditions, its final redactor, and his community as Christian Jews, not Gentiles. His greatest strength lies in the choice of that interpretive direction. He works from a scholarly Jewish position and brings to his study the contemporary subtlety about the development of Judaism which is exemplified in the work of J. Neusner. That is all to the good. Scholarship had strained for too long to make Matthew fit into the life and thought of second- and third-century Christianity (whose favorite Gospel it was). Now O. and others clearly reveal the Jewishness of Matthew: both the evangelist and his community were at home in the world of Judaism in the years after 70 C.E.

Besides reading Matthew quite successfully from the viewpoint of its setting in a Jewish world of ideas, O. also attempts to analyze the Gospel from the perspective of the emerging discipline of "social-world" studies. He is less successful here. The text just reveals too little that is genuinely social. We know too little about Jewish or any other first-century-C.E. society to be very confident about social analysis. Nevertheless, keeping ideas rooted in what we can know about a social setting is important. The clearest and best example of O.'s work here is his argument for a Galilean setting in Tiberias or Sepphoris for Matthew's Gospel.

There are some problems. In several cases, O.'s convincing insights into the Jewish structure of Matthean passages, e.g. the conflict stories (80-85), clash with his facile acceptance of Marcan priority. More importantly, perhaps, O. does not really engage the redaction-critical problem. Are the highly Jewish portions of Matthew the work of the final author or even reflect his thinking, or are they the result of his incorporating earlier traditional material? While I agree with O. on the Jewishness of the final author, the lack of

attention to that watershed issue may undercut his work for many readers.

Yet this is an important work. Gospel students need to take O.'s approach and results very seriously. It is one more step toward recognizing the heavenly Jewish origins of the early Christian material, especially the Gospels of Matthew and John.

LAMAR COPE

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THE TRIUMPH OF GOD: THE ESSENCE OF PAUL'S THOUGHT. By J. Christiaan Beker. Translated from the German by Loren T. Stuckenbruck. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990. Pp. xvi + 152.

An abridgment of Beker's *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (1980). B. also addresses criticisms of the earlier volume and reprints in an appendix his article "Paul the Theologian: Major Motifs in Pauline Theology" (*Interpretation* 43 [1989]). The result is a good introduction both to Paul's thought and to Beker's well-received interpretation of it.

Basing his hermeneutical approach on the nature of a letter, B. stresses—and here clarifies more—the interplay of contingency (the situation to which Paul responds) and coherence (the field of theological ideas which Paul interprets in response to that situation). He reasserts the place of Jewish apocalyptic as providing a framework for Paul's gospel and explains this (over his first book) as supplying theological motifs. Thus, Paul's gospel centers on his conviction that God, through Christ's death and resurrection, has opened up a new future for the world. He demonstrates his method and its theocentric soteriological conclusions by looking at Romans and Galatians. 1 Corinthians 15 reveals Paul's stress on the resurrection and judgment as future realities in the manifestation of God's reign and triumph.

Law and faith, sin, Spirit, death,

Church as Christ's body, theology of the cross, Christian hope, universal salvation, these motifs all receive provocative and compelling treatment here. The traditional understanding of the relationship between faith and law, sin and righteousness in Galatians and Romans 4 ff. might be supplemented with a second look at Romans 1-3 and the way righteousness was reckoned to Jews and Gentiles before Christ. This would support B.'s appreciation of Paul's positive evaluation of the Law and fill out the relationship between Law, faith, and the Christ event.

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WOMEN AND THE GENESIS OF CHRISTIANITY. By Ben Witherington III. New York: Cambridge University, 1990. Pp. xv + 273. \$44.50; \$14.95.

Witherington here condenses two previous scholarly monographs, *Women in the Ministry of Jesus* and *Women in the Earliest Churches*, with the aim of reaching a wider lay audience. As both a biblical and historical scholar, he assesses the historical issues raised by the Bible regarding the roles women played in the early Christian movement. His study starts with a discussion of the roles, status and attitudes toward women at the time of Jesus in Judaism, in Hellenistic communities in Greece, Macedonia and Asia Minor, and in Rome.

W. then studies the parables, the stories of help and healing, and the accounts of the ministry of Jesus. He finds evidence of Jesus' intent to reform the patriarchal social structures of his time in Jesus' teachings regarding parents, children, widows, marriage and adultery, divorce and "eunuchs." He also deals with the letters of Paul, who addressed many of the issues found in the Gospels in his responses to questions coming from various Christian communities about conflicts, needs and problems of his audience—

specifically those of marriage and the household. Finally, W. analyzes how the Evangelists selected and presented their material to illuminate the thought of the early Church about women and their roles. W. presupposes that Jesus proclaimed the kingdom of God as one whose inauguration would bring about the redemption of the whole person and the whole of creation, thus making part of the Christian message a challenge to unjust social structures, especially the patriarchal structures of society.

W. uses scriptural evidence to illustrate the basic principles by which Jesus and the early Christians lived their lives. The historical study of the NT materials is foundational to addressing the role of women in the Church today. An excellent, although not entirely up-to-date "Select Bibliography" and "End-Notes" list major studies supportive of W.'s research and conclusions.

Dolores L. Greeley, R.S.M.
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IMAGO DEI: THE BYZANTINE APOLOGIA FOR ICONS. By Jaroslav Pelikan. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University, 1990. *Bollingen Series XXXV/36*: Pp. xii + 196. \$39.95.

This work of historical theology originated as the A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts, 1987. Pelikan clearly delineates the path the theological defense of icons took during the iconoclastic controversies of the eighth and ninth centuries. He gives a realistic assessment of the part played by religion and politics. He demonstrates how deeply the issue of icons touched the faith and piety of Byzantine Christians. The ambiguity in Christian communities regarding the place of the visual in the process of sanctification and salvation receives concise and well-documented treatment.

