

## BOOK REVIEWS

**THE DISAPPEARANCE OF GOD: A DIVINE MYSTERY.** By Richard Elliott Friedman. Boston: Little, Brown, 1995. Pp. xi + 335. \$24.95.

Friedman here analyzes three interrelated mysteries, each addressing the increasingly hidden nature of God in Western civilization. The first mystery is the biblical shift from God's intimate walking in the garden as described in the Yahwistic creation account, through the Israelite request for a mediator rather than the fire and cloud of Sinai, to the total absence of even the divine name in Esther, with the correlative growth in human responsibility for life on earth. More seasoned readers may recall the striking manner in which Brueggemann addressed the latter theme in his *In Man We Trust* (1972).

Although F.'s study of the fuller contrast is very well written and engaging, I confess to having experienced the similar effort of Jack Miles (acknowledged on p. 78) as much more dramatic, probably due to the biographical genre creatively selected by the latter. By exceeding the more limited historical scope of Miles (namely, the Hebrew canon alone), however, F. is able to include the New Testament's re-shifting balance back to the incarnate God in Jesus, the Messiah and Miracle-worker. Similarly, F. can describe the parallel rabbinic focus on the divine character of the written Torah as the new locus for religious authority in the early Jewish communities of the Common Era. The story ends quite differently under those stage directions.

F. chooses to illustrate the second mystery with a respectful presentation of the genius and pathos of Nietzsche's struggle with the Divine, culminating in the proclamation of God's death so familiar to anyone possessing even the most superficial acquaintance with the 19th-century roots of existentialist philosophy. With extraordinary and captivating patience, this portion of the work traces minute literary and intellectual relationships between Nietzsche and Dostoevsky, though the two giants never actually met during their lives. Both figures serve to illustrate an age severely confronted by the idea of God's disappearance from its major cultural forces and discoveries. No caricature here, for even Nietzsche's dramatic collapse into madness occasioned by the mistreatment of a horse in Turin is presented with great sympathy and illumination. This is a remarkable case of careful detective work, itself worth the reading of the entire volume.

The final mystery F. explores is the relationship between religion and science. Here he draws striking parallels between the origin of the universe as conjectured by Kabbalistic mysticism and that postulated by the more sophisticated scientific explorations into the Big Bang. The further the great minds of modern cosmic theoreticians venture into the universe, the more the question of God comes into the human consciousness again.

It seems difficult to affirm, measure, or question the deepest reli-

gious sentiments of the scientific heroes of our age, for their language so often verges on the poetic. Nevertheless, I wonder if F. doesn't grant an overly optimistic assessment of the awe described in so many of the major *Grundstudien* of the multiple disciplines which probe the heavens today. F.'s repeated lament over the lack of solid foundation for a common morality in the wake of God's disappearance and his sober list of the consequent woes of spiritual deprivation, unprecedented wars, and eco-damage certainly gives pause to the pastoral observer of contemporary society. His suggestion of "species morality" with its loyalty to the needs of the common good as a new common ground for moral behavior, might address the blatant individualism of our secularized age. Its long rage effectiveness amid the commercialization of our culture remains to be seen, as well as its practicality in the decisions of day-to-day existence. The remedy remains to be tested, but F. has documented the malady in a compelling way. His book is recommended reading for personal enjoyment, cultural insight, and pastoral wisdom.

*Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Wisconsin*

RICHARD J. SKLBA

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT. By Hans Dieter Betz. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995. Pp. xxxvii + 695.

This is Betz's third contribution to the Hermeneia series, and his second one devoted to a segment of a canonical book rather than the book as a whole. A note by one of the series editors, who have yet to offer us a satisfying commentary on a canonical Gospel, declares that this bulky volume on the Matthean and Lucan "sermons" attests the editorial board's recognition of "the importance of oral tradition and written sources in the formation of early Christian writings" (xxxvii). Subscribers may or may not rejoice at this commitment as they contemplate the eventual size, weight, and cost of the complete series. At any rate, one has to wonder what broth of a commentary on Matthew would be needed to complement B.'s arm-load on but three of its chapters.

The point is not facetious, for *Matthew* is the problem in this rich, immensely erudite, and often stimulating work. The two evangelists are more or less "out of the loop" here, because Matthew's Sermon on the Mount (SM) and the shorter "Sermon on the Plain" in Luke (SP) were fixed in writing long before either Gospel was, and even before their common source, Q, took shape. The genre and purpose of these protean compendia of Jesus' words is B.'s guiding interest—so much so that he assumes the evangelists took them over all but unchanged, and he ignores their connection to a larger narrative framework which makes them contribute to what we continue to call "Gospels."

No commentary is granted to the lead narrative of either sermon, nor is the relationship between the rigorous demands of Jesus' speech and the abundant grace of his ministrations to the needy—the scenario shared by the SM and the SP—ever assessed. Rather, the a priori of B.'s hypothesis on the original function of these compositions dictates

their characterization as summaries of “advanced teaching” for those who have already entered into Jesus’ following. This makes it difficult to explain the persistence on the scene of both the SM (Matt 5:1; 7:28) and the SP (Luke 6:19; 7:1) of “crowds,” apparently viewed by the evangelists as “the pool” from which new disciples were to be recruited (81). Does not each discourse accordingly act as a winnowing *oratio protreptica* rather than on B.’s hypothetical model of a focusing “epitome” earmarked for insiders (79)? This question, like many another thorn on B.’s arduous path, is stepped over lightly with copious citation of inconclusive literary analogues.

The philosophical “epitome,” the genre B. proposes for both the SM and the SP, had its leading realizations in the *Kyriai Doxai* composed for Epicurus and the *Encheiridion* put out by Epictetus’s student, Arrian. The SM/SP analogy involves some of the genial hellenizing syncretism, unburdened by sticky particulars, for which B.’s commentaries are renowned. The present argument was previewed in a battery of essays collected over ten years ago in the volume *Essays on the Sermon on the Mount* (Fortress, 1985), and has thus had ample time to attract some incisive criticism, notably from G. N. Stanton (*A Gospel for a New People* [Westminster/Knox, 1992]) and C. E. Carlston (*CBQ* 50 [1988] 47–57). B. contents himself with ignoring or making light of contradiction, and an egregious case in point is his response to the objection that “epitome” specimens are simply not to be found in early Judaism, the milieu (as early as Paul’s time) from which the two sermons are supposed to derive. With the patronizing rejoinder that his critics are simply “unfamiliar with the material” (73), B. cites a bewildering cluster of Jewish works, some as complex as Sirach and the Wisdom of Solomon, one known to us only in two quoted extracts, of which a common element appears to be the serialized collection of gnomic sayings. The fact that such material, like the sayings of Jesus, generally resists systematizing, whereas the condensed statement of a thought system is the *specificum* of every epitome (79), is another roadblock which can be blithely vaulted over along with all the unsettled issues of each Jewish book’s plan and purpose. B. is obviously much more at home in the Greek sphere, and he tends to enlarge this influence and short-change Jesus’ native religious culture.

Let me not fail to give the commentary its due. Individual treatments in it are very illuminating, e.g. the *talion* and enemy-love “antitheses,” the “cult-didache” of Matt 6:1–18, and the Lord’s Prayer. And B.’s reading of all the Matthean “antitheses” as Torah-affirming, not Torah-revoking, is, in my opinion, fully on target. Even where one is inclined to judge his investigation of theoretical backgrounds to be tangential rather than foundational (e.g. Greek theories of vision *ad* Matt 6:22–23; Platonic theory of the truth of language behind the swearing “antithesis”; ingredients from Greek thought in the “anxieties” instruction), the wealth of comparative data usually impresses and stimulates us.

When it is claimed, however, that the conceptual goal of the SP is reached with an expression of the *Greek theory* of "the good man" in Luke 6:45 (630), consonant with the SP's tailoring to Luke's Hellenic audience (versus the SM's to Matthew's Jewish-Christian constituency), we protest, as we often do over B.'s finessed details: Wait a minute! Matthew has the same words about "the good man" in Matt 12:34–35, where he obviously transferred the conclusion of the tree-and-fruits *mashal*. Does that not indicate that Matthew knew the same text as Luke used, and that he was topically rearranging Q material in transposing "the good man," the very policy he followed to create the much larger SM based on the matrix of Q's SP (cf. 532)? Such is the common opinion that B. has deserted. I expect most of us will continue to cling to it, charging the double tradition's irreducible disparities to the different Q recensions the two evangelists used.

*Fordham University*

RICHARD J. DILLON

**A RADICAL JEW: PAUL AND THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY.** By Daniel Boyarin. Berkeley: University of California, 1994. Pp. xi + 366.

Boyarin, a self-described talmudist and postmodern Jewish culture critic (1), reads Paul as a fellow Jewish thinker and culture critic whose theology of law stemmed from "a critique of its social effects and meanings" (49; 52–56). Motivated by the Hellenistic ideal of unity ("the One"), Paul sought to overcome the limitations of ethnic Israel in order to recreate a universal Israel which included all humanity. But, B. contends, Paul's desire for the unity of humankind annihilates real identities and differences in favor of a more abstract, spiritual identity. Specifically, though Paul remained a Jew and was not anti-Jewish, his desire for oneness has led Christianity and Western culture to deny the validity of Judaism and persecute Jews. Analogously, Western culture has promoted its cultural ideal at the cost of suppressing differences of gender and culture and subordinating women and non-Western peoples. In answer to this tension between the universal and particular B. seeks a synthesis that "will allow for stubborn hanging on to ethnic, cultural specificity but in a context of deeply felt and enacted human solidarity" (257) for "the claims of difference and the desire for universality are both—contradictorily—necessary; both are also equally problematic" (10).

B. enters the minefields of Pauline exegesis in order to uncover Pauline themes that will explain, clarify, or solve the problem of universality and difference. Though he dialogues intelligently with a variety of major interpreters and wrestles valiantly with a series of terse and often ambiguous Pauline passages, he eventually comes out where he started, in favor of liberation and human solidarity, against racism and ethnocentrism, and far from both Paul and contemporary solution. The problem is partly his method. As a postmodern culture critic B. is committed to multiplicity of meaning and rejection of univocity and an

underlying signified (16). In the end, his interpretations will stimulate reflection on the problems he takes up but remain far from proven and in principle unprovable.