P.'s conclusion is that the Incarnation made it possible for Byzantine theology to justify aesthetics and represen-

tational religious art. But the influence was reciprocal. Art and aesthetics were also transformed when they entered into dialogue with the Christian mystery of the Incarnation. What was profoundly at stake in the iconoclastic controversy was the true humanity of Christ. As it turned out, the dogmas of the Trinity and the Incarnation provided the basic rationale for the use of artistic images in the Church. Since God had become permanently visible in Jesus Christ, it would be legitimate to make images of the image of Christ. And because Mary's nature was also transformed by the Incarnation, she joins the angels and saints in their imaging of God.

The result of the position of the iconodules was the rehabilitation of the visual based on an understanding of sense perception. Commendably P. addresses the role played by the other senses in the defense of icons. The fact that touch, taste, audition, and smell were acceptable in making contact with the divine made it easier to argue for the place of the visual. The iconographic text of the book is the sixteenth-century Egyptian wool tapestry *Icon of the Virgin* now in the Cleveland Museum of Art.

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HENRY VIII AND THE CONFORMING CATHOLICS. By Paul O'Grady. Collegeville; Minn.: Liturgical, 1990. Pp. vi + 186. \$11.95.

In seven closely reasoned chapters O'Grady traces the development of the theological polemic of the English Catholic writers like Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, who supported Henry VIII in his break with Rome. O. documents the dependence of these writers on conciliarists such as Ockham and Gerson for their repudiation of papal authority. O. clearly shows that the Henrician Catholics relied on Marsiglio of Padua for their defense of Hen-

ry's supremacy over the Church. Tunstall, Stokesley and Longland join Gardiner in accepting many of Erasmus' ideas for the renewal of Christian life and his judgment of the unimportance of what proved to be vital ecclesiological issues.

The study concludes with a summary of these writers' polemics against the rising tide of Protestant theology that gained influence in the later years of Henry's reign. Central to this polemic were not only the writings of Gardiner, who deepened greatly as a theologian after 1536, but the brilliant and often overlooked work of Richard Smith, first Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford.

Unfortunately O.'s valuable scholarship is marred by over thirty serious misprints in the text, an announced subject index which does not appear, and an author index with entries printed out of alphabetical order.

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CATHOLIC REFORM: FROM CARDINAL XIMENES TO THE COUNCIL OF TRENT, 1495-1563. By John C. Olin. New York: Fordham University, 1990. Pp. xviii + 152. \$35; \$17.50.

This hybrid volume contains two essays by John Olin and seven documents illustrating the Catholic Reformation. The documents are Egidio of Viterbo's address to the Fifth Lateran Council (1512), Cardinal Ximene's prologue to the Complutensian Bible (1517), a famous memorial to Paul III on church reform (1537), a letter of Pierre Favre (1538), the first sketch of the Society of Jesus (1539), and two reform decrees from the Council of Trent (1563). Only seven pages appear here for the first time in English.

One of the essays, on Ignatius of Loyola and the idea of pilgrimage, first appeared in *Church History* (1979); the other essay, with the same title as the book, appeared in 1969 in a textbook

but Olin has updated and rewritten it. Olin documents all these earlier publications, which are mostly out of print. It would be easy to dismiss a volume with so little that is new, but the title essay is a jewel which sums up with balance and wisdom a lifetime of teaching and writing on the Catholic Reformation. Olin's basic argument, also illustrated by the documents, is that the Catholic Reformation is not a reaction to the Protestant Reformation but a parallel development. Graduate students preparing for their comprehensive examinations and young professors writing a few lectures on the subject will find no better source. Olin adds a preface, bibliography and index.

JOHN PATRICK DONNELLY, S.J.
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IGNATIUS LOYOLA: A BIOGRAPHY OF THE FOUNDER OF THE JESUITS. By Philip Caraman, S.J. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990. Pp. ix + 222. \$22.95.

Caraman has produced a highly readable narrative, especially commendable for the new details it incorporates about Ignatius' life before his conversion in 1521. The book is intended as a popular biography. While it therefore makes no pretence at breaking new ground, it presents Ignatius intelligently and sympathetically and situates him in his milieu.

Well researched, this biography, like others before it, is more satisfactory for the period before the founding of the Jesuits in 1540, a deficiency due as much to the nature of the sources as to any fault in the biographer. The "enigma" noted in Ignatius' personality by André Ravier, who dealt exclusively with the later period, is not directly broached, nor are some other problems of interpretation, perhaps considered too technical for the readership envisaged.

The book contains a fair number of mistakes in detail. Although these er-

rors are usually inconsequential, they render the book inferior in this regard to the recently translated biography by Candido de Dalmases. The most compendious biography to date is by Ricardo Garcia Villoslada (1986), who also follows traditional patterns of method and interpretation. For its genre, however, C.'s book is of high quality and can be recommended as a primer for anyone wanting to know more about this major and complex figure.

JOHN W. O'MALLEY, S.J.
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THE VIA MEDIA OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH. By John Henry Newman. Edited with Introduction and Notes by H. D. Weidner. New York: Oxford/Clarendon, 1990. Pp. lxxix + 416. \$86.

Although Newman's *Lectures on the Prophetic Office of the Church* (1836¹, 1837², 1877³) has been both difficult to obtain and infrequently read, he considered it to be one of his five chief works. Accordingly, one wonders why these *Lectures* were not re-issued under their own name, rather than one that coincides with *The Via Media of the Anglican Church*, originally published in two volumes in the standard edition of N.'s corpus by Longmans Green. The first volume consisted of the *Lectures* republished here, but the second volume contained eleven essays not included here.

In any case, the present edition is enhanced by Weidner's lengthy but excellent introduction, which first describes the background of N.'s search during the Oxford Movement for a *via media* between what he then construed as the distortions of continental Protestantism and the exaggerations of Roman Catholicism; when Anglicanism, in N.'s judgment, failed to provide that "middle path," he entered the Roman Catholic Church. The introduction also perceptively examines N.'s retraction of his earlier anti-Romanism in his

1877-Preface to the slightly revised third edition. What angered some of N.'s ultramontane (Roman Catholic) contemporaries and what should not be overlooked today is the fact that the 1877-Preface was a "re-visioning" as well as a retraction: "In the *Prophetical Office* we see a desire for a reformed Catholicism which Newman never abandoned, and which allowed most of the issues central to this [Anglican] theology to be transformed after his adoption of the Roman communion" (lxxvi).

While welcoming the republication of this important but neglected work, one regrets that the "Textual Appendix" of variant readings and the "Editor's Notes," that helpfully identify persons, publications, Scriptural citations, etc., are inconveniently placed at the end of the volume without appropriate reference in the text. Most of all, one regrets the incredible price that practically insures that this ecumenically and ecclesiological significant work will continue to be neglected.

JOHN T. FORD, C.S.C.

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THE RELIGIOUS WITHIN EXPERIENCE AND EXISTENCE: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION. By Patrick L. Bourgeois. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University, 1990. Pp. 138. \$23.95; \$14.95.

The slimness of this volume belies the importance and the subtlety of its argument. Bourgeois has undertaken a phenomenological investigation of religious experience. His argument, however, extends beyond mere description. It includes critical reflections on the use of descriptive method to explore religious experience and mounts a critique of the abuse of that method in religious thinking. B. argues, quite correctly, that phenomenological method alone lacks the resources to validate metaphysical claims about God, even though it can make explicit the basis

within religious experience for a fundamental option concerning God.

B. points out, however, that a careful use of phenomenological method in the exploration of religious experience needs to distinguish between religious experiences that exhibit a theistic character and those that do not. He discovers a neutral realm within religious experience more fundamental than theistic faith; and he looks to other methods of thinking for a causal account of this interesting phenomenon.

I find B.'s argument lucidly stated and sound. I also find it suggestive for developing a contemporary theology of conversion. Bernard Lonergan has suggested that conversion can occur in other contexts besides religious faith. I would agree and would, with Lonergan, include moral conversion among the secular forms of conversion that can happen outside of theistic faith.

B. discovers within religious experience a concern with ultimacy. It seems to me that one can argue that any genuine ethical commitment also involves a concern with ultimacy in so far as it engages one to stand ready not only to live for certain realities, ideals, and values, but, if necessary, to die for them. If one can experience a moral conversion apart from theistic faith, then that event would account for the theistically neutral realm of religious experience that B. accurately describes.

I recommend this book enthusiastically to anyone interested in probing some of the important, subtler aspects of human religious experience.

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THE MIRROR OF CREATION. By E. J. Ambrose. Edinburgh: Scottish Academic, 1990. Pp. xii + 238. \$25.95.

Ambrose is a British cell biologist with a brilliant career in cancer research, the microbiology of leprosy, and protein structure. Starting from a training in the physical sciences, he has

moved over to molecular biology and an outstanding career in medical and fundamental research. At the same time, A. has struggled for meaning in the large world he studies. He is impressed by the strange tendency of the physical universe that seems to have higher and higher degrees of order emerging as time moves on. It is as if some large quantity of information were flowing into the process to guide a richer and richer development. It is as if the framework of the world were so fashioned as to foster the final appearance of the most complex structure known, the human person.

A simple banging together of primal atoms in a random process could not produce this result, A. says. An application of such random collisions to provide a pool of biological variation that can then be filtered through the sieve of natural selection is not a mechanism strong enough to explain all of the choices nature has made in the course of biological development. Somehow more information has entered the system of the world to direct otherwise chaotic forces toward an organized result. Somehow advantage has been taken of the unpredictability of atomic processes to nudge the universe toward Teilhard's complexification.

A. sees with wonder a mastering intelligence at work. He has the background in the physical sciences and biological research to trace a broad pattern through cosmology to planetary systems to living forms to the altruism of the human species. A. is wise enough to avoid the presentation of the divine as just a god of the gaps, an explanation of what science has not yet explained but soon will. Still, brilliant as his explanation is, that danger lurks in the background. The book is well worth the read just to see how he attempts to avoid the standard pitfall and to judge whether he has succeeded in avoiding it.

FRANK R. HAIG, S.J.
Loyola College, Baltimore

THE BIBLE, THE CHURCH, AND THE POOR. By Clodovis Boff and George V. Pixley. Translated from the Spanish and Portuguese by Paul Burns. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1990. Pp. xviii + 266. \$29.95; \$14.95.

This text suffers, in a sense, from a misnomer. The original Portuguese title, *Opção pelos pobres*, more accurately conveys its subject matter: the meaning and significance of the preferential option for the poor that is at the heart of Latin American liberation theology. After an introductory chapter of social analysis that answers the question "Who are the poor?" in structural terms, the text divides into three parts: an examination of the biblical, theological, and pastoral aspects of the preferential option for the poor.

Part 1 is largely a series of vignettes establishing that (1) God's option for the poor is constitutive of the identity of the Christian God, which (2) provides the basis for a biblical ethic of solidarity with the poor, who (3) are the privileged audience of the gospel proclamation. Part 2 lays an incarnational foundation for the unity of the option for the God of Christianity and the option for the poor. It treats two current questions of ecclesiology: "To what extent is the preferential option for the poor an option for a specific class and its struggle?" and "What is the relation between material and spiritual poverty?" After a fascinating summary of the option for the poor from the sixth to the sixteenth centuries, Part 3 takes up a variety of pastoral issues: the liberative practices of the poor, the evangelizing potential of the poor, the position of the nonpoor in the Church.