B. is especially good at combating Christian interpretations which misrepresent Judaism and misunderstand Paul as a first-century Jewish thinker. He also surfaces tensions in Paul's thought through careful midrashic, intertextual comparisons. He emphasizes and works out the implications of passages usually passed over hurriedly or in silence, such as the oxymoron in 1 Corinthians 7:19 whereby circumcision is insignificant compared to obeying God's commandments (which command circumcision!). On larger issues, B. convincingly argues that Paul did not reject Jewish law because it was evil but because he wanted to unify all humanity under God (based on a reading of Galatians). Other exegetical conclusions are less convincing. In B.'s view Paul is an allegorical interpreter who valued the higher spiritual meaning of the Bible (a hidden signified) at the expense of the body and the historical Israel, and who stressed the distinction of spirit and flesh to the detriment of the more integral Jewish view. Even more improbably B. argues that Adam is the "I" speaking in Romans 7:7 ff., and that for Paul, "sexuality per se is tainted with immorality" (171). Everyone will find a variety of *cruces interpretum* to accept or reject. B. argues for his views vigorously and fairly in a field marked by fundamental disagreements.

This book drives determinedly toward a solution to the "politics of identity" which emerges from the dilemma of universalism and difference. Seeking a synthetic middle way, B. finds some help in Paul who favored the universal and spiritual, but made room for the body (185). However, the weight of his exegesis argues for a Pauline dissociation of flesh and spirit, letter and meaning, signifier and signified, in contrast to other recent interpreters of Paul who understand him as a more Jewish and less Greek in his world view. In the end B. turns to the Jewish diaspora tradition to preserve the concrete Jewish identity, which is extremely precious to him, without falling into the evils of ethnocentrism and racism which have done so much harm in our world (228–29). He briefly sketches a theory of cultural identity which preserves ethnic Jewishness while fostering interaction with other cultures and peoples. Such an identity, based on diaspora Jewish experience, does not require a Jewish state, but thrives in a multicultural nation (242–49). But this solution sounds like a well-functioning, multicultural, democratic nation state, such as the United States is or ideally hopes to be, and brings B. back to where he began. Modern political arguments, such as those found in Benjamin Barber's popular book, *Jihad vs. McWorld: How Globalism and Tribalism are Reshaping the World* (New York: Ballantine, 1995), are more convincing for this solution than B.'s exegesis of Paul and the Jewish tradition.

**THE CORINTHIAN BODY.** By Dale B. Martin. New Haven: Yale University, 1995. Pp. xix + 330. \$35.

Martin seeks to place Paul's arguments in 1 Corinthians within the larger context of Greco-Roman views of the body, both individual and social, and of disease and pollution. In his view, the theological differences reflected in 1 Corinthians were rooted in different ideological constructions of the body, and these constructions were in turn connected with socioeconomic status within Greco-Roman society. On the one hand, Paul, and probably the majority of Corinthian Christians, saw both the individual body and the social body, i.e. the body of Christ, as permeable entities dangerously threatened by polluting agents. On the other hand, a minority of Corinthian Christians ("the strong") saw the body, again both individual and social, quite differently. They stressed the hierarchical arrangement of the body and the proper balance of its parts, without much concern over body boundaries or the dangers of pollution. According to M., these different views correlate with socioeconomic status, "the strong" being the higher-status group, and the majority of Corinthian Christians being of the lower-status group (xv-xvi).

Especially noteworthy are Chapters 1 and 6, devoted specifically to Greco-Roman views of the body and of disease and pollution respectively. These chapters are valuable because they insist on the variegated views Greco-Roman culture had on these issues (far more variegated than most New Testament scholars have allowed for) and on the correlation of at least some of these views with socioeconomic status.

Most of the book, however, is taken up with analyses of the different issues treated by Paul in 1 Corinthians. Of these analyses, I found two to be most insightful. The first is his treatment of 1 Cor 6:1-11; 8-10; and 11:17-34 in which M. shows how the divisions among the Corinthian Christians about going to courts outside the community, about eating meat offered to idols, and about the celebration of the Eucharist are best understood against the background of differences of socioeconomic status and how Paul's arguments are meant to overturn the importance of conventional differences in social status. Second, the analysis of Paul's view of the status of women in 1 Corinthians 7 and 11:2-16 is also insightful, if overdone. M. argues that, unlike the treatment of other issues, Paul's treatment of the status of women in the community does not overturn conventional Greco-Roman hierarchical views of the relationship of men and women. Both in his views of women's sexual desires and their danger for pollution, Paul seems to accept women's subordinate place, a place determined by the character of their bodies. While I think Paul's view of marriage is more positive than M. allows for and Paul's view of the status of women is more complex, nevertheless his attempt to place Paul's views within the context of the Greco-Roman world is to be applauded.