This book's strength is twofold: (1) it is simply, clearly, and directly written, and would be, I suspect, suitable for undergraduates or adult education; (2) it treats the subject matter from a variety of theological perspectives. For some, however, these strengths might be counted as "weaknesses," in that

almost all its topics raise questions which could be treated in more detail.

J. A. COLOMBO
University of San Diego

FROM THEOLOGY TO SOCIAL THEORY: JUAN LUIS SEGUNDO AND THE THEOLOGY OF LIBERATION. By Marsha Aileen Hewitt. New York: Peter Lang, 1990. Pp. xii + 184. \$41.95.

Hewitt's stated aim is "to offer a critical assessment of Segundo's dialogue with those non-theological intellectual traditions that have been important influences on his thought" (ix). She cites Freud, Weber, and Lenin, among others, as significant influences on Segundo, but the book focuses primarily on his interpretation and use of Marx. The Introduction and four subsequent chapters explore Segundo's claim that faith must be translated into critical social theory, or 'ideology,' if it is to influence historical reality. Segundo proposes to employ Marx in this endeavor. H. argues that he fails to demonstrate that a 'theologized Marxism' is really possible. She is somewhat puzzled by his attempt to employ Marx, since he could have chosen other interlocutors (Ricoeur, Mannheim, Gouldner, Geertz, Habermas) more sympathetic to his intentions.

In the final two chapters, there is a curious shift in tone. In defending Segundo, and liberation theology in general, against criticisms contained in the two Vatican instructions, H. appears willing to overlook some of her earlier negative conclusions regarding his use, or abuse, of Marx, and the "impossible contradiction" in his attempted synthesis of Marx and theology. Given her observations regarding his dependence on a relatively narrow spectrum of Marxian texts, and his tendency to confuse and distort certain key notions, it is hard to understand in what sense he can be said to have undertaken a serious engagement with Marx's thought. There is a similar discrepancy

between the earlier and later chapters regarding the extent to which all liberation theologians may validly be regarded as pursuing a common purpose and sharing a common methodology.

The final two chapters aside, the book is valuable for its treatment of a very central issue in the writings of a major representative of liberationist thought.

KEVIN P. O'HIGGINS, S.J.
Saint Louis University

HUMAN RIGHTS TREATIES AND THE SENATE: A HISTORY OF OPPOSITION. By Natalie Heveren Kaufman. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1990. Pp. x + 256. \$32.50.

The theory that foreign policy debates are really a reflection of public opinion on domestic issues gains support in Kaufman's well-researched, organized and written analysis of the once hotly disputed Bricker Amendment (which, in its six formulations between 1952-1954, sought to limit the domestic impact of international treaties) and of the political opposition to a series of human rights proposals, from the Genocide Convention of 1948 through the Kennedy and Carter administrations.

Critics presented these international agreements as communist plots, infringements by idealistic one-worlders on national and state sovereignty, as tricks to force civil rights legislation on the South. Frank Holman, president of the American Bar Association, argued that if someone accidentally ran over a Negro child while driving to the airport, the proposed Genocide convention, drafted in response to the atrocities of the Third Reich, could have him shipped overseas somewhere and tried for an international crime. Even more threatening to Bricker's group was the proposed U.N. Covenant on Human Rights, drawn up by a committee chaired by the U.S. representative, Eleanor Roosevelt, whom Bricker and

his supporters, like the Daughters of the American Revolution, reviled as a naive social reformer and communist sympathiser. As K. makes clear, far from being duped, the U.S. delegation argued a "conservative constitutional position protective of a traditional American view of individual rights."

Most scholars, K. reports, see the Bricker Amendment as a reaction against U.S. increased international involvement, as dismay over the growing independence and power of the executive branch; yet her content analysis demonstrates that its proponents, in the words of one spokesman, saw the treaty clause of the Constitution (article VI) as a "'Trojan horse,' ready to unload its hidden soldiery into our midst"—as if international human rights somehow nullified state laws and constitutions.

In one of her more interesting case studies, K. shows how in recent deliberations, like the Carter administration's attached reservations to the Civil and Political Rights Covenant, U.S. policy fought provisions that would broaden rather than limit human rights. E.g., on capital punishment, Colombia and Uruguay proposed: "Every human being has the inherent right to life. The death penalty shall not be imposed on any person." Yet, K. concludes, the 1950s fear of change and the certitude that not just our constitutions but all American legal customs are superior to international treaties continues to hold sway—including "the need to reserve the right to execute pregnant women."

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH, S.J.
Loyola University, New Orleans

THE VATICAN, THE LAW AND THE HUMAN EMBRYO. By Michael J. Coughlan. Iowa City: University of Iowa, 1990. Pp. viii + 125. \$8.95.

This very tightly and cogently argued study analyses *Donum vitae* with

respect to the validity of its argument about the status of the human fetus and its public-policy implications. Coughlan's viewpoint is well summarized in his own words "It has to be concluded . . . that no persuasive argument has been presented for deeming the embryo a *person*, or even merely an individual human being, from the moment of conception (understanding 'conception' as traditionally understood, i.e., fertilisation)" (76).

C. builds his case by demonstrating, on the one hand, that the argument of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith is not sustainable and, on the other, by presenting the relevance of contemporary embryology to undercut the claim that the zygote is an individual human being from its inception. C. also offers a compelling case for the relevance of hylomorphism and the succession of immaterial forms, arguing that the embryo or fetus cannot be ensouled until it has "the necessary physical organs, including brain matter, requisite for taking advantage of the potential which the soul is capable of activating" (83).