Granted the significant contributions this book makes to a more nuanced understanding of Paul, several limitations also need to be

pointed out. First, M.'s attempt to reduce all the issues in 1 Corinthians to divisions between Christians of higher status and those of lower status is not successful. This is especially the case with 1 Corinthians 1–4. While M. is correct to point out that these chapters are filled with status terminology, the force of Paul's arguments depends on his opponents not being primarily of a higher social status (see 1:26–31). Second, M.'s connection of certain views of the body with socioeconomic status may be too sharp. Specifically, given the evidence that he provides, members of the upper classes of Greco-Roman society often enough had views of the body and pollution which M. associates with those of lower status. Views of the body and pollution, then, are not easily correlatable with actual social status. Finally, M. would have done well to consider more carefully the question of how the divisions within the Corinthian community came about. Here one has to take seriously the possibility that the divisions arose out of their interpretation of baptism and the importance of who did the baptizing. This is the first issue raised in 1 Cor 1:10–17. It may well have been that the Corinthian Christians came to interpret baptism on the analogy of initiation into a mystery cult. Such an interpretation could have led to the concerns with status within the community so clearly reflected in the letter and yet would not have been reducible to conventional status in the larger Greco-Roman world. Aspirations for upward status mobility within the community rather than simply status itself may have played a more significant role than M. allows for.

Overall, however, this book is well worth reading for anyone interested in a sophisticated and nuanced analysis of 1 Corinthians.

*Loyola University, Chicago*

THOMAS H. TOBIN, S.J.

ONE FAITH: BIBLICAL AND PATRISTIC CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARD UNDERSTANDING UNITY IN FAITH. By William Henn, O.F.M.Cap. New York: Paulist, 1995. Pp. vi + 334. \$22.95.

Few Christians would argue against the ancient claim that the Church is one. Yet, as all Christians know, the unity implied in this claim remains more an eschatological hope than a present reality. Three decades of ecumenical dialogue have increased communication and understanding between Christianity's divided communities, but have still made little progress in restoring (or perhaps establishing for the first time) that unity which is so deeply prized. Henn's work with the Vatican's Council for Promoting Christian Unity has provided him with the opportunity to experience first hand both the promise and frustration of ecumenical conversation. This experience serves as the impulse behind his book. H. explains in the Introduction that not only is unity in faith "an elusive goal which is yet to be achieved, but that much work remains to be done simply to bring into sharper focus just what it means to be one in faith." He proposes that we look more carefully at this question by gazing "patiently and lovingly" into both

Scripture and patristic literature in order to see what these sources have to offer us as we work "to join together in communion of faith."

His first two sections survey biblical and patristic perspectives on the Church's unity, while the third section attempts to tease out some tentative conclusions that might help advance ecumenical dialogue. The project H. has set out for himself is enormous. He has basically asked, How is "faith" understood in all biblical and patristic literature? H. recognizes this problem and attempts to bring some order to the mass of information by asking two basic questions of all the literature surveyed: What does "x" say about faith? and What does "x" say about unity in faith? Still, because so much material is covered, he is forced to present his material in the form of a list (e.g., faith in the Old Testament, in the Synoptics, in Pauline literature, in the Eastern Fathers, in the Western Fathers, etc.). While the various chapters are packed with information, H. risks losing the reader who is at once disoriented by a sea of detail from many sources and frustrated by the lack of deep exploration of any single source.

Throughout the first two sections, H. attempts to show that there is significant diversity in the way biblical and patristic literature understands faith and unity in faith. There are, after all, different literary genre involved, different languages, different historical situations and different theological challenges. Descriptions of faith and unity in faith are nuanced according to situation and context. Yet, at the same time, these sources are remarkably united in certain areas. For example, H. argues that the importance of creedal statements and "ministerial leadership" can easily be discerned in the both New Testament and patristic literature. These formal controls on diversity, he implies, were primarily responsible for maintaining unity in the ancient Church. Not surprisingly, H. suggests that this same tolerance for diversity within a structured environment should be the basis for ecumenical discussion of what it means to be united in faith in the contemporary context.

While H. is careful to use language that is ecumenical, such a "ministerial leadership" instead of "historic episcopacy," it is clear that his sensibilities are Roman Catholic. Indeed, his reading of the literature is in many ways determined by the Catholic perspective he brings to it. One example should suffice. In recounting the events surrounding the Council of Ephesus, H. cites Cyril of Alexandria's appeal to Pope Celestine as an example of the authority of the Bishop of Rome. (Indeed H. emphasizes the role of Rome frequently in the book). An Orthodox interpretation—which may be more historically accurate—would acknowledge that Cyril appealed to Celestine, but not because Celestine had the authority to settle the dispute on his own. Rather, Cyril made the appeal because he needed another important bishop on his side in order to defeat the bishop of Constantinople. There is nothing wrong with H.'s "Catholic" reading of the literature, but, it seems to me, that it would be more helpful for dialogue if this perspective were more



openly acknowledged. Protestant and Catholic scholars can and do use the same evidence that H. does in order to advance very different conclusions.

Despite its shortcomings, this is a useful book. It will perhaps serve best as a reference work for those interested in studying the idea of "unity in faith" in more detail. H. is a careful researcher, and the book contains copious notes and bibliographical information. This alone is a great value. Beyond this, however, he draws our attention back to the important work of ecumenical dialogue in a time when fragmentation and retrenchment seem more the order of the day.