Furthermore, C. presents an excellent proportionalist argument concerning the value of human life, which he uses to critique various interpretations of what is assumed to be the "official" Catholic position. This is a valuable addition to the growing body of research on the moral status of the early human embryo. While C. is critical of the argument in *Donum vitae*, it is important to note that he criticizes the flaws in its reasoning, but does not dismiss the teaching authority of the Church itself.

THOMAS A. SHANNON
*Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Mass.*

PRENATAL DIAGNOSIS: CONFRONTING THE ETHICAL ISSUES. By Agneta Sutton. London: The Linacre Center,

1990. Pp. x + 226. £10.95.

Sutton's study is replete with ethical concerns, and she desires to provoke discussion of these concerns. The first half focuses on general information, and the second examines the principal moral issues. S. perceives the present rationale of prenatal diagnosis to be one of negative eugenics. Prenatal testing is done to reveal fetuses with problems so that these fetuses may be eliminated through abortions. The breadth of S.'s analysis is vast. She draws on biological, medical, legal, and sociological information. The analysis also includes a review of Roman Catholic tradition concerning abortion and canonical penalties.

Because her scope is so broad, and the issues so many and so complex, S. is unable adequately to sustain many of her arguments or justify her position within the limits of this book. One example of this inadequacy involves an alternative rationale for prenatal diagnosis. Most women discover through prenatal diagnosis that their fetuses do not have the problems for which they were thought to be at risk. These results can decrease maternal anxiety and increase maternal-fetal bonding. S. mentions this rationale, but challenges it only by observing that the reassurance is not complete or certain. This observation does not refute the claim that benefit does occur through a reduction in anxiety, and that the rationale of prenatal diagnosis is not primarily abortion.

Similar to the above example, there are numerous issues and arguments cited which are not thoroughly addressed. Too often S. relies on merely asserting the superiority of her position over counterpositions. In addition, the brevity of her treatment results in poor representation of opposing arguments, and even passing over in silence arguments which are most difficult for her position to confront. Due to these prob-

lems, this book best serves as a survey of certain ethical issues in prenatal diagnosis.

KEVIN T. FITZGERALD, S.J.
Georgetown University

VANCOUVER TO CANBERRA, 1983-1990: REPORT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES TO THE SEVENTH ASSEMBLY. Edited by Thomas F. Best. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1990. Pp. xxv + 275. \$18.50.

A summary of program activities reported to the Central Committee of the Council on the eve of its 1991 Assembly in Canberra, Australia. The report provides a useful bibliography, but will serve more for reference than for regular reading. Among the important developments to be noted will be the results of the *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* process, the work on mission and social concerns (often carried forward with full Roman Catholic partnership), and the gradual emergence of spirituality as an element in the global ecumenical movement. It will be an important resource for tracking down the more thorough missiological, social-ethical, and theological work documented elsewhere in ecumenical literature. The process of discussion among the churches on topics such as justice, peace, and the integrity of creation, in which the Roman Catholic Church was an important element, is treated in summary fashion.

This volume notes another study which contains some more carefully crafted theological documents over this same period, *Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches*. Issues of local-universal ecclesiology, the hierarchy of truths, and ethical concerns are treated in that text. The review of ecumenical formation, common witness, and ecumenical marriages both indicates progress made and challenges

which confront the Roman Catholic Church and its ecumenical partners in the years to come.

Both of these documents are key summaries outlining the continued development and reception of the ecumenical movement in the last decade.

JEFFREY GROS, F.S.C.

National Council of Churches
N.Y.C.

FROM MINISTRY TO THEOLOGY: PASTORAL ACTION AND REFLECTION. By John Patton. Nashville: Abingdon, 1990. Pp. 128. \$12.95.

Theological reflection on ministerial activity has been a goal of pastoral training in the U.S. for the last 35 years. During this time various methods and models have been developed to achieve this goal. Patton, who has previously written with wit and insight about pastoral issues and has served as associate editor for *The Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling*, shares now what he has learned from directing groups of ministers who reflect theologically on their experience. The main lessons are: theological reflection is a slow process; ministers should not rush to interpret their experience; reflecting with others builds community; and theological reflection should lead to change.

P. understands pastoral theology to include three essential elements: action, relationship, and meaning. All three are woven together by imagination. For P. the use of imagination is guided by the philosophy of phenomenology, especially its technique of bracketing, which suspends premature interpretation of experience (a recurring theme in the book). P. relies heavily on the theoretical work of Edward Farley and a core of process theologians, while inserting insights from contemporary psychotherapists who try to get their clients to reflect on their experience.

As expected in a pastoral work, there

is extensive clinical material and an explanation of how P. structures a twelve-session course to help students describe and feel their way into the meaning of their experiences. This is the novel contribution of the book. It demonstrates how bracketing works and what benefits it yields. Along the way it allows P. to share his own observations about theological reflection and report on the state of the art as it is discussed in selected current literature. The result is a practical, intellectually challenging glimpse into the workings of a process widely affirmed, solidly established, and still seeking a successful method of operation.

ROBERT L. KINAST

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DESPAIR: SICKNESS OR SIN? HOPELESSNESS AND HEALING IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. By Mary Louise Bringle. Nashville: Abingdon, 1990. Pp. 186. \$14.95.

Everyone knows about despair, but who asks whether it is a sickness or sin? For the student of theology, for one steeped in historical traditions of the faith, and for counselors, this becomes a lively question while reading Bringle's book.