*Creighton University, Omaha*

JOHN J. O'KEEFE

**DIVINE MEANING: STUDIES IN PATRISTIC HERMENEUTICS.** By Thomas F. Torrance. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1995. Pp. 439. \$39.95.

Torrance is best known for his writings in systematic theology and on the relation of theology and science, but, as this collection of essays shows, he is also a serious student of the Church Fathers. He discusses Irenaeus, Melito of Sardis, Clement of Alexandria, Athanasius, Hilary of Poitiers, the apologist Athenagoras, and early Christian biblical interpretation in general, as well as Greek conceptions of space and the Incarnation in relation to ancient notions of space. T. brings a deep knowledge of contemporary Christian thought into dialogue with the ancient texts, thereby illuminating the thinking of the Church Fathers as well as current Christian discussion. His is an independent interpretation of many familiar texts and a fresh account of some lesser-known texts, all based on his own close reading of the texts, relatively unencumbered by current historical scholarship, but informed by contemporary thinking. Which is to say he reads the Church Fathers as they have always been read in Christian history, not as historical curiosities from a forgotten past, but as living voices of faith and teaching.

Though these essays were written over many years, certain themes recur. The most important has to do with the central principle undergirding all patristic interpretation of the Bible: that the Bible is to be understood in light of its central purpose. In his debates with Arius over the relation of the Son to the Father, Athanasius argued that Arius consistently misinterpreted passages from the Bible because he failed to interpret them in light of the whole. And this whole, what Athanasius called the "scope and character of the Holy Scripture" is that the savior who is eternally God as the son and Wisdom and Word of the Father for our sake took flesh from the Virgin Mary, the *theotokos*, and became man. This means that individual texts (e.g., "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature," and "the Son of man does not know the day or the hour") are to be interpreted in light of the central message of the Scriptures.

Another major theme has to do with the relation of Christian thought to Hellenism. Although T. appreciates the genius and origi-

nality of Origen, he clearly thinks Origen was much too beholden to Greek ways of thinking to understand the Bible, and that Athanasius corrected him and set Christian thought on a sounder, and more biblical, course. There is some truth to that, but T. exaggerates the discontinuity between the two thinkers on the doctrine of God and underestimates the ways in which Origen distanced himself from Hellenistic conceptions. In part this is because his understanding of Origen still stands in the shadow of von Harnack, filtered through Hanson, in part because of an uncritical use of heuristic categories such as the distinction between Hebraic (Athanasius) and Greek (Origen) ways of thinking. He seems not to have read de Lubac on Origen.

The most original essay is that on Hilary of Poitiers. Hilary is a major, but neglected, figure in early Christian thought, a writer read chiefly by specialists, and it was particularly gratifying and illuminating to read T.'s careful and nuanced discussion. Here too his chief interest is how Hilary approached the task of biblical interpretation, especially in the context of his debates with the Arians. Like Athanasius, Hilary stressed the importance of the *purpose* of the Scripture, but his way of putting things is a bit different. For Hilary the key factor in biblical interpretation is that the words of Scripture are to be understood in relation to the "res," the reality of things. The reality is the biblical narrative of God's revelation in Christ. The point is significant, for, as T. observes, this approach to exegesis rules out building up theological conceptions simply by the citation of biblical texts; only if the texts are related to the reality of which the Bible speaks will they be properly understood and used to construct theological arguments.

T. argues further that the reality about which they speak is always the living God, i.e. "what is." Which means that content, not method, is the key to interpretation. It also means that what the interpreter says must always be disciplined by the limits of divine revelation. (T. nicely introduces Calvin's idea that knowledge of God begins in obedience). Because our mind can never grasp anything "anterior to what God is in his own being," it continually bumps against the reality that God "is."

This book deserves careful reading by theologians as well as patristic scholars. T. understands that in the great formative period of Christian thought theology and biblical interpretation were one task, that without a knowledge of the reality of the living God revealed in Christ the Scriptures were simply a collection of stories and sayings that could be adapted and molded at the will and whim of the interpreter. This is a profound and timely theological admonition.

*University of Virginia, Charlottesville*

ROBERT L. WILKEN

**AUGUSTINE THE READER: MEDITATION, SELF-KNOWLEDGE, AND THE ETHICS OF INTERPRETATION.** By Brian Stock. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap/Harvard University, 1996. Pp. 463. \$39.95.

Good books on Augustine continue to be written in a surprising

number even now, some 1600 years after the bishop of Hippo returned to writing during his retreat at Cassiciacum in 396. Different authors approach Augustine's writings with diverse intellectual backgrounds; Stock brings to his study of Augustine the reader a wealth of literary theory and a sensitivity to language that makes this book a very valuable contribution to the growing number of good studies of Augustine's works. Anyone who reflects upon the central role played by reading in Augustine's account of his own life in the *Confessions* will realize that S. has found a topic central to that work. His book shows that the topic and theory of reading play a much more extensive role than one might suspect.

S.'s first part deals with *Confessions* 1-9 and provides a very enlightening reading of those "autobiographical" books, focusing upon Augustine's learning to speak and to read as a youngster, upon his education as reader, especially his encountering Cicero's *Hortensius*, and upon his contact through reading with the Manichees and the neo-Platonist philosophers. S. shows the role of reading in Augustine's own conversion and in the conversions of others he reports, such as those of Alypius, Victorinus, and Ponticianus, and the role of reading during his retreat at Cassiciacum in his prayerful recitation of the Psalms, as well as the transcendence of all spoken and written words in the vision of the life to come shared with Monica at Ostia.

The second part is entitled "The Ethics of Interpretation." Having worked through Augustine's account of his progress as a reader in *Confessions* 1-9, S. turns to the function served by the reading episodes in these books of the *Confessions*. Here he begins with the Letters and the Dialogues and then turns to a careful consideration of Augustine's small, but difficult works, *De dialectica* and *De magistro*, to study his theory of language and his theory of reading. He uses the latter half of *De utilitate credendi* as an introduction to two other works which further develop his theory of reading, namely, *De catechizandis rudibus* and *De doctrina christiana*. The remaining chapters return to the final books of both the *Confessions* and *De trinitate*. In both of these works Augustine takes up the topics of memory, time, the self, and the reformation of the self in relation to reading. These chapters are, to my mind, the richest and most valuable in the volume, though even in these chapters S.'s treatment of the last books of the *Confessions* was, I thought, superior to his handling of the later books of the *De trinitate*.

Despite the wealth of its insights and the soundness of the general thesis, the volume has some weaknesses. For example, S. seems to miss the philosophical point when he says of *De trinitate* 5, "It is incorrect to speak of anything's taking place in God's substance 'through an accident'" (248). He immediately presents a list of "such terms" and says that they "are 'names' given to aspects of the divine when the field of reference is temporal rather than eternal," though not everything seemingly said of God according to accident is said of God in relation to

some creature, nor does every relative predication refer to something temporal.

At times the translation of Augustine's Latin leaves something to be desired. For example, from *Sermo* 119.7 S. translates "Sicut ergo uerbum meum prolatum est sensui tuo, nec recessit a corde meo: sic illud uerbum prolatum est sensui nostro, nec recessit a patre suo" as "Just as my word, after being spoken, exists in your senses without leaving my mind, so the Word, when spoken, exists in the sense without leaving its father" (247); here even the theology of the Incarnation of the Word suffers from the odd translation.

There are other points on which S.'s interpretation of a particular text or understanding of a theme is debatable. For example, I think Augustine did more than "flirt" with the preexistence of souls and did so even after 389 (see 147). However, none of these debatable points undermine his main thesis that for Augustine reading, especially reading of the Scriptures, is a means of understanding one's past and of coming to redirect one's life, so that reading should be for us, as it was for him, a making or remaking of the self or of the text which is one's own life.

*Marquette University, Milwaukee*

ROLAND J. TESKE, S.J.

DIVINE GRACE AND HUMAN AGENCY: A STUDY OF THE SEMI-PELAGIAN CONTROVERSY. By Rebecca Harden Weaver. North American Patristic Society Monograph Series. Macon, Ga.: Mercer University, 1996. Pp. xii + 264. \$30.

The controversies of the Reformation period eventually resulted in a significant wave of Augustinian scholarship in the 17th century. Amid the debates of the Molinists, Jansenists, Calvinists, and others, the term semi-Pelagian was coined. Weaver recounts the history of the original controversy which took place in the century between 426 and 529. The problems began with the final writings of Augustine himself.

By the end of his life and his disputes with Pelagius and Julian of Eclanum, Augustine had developed his views of the sovereignty of grace to such an extreme that it seemed nearly impossible to find any meaningful place for human moral effort. Since monks were those who had dedicated their lives to precisely such efforts through prayer and asceticism, the views attributed to Augustine were, at the very least, disconcerting. The first to seek clarifications from him were monks from Augustine's own North Africa who perceived, to use W.'s words, a severing of the connection between the pattern of one's Christian life and the outcome of that life. To such readers, it seemed that the more Augustine wrote on the subjects of grace, predestination, and final perseverance, the less important human free will became. The older Eastern tradition, with its pattern of free will, merit, and final judgment, seemed to be reduced to "grace rewarding grace."

W. goes on to study the ideas of those who later entered the dispute. Such were some of the monks of southern Gaul who mirrored the ideas of Augustine's contemporary, John Cassian, the conduit for so much of the Eastern monastic tradition to the West. She is precise in delineating the ideas of later authors, the influences upon them, and how their own thoughts were modified in time. This is especially helpful for Prosper of Aquitaine, usually seen as a strict Augustinian defender. W. shows how in fact he modified his later views.

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*Catholic University of American, D.C.*

ROBERT B. ENO, S.S.

SCHOLASTIC HUMANISM AND THE UNIFICATION OF EUROPE 1: FOUNDATIONS. By R. W. Southern. Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1995. Pp. xxiii + 330. \$44.95.

This first of a projected three-volume study is the fruit of Southern's half-century of reflection and writing about the medieval thinkers who first developed systematic thought about God, man, and the universe.

This volume concentrates on early monastic thinkers and on masters of the cathedral schools of northern France, where this theology first found its focus, and especially Paris, where scholastic thought would realise its fullest development and influence theology even to our day.