Writing from a confessional perspective, B. employs the doctrines, symbols, and stories of Christianity to study despair. The reader gets a contemporary "feel" of despair through the characters, Celie and Isabel, in Mary Gordon's *Final Payments* and Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*. B. searches for the sin/sickness dimensions of despair in the patristic, scholastic, Reformation, and Renaissance eras. The religious and moral landscape of despair is found in various writers. While Augustine, Aquinas, and Luther concur that despair is an unforgivable sin against the Holy Ghost, they differ in their assessment of despair as sin. Renaissance writer Burton interprets despair

as sin and sickness, while 19th-century phenomenologist Kierkegaard sees despair as the ultimate form of sin.

"Can one be held responsible for despair?" B. answers this question by drawing on 20th-century psychologists, Arnold, Solomon, and Roberts. Their contrasting assessment of despair as sickness assists B. in diagraming a taxonomy of despair to illustrate personal responsibility. Synthesizing her study of religious writers and psychologists, B. suggests a dialectic of effort and grace to heal despair. She notes that healing is not an individual effort but comes through the Christian community which enables the despairing person to experience crucifixion-incarnation-eschatological shalom. Indeed, the community itself harbors some causes and symptoms of despair. B. concludes that "despair is neither sin nor sickness *per se*, but rather a *symptom* of both" (173).

ELIZABETH WILLEMS, S.S.N.D.
Notre Dame Seminary
New Orleans

AND BLESSED IS SHE: SERMONS BY WOMEN. Edited by David Albert Farmer and Edwina Hunter. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990. Pp. viii + 247. \$18.95.

Twenty-two sermons: seven from the past, with biographical sketches of the preachers and samples of their work; fifteen from contemporary America, with reflections by the preachers. Understandably not comprehensive: the history is not yet researched, and today's material is too extensive. Hence "a broad sampling of all that is available," most of it, of course, outside mainstream churches.

Farmer's introduction to the past focuses on the experiences of women among the New England Puritans (male dominance) and the Society of Friends (women preachers accepted), in the 17th and 18th century (greatest

freedom in sectarian groups and for evangelists), the effort to overthrow the male monopoly of the pulpit in the 1800s (holiness groups, first ordinations of women in the U.S., Mary Baker Eddy, Salvation Army), and progress in our century (e.g., ordinations in a number of denominations). The sermons from the past stem from Shaker Lucy Wright, Methodist Anna Howard Shaw, Universalist Olympia Brown, Baptist Helen Barrett Montgomery, Pentecostalist Aimee Semple McPherson, Salvation Army general Evangeline Booth, and Methodist liberal theologian Georgia Harkness.

Hunter's introduction to the present highlights influences on the "radical" movement in preaching (ordinations in mainline congregations and women in theological schools), the variety of voices, and the similarities in female preaching: importance of scholarly exegesis but with "hermeneutical suspicion," concern for justice, inclusive language, modification of theological assumptions, use of feminist or liberation hermeneutic, a fresh way of imaging God, relational or communal approach to authority, use of personal story.

The sermons that illustrate the fresh approach constitute a memorable mosaic: biblicist and homiletics professor Elizabeth Achtemeier on the significance of the Ascension; Roman Catholic professor of homiletics Joan Delaplane as the daughter of the Canaanite woman and resonating to the latter's feeling of alienation; black Catholic Toinette Eugene preaching on "liberating love" to a middle-class black community; Southern Baptist Nancy Hastings Sehested using midwives Shiprah and Puah (Exodus 1) to illustrate letting our pharaohs go. But to me the most useful materials are the reflections of each preacher; for here I discover their personal "story," their experience of frustration, influences on their preaching, their theological and homiletic concerns, voices that so long

have been muted or have cried out in a wilderness.

WALTER J. BURGHARDT, S.J.
Annapolis, Md.

AN AFRICAN TREE OF LIFE. By Thomas G. Christensen. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1990. Pp. xix + 184.

Christensen provides us with a valuable study of a local theology in the making, describing how one group of African Christians, the Gbaya people of east central Cameroon and the Central African Republic, have used a single root metaphor, which derives from their own symbolic and cultural heritage, to understand and celebrate what God has done for them in Christ.

The *soré* bush, a small tree growing on the West African savanna, constitutes the center of the Gbaya symbol system. C. presents an ethnographic "thick description" of the rituals associated with it. *Soré* is used in making a new village, reconciling enemies, ending hostilities, purifying violators of taboos, washing hunters and weapons, conducting initiation rites, calming violence, cooling anger and grief over death, and accompanying people into new and potentially dangerous situations.

To recapitulate the uses and meanings of *soré*, C. employs Victor Turner's categories of analysis (the exegetical, operational, and positional meanings), concluding that the themes find their center and focus in the root metaphor: *soré* = cool-thing. The soft and flexible *soré*, with its slippery substance between bark and core, suggests to the Gbaya humility and coolness, resistance and resiliency. *Soré* cools and calms; it cleanses and blesses as it cools. Individual and community life depend on its cooling, peace-making power. Finally, C. examines the Gbaya Christological confession, "Jesus is our *soré*—cool-thing," illustrating how *soré* rituals have been invested with, and thus transformed by, Christian belief.

C.'s main contribution lies in his detailed description of beliefs and rituals. His more systematic reflections on these tend to be so dense as to be of little assistance to those not trained in anthropology. His reflections on the theological significance of the *soré* metaphor and the arguments justifying its use in confession and celebration are cogent and in line with contemporary missiology's understanding of the importance of inculturation.

GERALD R. BLASZCZAK, S.J.
St. Andrew Hall, Syracuse, N.Y.

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SCRIPTURAL STUDIES

- Allen, L. *Ezekiel 20—48*. Dallas: Word, 1990. Pp. 301.
- The Bible: The New Revised Standard Version with Apocrypha*. N.Y.: Collins, 1991. Pp. 1140. \$19.95.
- Brown, R. *A Risen Christ in Easter-time*. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical, 1990. Pp. 95. \$4.95.
- Bruce, F. *A Mind for What Matters*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990. Pp. 325. \$19.95.
- Bruner, F. *Matthew 2: Matthew 13—28*. Dallas: Word, 1990. Pp. 650.
- Carson, D. *The Gospel according to John*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991. Pp. 715. \$29.95.
- Cooté, R. *Early Israel*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990. Pp. 197.
- Craddock, F. *Luke*. Louisville: Westminster/Knox, 1990. Pp. 300. \$21.95.
- Falk, M. *The Song of Songs*. S.F.: Harper, 1990 [1973]. Pp. 213. \$18.95.
- Fitzmyer, J. *An Introductory Bibliography for the Study of Scripture*. 3rd

the triune God (somewhat like dynamic *Śūnyatā* in Abe's interpretation) is by nature self-emptying love, albeit self-emptying love as realized in and through the divine persons in their relations to one another and all their creatures.

Thus, while Abe will surely have to come to terms with the personalist overtones of dynamic *Śūnyatā* insofar as it exhibits wisdom and compassion to all sentient beings, Christian thinkers, as Tracy recommends, will have to reflect more carefully on the traditional distinction between person and nature within God. In particular, Whiteheadians, who otherwise share so many philosophical presuppositions with Buddhists, should inquire further into the relationship between God and creativity so as to explore whether or not this, too, admits of a trinitarian reinterpretation.

Xavier University, Cincinnati

JOSEPH A. BRACKEN, S.J.

CHRIST AS THE COMMON GROUND: A STUDY OF CHRISTIANITY AND HINDUISM. By Kathleen Healy, R.S.M. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University, 1990. Pp. xiv + 218. \$24.95.

Based on several visits to India, this book is Healy's attempt "at a thoughtful integration of what [she has] learned firsthand about the spirituality and culture of the Hindus from the Hindus themselves, about Indian Christians from themselves, and about what each can offer to the other today in spiritual interpretation" (xiii). H. traveled extensively and consulted widely, and the breadth of her conversations with "theologians, philosophers, swamis, gurus, sannyasis and 'ordinary people'" is impressive. Written in an accessible, journalist style, the book organizes the fruits of these consultations (and extensive background reading) with a deep respect for Indian culture, an urgent sense of compassion and social justice, and lively theological thinking (strongly influenced by Raimundo Panikkar)—all for the sake of reflection on the future of Christianity in India, and with the hope that the book will guide Indian Christians in envisioning a future Indian Christianity that would be acceptable to Hindus too, millions of whom "worship Christ, but often view the Christian church as 'Churchianity'" (xiv).

Looking for Christ "beyond Christianity" and seeking mutual spiritual fecundation of Hinduism and Christianity, H. sets forth her vision clearly and sharply: "Christians have no monopoly on the Christ who existed from the beginning" (8); "Christians today must die to themselves in order to know more fully the Christ who reveals himself to the Hindu: the non-Mediterranean, the universal Christ" (27); the Church must be decentralized, made less clerical (62), in brief must "renounce a type of

absolute centrality in rites, rules, and formulations of doctrine promulgated through historically exaggerated insistence on authority" (84); "the Hindu mentality by its very nature can respond more fully to the trinitarian Christ than to Jesus Christ, the man of Galilee, in the historical Christian emphasis . . . The mystery of the church must be seen in universal revelation. Hinduism as well as Christianity leads to transcendent knowledge" (86).

She explores "eastern and western paths in conflict and complementarity," setting forth the respective Hindu and Christian emphases on "mysticism and human service; interiority and action; vertical spirituality and horizontal spirituality; experience and suffering; karma and person," all of which are to be explored not only academically, but also in order to "produce significant concrete statements about Eastern and Western responses to truth and reality" (119). After some honest and sharp criticisms of Hinduism—a critique of social injustice, and the suggestion that "Hindus need to explore the values of rationality and of the seriousness of history to Western Christians"—she concludes with the hope that "the self-revelation that God has made to the East since ancient days will at last unite Banaras to Bethlehem, Krishna to Christ" (190).

Despite its diligence, courage, and admirable insistence on confronting the whole range of key issues, the book seems too ambitious in its pursuit of a revised Catholic ecclesial practice, its critique of Hinduism and Christianity in India, and its plea for a renewed spiritual encounter of Hindu and Christian. Specialists will find H.'s presentation of Hinduism simplistic, because of its generalizations, primarily its presupposition that there is a "Hindu mind" and an "Indian way" of thinking and doing. Much of the contemporary Indological and postorientalist reconsideration of India has been dedicated to questioning such simplifications of India and its religions, especially that neo-Vedanta simplification favored by H., which identifies Hinduism with the pursuit of an absolute nondual reality, mystical nonengagement in this world, and some version of prerationality or nonrationality.

Theologians who push Panikkar for a more systematic presentation of his Trinitarian and Christological thinking will not find in H.'s work any advance on his; and given the radicality of the proposals involved—a truly non-Mediterranean Christ, a truly decentralized Church—much more theological argumentation would be required to win over the skeptical theologian, Western or Indian. Finally, though outsiders do bring a fresh perspective to previously familiar issues, and hence are worth listening to, it is hard to see why Indian Christians, much less Indian Hindus, should be persuaded by the vision of Indian Christianity offered by this visitor; had the book been written more directly as an appeal to

a likely Western Christian audience to rethink itself in light of an evolving global religious scene, it could have been more effective.

Boston College

FRANCIS X. CLOONEY, S.J.

LITERATURE AND RELIGION: PASCAL, GRYPHIUS, LESSING, HÖLDERLIN, NOVALIS, KIERKEGAARD, DOSTOYEVSKY, KAFKA. By Hans Küng and Walter Jens. Translated from the German by Peter Heinegg. New York: Paragon, 1990. Pp. x + 308. \$22.95.