The Introduction is a brilliant stand-alone essay on the aims and purposes of scholasticism and its enduring value to the Church and the world. But S.'s admiration for the scholastic achievement rarely extends beyond the early decades of the 14th century when, he believes, its proclivity for insoluble problems radically diminished its appeal. By that time, however, scholastic thought had already stabilized and systematized theology and law, the subjects of greatest importance for creating and maintaining an orderly, hopeful society, and produced works of the highest genius in Christian doctrine, devotion, art, and order.

The term "scholastic humanism," employed by S. since at least 1970, goes beyond both the commonplace sense of affirming what is human and Kristeller's sense of studying Greek and Latin literature to develop sensibility and style. Humanism for S. means pushing rational investigation into every branch of human life and cosmic being. Scholastics affirmed the supernatural as completing the natural world, not diminishing the scope of reason. The sharp change of emphasis after 1100 brought hope of human fulfilment through natural means that has lasted to the present. When Anselm "entered into the chamber of his mind" (1079), excluding everything except the word "God" and finding that the word articulated itself into a demonstration of God's necessary existence, this was a revolution and revelation of the powers that lay within the human mind. In the middle and at the end of his chronology, S. considers Aquinas and Dante as the two greatest representatives of the scholastic humanist tradition.

Rehearsing here his 1970 criticism of the "School of Chartres" thesis, S. contends that Paris alone had the infrastructure required to support several masters in different fields and many students from many lands. Paris, not Chartres, was the site of most of the teaching of John of Salisbury, William of Conches, Gilbert de la Porrée, Thierry of Chartres, and the two masters Bernard. This is no mere quibble, for the thesis of Chartrian leadership implies the antithesis of a Parisian anti-humanistic scholasticism, which S. sees as destroying a true understanding of scholastic thought. S. demonstrates here his mastery of the original sources. Regrettably he could not take into account Edouard Jauneau's *L'Age d'or des écoles de Chartres* (1995). For conditions in Paris, he might likewise consider the works of Stephen Ferruolo (1985, 1988).

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Even the best books have minor flaws. Here S. repeats (and sometimes more than once) matters that he has previously established. He confuses the Paris churches of S.-Séverin and S.-Mathurin. Typos are rare: O'Connell/O'Donnell (xiv), Wortkoncordanz/Wortkonkordanz (xvi), Chalchidius/Calchidius (79), know/known (88.23), the Augustine/Augustine (276 n. 12.11)—listed here in the event of a reprint. None of this detracts from the interest and importance of this lucid, personal view of scholasticism by a master historian. Readers interested in the history of culture and knowledge will keenly anticipate the volumes to follow.

*Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval  
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voiced between theology and mysticism, by which theology became an acquired science accessible to human intellect and the once common and everyday experience of the mystic became a rarified "mystical experience," leading to a psychologizing rather than theological approach to the mystical. If Denis the Carthusian in the 15th century still firmly resisted this experientialization of mysticism, and even if John of the Cross's "'dark nights' are the metaphors not of experience, but of a dialectical *critique* of experientialist tendencies," John's very real "psychologizing and experientializing approach to mysticism (226-27). "'Experientialism' in its most extreme forms is therefore the displacement of a sense of the negativity of all religious experience with the pursuit of some goal of achieving *negative experiences*. Experientialism is, in short, the 'positivism' of Christian spirituality. It abhors the experiential vacuum of the apophatic, rushing to fill it with the plenum of the psychologistic" (259). Even Bernard McGinn's definition of mysticism as the consciousness of the immediate presence of God and of apophasis as consciousness of God's absence must be trimmed to fit T.'s procrustean anti-experientialism (262-65).

T.'s goal is to call readers of medieval mystics back to a nonexperientializing reading of the *apophatic* mystics, a reading recognizing that even apophasis was "couched in terms descriptive of the rhythms of common religious ritual," in the everyday and ordinary (258): "theology in so far as it is theology is 'mystical' and in so far as it is 'mystical' it is theology" (265).

This is certainly a commendable project. Much of what T. reports as surprising insights are in fact commonplaces in secondary studies of medieval contemplative literature. E.g., his conclusion that "the apophatic in theology is simply the product of a properly understood cataphaticism and that we reach the point at which the apophatic begins by means of the comprehensiveness of our affirmations, whose combined and mutually cancelling forces crack open the surface of language" (33) is solid, but not at all new. Denis the Carthusian's list of mystical authorities (213-14) was neither the first of its kind nor the last during the Middle Ages; he and others of his era were self-consciously aware that mystical theology was simply a matter of commentary on the greatest of all *theologians*, Pseudo-Denis, and drew up their lists accordingly.

The valuable insights in the book are gems in the rough—glimpses of specific and technical interpretations of specific aspects of the writers T. has studied. Unfortunately, in order to find them, one has to fight against a convoluted pattern of exposition. All too often T. tells us it would be an exaggeration or an oversimplification to say such and such, then proceeds to take us part-way in that direction, before turning around and telling us where he really wants to go.

This book lives up to its dust-jacket billing as a "timely and important" and "exciting" book for those who come to it from a vague modern

quest for "mystical experience." Those already familiar with medieval mystical texts on their own terms will occasionally find their labors repaid with new insights.