“What happened to religion in the modern period? What happened to modernity because of religion?” In this collection of essays, originally lectures, theologian Küng and literary critic Jens attempt a “diagnosis of modernity.” As Küng explains, the pressures of modernity, evident in the Reformation and the Enlightenment, resulted in a paradigm change, a “new basic model of the world, society, the church, and theology” (5).

The eight writers here considered span what might loosely be considered the Continental tradition of Reformation theology. Thus it is not surprising that even Jewish and Catholic writers, e.g., Kafka and Pascal, come off sounding a bit like Martin Luther. Küng strikes the note early; in his opening chapter on Pascal, it becomes evident that of the four “great powers” of modernity—science, technology, industrialization, and democracy—Küng is most concerned with democracy, by which he means nonauthoritarian, noncentralized, nonchurchly power.

The subtext of Küng’s own problematic relationship with “political reactionaries and . . . Roman agents” shadows, indeed, shapes his argument. Throughout he returns, sometimes directly, to his struggle against a medieval and regressively autocratic Church. In his essay on Novalis he injects this comment: “Indeed, isn’t the Roman church today being led once more by men from Poland, Bavaria, Italy, and Spain, who, despite their clever strategies of adaptation to modern times, are oriented to that medieval, then Counter-Reformation, antimodern model of Christianity?” (157).

Though Küng and Jens contribute equally to the volume’s sixteen essays, Küng’s preface and voice sets the generally polemic tone. The strength of Küng’s essays is at the same time their weakness. They read like lectures, offering an interesting, wide-ranging overview of intellectual history, syncretic, discursive, and thus, inevitably reductive. His approach is historiotheological. Reading him, it becomes clear that the tradition of Western thought is, from another point of view, a theological narrative, an investigation of grace—the naming of God and the definition of human potential in time and space.

In contrast to Küng’s broader reading of history, Jens modestly reads the texts at hand. As a consequence his essays are less evangelical, if we

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Our June issue features four major articles and one note. They range, on the one hand, from the fundamental theological understanding of revelation as divine self-communication to, on the other, one of the ultimate problems of eschatology: the question of universal salvation. In between lie an article offering a provocative analysis of the ordering of human love, a note discussing the love of God as the matrix for understanding human suffering, and an article offering an extended reflection on the dialogical relationships that should exist between theologians and scientists.

Divine Revelation: Intervention or Self-Communication? exposes the inadequacy of viewing revelation as an outside intervention inconsistent with the autonomy and authenticity of the cosmos and humanity. FRANS JOZEF VAN BEECK, S.J., the John Cardinal Cody Professor of Catholic Theology at Loyola University of Chicago and current president of the American Theological Society, points out that what is far more consistent with a Catholic understanding is a phenomenological analysis of human communication which shows that revelation is best interpreted by way of transcendence and immanence. Van Beek is well known for his *Christ Proclaimed* (Paulist, 1979), and more recently for *God Encountered: A Contemporary Systematic Theology 1: Understanding the Christian Faith* (Harper & Row, 1989). The present article is drawn from material which is being prepared for volume 2 of that work: *Exitus: The Reflection of the Glory*.

Current Eschatology: Universal Salvation and the Problem of Hell, building on recent Roman Catholic developments in the theology of human freedom, explores the perennial notion of universal salvation from within the Catholic tradition and in a way that does not undercut human freedom or responsibility JOHN R. SACHS, S.J., a Ph.D. from Tübingen, is assistant professor of systematic theology at Weston School of Theology. His *The Christian View of Humanity: Basic Christian Anthropology* (Glazier/Liturgical) will appear this fall.

The Order of Love and Recent Catholic Ethics: A Constructive Proposal retrieves the Thomistic notion of the "order of love" by means of a critical appropriation of current biologically based notions of the natural gradation of altruism. This offers a corrective to certain deficiencies in recent Catholic treatments of love that have relied on exclusively personalist and existentialist sources. STEPHEN J. POPE, who studied under James Gustafson at the University of Chicago, is assistant professor of Christian social ethics at Boston College. He is working on a series of articles, some of which have begun to appear this year (e.g., in the *Heythrop Journal* and the *Journal of Religion*), focusing on the ethics of Thomas Aquinas, theories of love and justice, and Roman Catholic social teaching.

Theology and Science: A New Commitment to Dialogue follows "Cybernation, Responsibility and Providential Design" which appeared a year ago with Michael Buckley's note on "Religion and Science," (*TS*, June 1990). Observing that dialogue between scientists and theologians is still in its infancy, Mooney argues that a common commitment to the intelligibility of reality and a common sociology of knowledge makes possible conversation focused on the contribution of each to an understanding of the human. CHRISTOPHER F. MOONEY, S.J., S.T.D. from the Institut Catholique in Paris and J.D. from the University of Pennsylvania Law School, is professor of religious studies at Fairfield University. Long known for his earlier work on Teilhard de Chardin, he recently published *Boundaries Dimly Perceived: Law, Religion, Education, and the Common Good* (Notre Dame, 1990), and is now working on a book on the science/theology dialogue.

Thomas Aquinas, Human Suffering, and the Unchanging God of Love uses Thomas' understanding of love and compassion in order, negatively, to point out the inadequacy of conceiving God as a "fellow sufferer," and, positively, to suggest a more profound understanding of God's identification with suffering humanity and to consider some pastoral implications of that understanding. MICHAEL J. DODDS, O.P., has his S.T.D. from Fribourg, Switzerland, where he published *The Unchanging God of Love* (University of Fribourg, 1986). He is currently academic dean and associate professor of theology at the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology of the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California, where he is continuing his research and writing on divine immutability.

Robert J. Daly, S.J.
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