*Loyola University, Chicago*

DENNIS D. MARTIN

POWER, GENDER AND CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM. By Grace M. Jantzen. Cambridge Studies in Ideology and Religion. New York: Cambridge University, 1995. Pp. xvii + 384. \$64.95; \$18.95.

Building on the work of M. Foucault, Jantzen criticizes the essentialist viewpoint of many philosophers of religion, arguing instead for an understanding of mysticism as a socially constructed phenomenon that changed over time, and in ways that were intimately linked with struggles of power and gender and therefore of justice. Noting connections between mystical knowledge of God and claims to authority, she concludes that spirituality and mystical experience have come to be acknowledged as part of *women's* religiosity in direct proportion to the perceived decline of religion/mysticism in public and political importance" (xv, 24, 326).

Six of the book's nine chapters trace the genealogy of the social construction of mysticism. In the mystery religions from which Christian mysticism emerged, mysticism named those parts of initiation rites that were kept secret. In the early Church, influenced by neo-Platonism, mysticism was linked with the deeper meaning of the Scriptures and sacraments. Medieval mysticism, whether of the cognitive or affective varieties, focused on experience—and for women especially, often of a visionary nature, that was later suppressed. Mysticism was also associated with bodily control, taking the form of denial of food and sexuality and the practice of enclosure. Finally, J. examines the fate of heretics whom she calls "mystics who failed" (244). She argues that these constructions privileged intellect and denied bodiliness in ways that consistently marginalized and/or penalized women.

J. also criticizes what she perceives as serious problems in recent philosophical analyses of mysticism: a presumption of neutrality and objectivity with its attendant lack of interest in postmodern concerns (e.g. power, authority, gender); the tendency in this literature to ignore primary sources; the failure to inquire about the social structures that generate anxiety and oppression from which many in Western society seek relief through engagement in various religious movements; and ignoring the ways in which mysticism came to be understood as privatized, "depoliticized" consciousness. In a chapter on "The Language of Ineffability," J. traces this narrowing, individualistic trend from Kant through William James to Evelyn Underhill. She posits that when the mystics spoke of ineffability they were referring to God, not to the limits of human experience or language as is the case with contemporary philosophers. While these criticisms may hold for philosophical analyses of mysticism, they are less true for any number of historical

treatments of medieval women mystics that cover similar territory. J.'s criticisms need to be viewed in this larger, interdisciplinary context.

This book calls readers to a renewed hermeneutics of suspicion vis-à-vis contemporary philosophical treatments of mysticism; to fresh insight into the ways our ideas about mysticism have changed, and why; and to a deeper appreciation of the role of gender and power in these changes. For these reasons, it is a fine complement to major studies on mysticism such as Bernard McGinn's *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism* (1991, 1994).

There are a number of ways in which this volume could be strengthened. E.g., it addresses such a wide range of issues that the focus becomes blurred at points. And J. does not escape a certain polemical tone in her discussions of the differences between male and female expressions of mystical experience and of mysticism's various constructed meanings. While she rejects the theory of conspiracy against women as an explanation of the phenomena she examines, she repeatedly suggests conscious intent to marginalize and suppress women in the interest of ecclesiastical control. At times she also projects post-modern consciousness onto medieval women mystics and finds them either wanting or heroic—the very thing for which she criticizes her colleagues. At one point J. says of Hildegard of Bingen that “it is necessary to keep in mind how strongly she herself was male-identified and part of the male-identified church, how thoroughly she despised her own sex . . . and how much her authority depended on the oppression of women in general. It would in many respects be more accurate to see Hildegard as a prototype token woman than as a twelfth-century feminist” (171)! J.'s argument would also benefit from analysis of the differences between legitimate and illegitimate use of authority in church and society, and of how the ecclesial community makes judgments about the truth or falsity of religious experience.

Overall, this volume is a rich and provocative contribution to the philosophical discussion of mysticism. It raises historical, philosophical, theological, linguistic, and gender-related issues that will be revisited again and again, and we can only be grateful to J. for entering into and furthering this conversation.

*Hamden, Connecticut*

ELIZABETH A. DREYER

KIERKEGAARD AS RELIGIOUS THINKER. By David J. Gouwens. New York: Cambridge University, 1996. Pp. xv + 248. \$54.95; 17.95.

Gouwens rightly insists that we read Kierkegaard as a whole. Accordingly he draws on the religious discourses Kierkegaard published under his own name simultaneously with the pseudonymous works and those later discourses R. Perkins has called the “second authorship” as much as on more familiar works like *Either/Or*, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, and *Sickness Unto Death*. The result (but this was the original intention) is a very strong case in support of Kierke-

gaard's claim that his entire authorship has a religious purpose. To call him a religious thinker is not to deny that he is also a wonderfully gifted poet and philosopher; it is only to recognize that his writings place these gifts in the service, not of theology, but of faith.

Furthermore, I know of no other book that presents such a sustained argument for the thesis that subjectivity is not subjectivism for Kierkegaard (or his pseudonyms), that he insists on the importance of the "what" as well as the "how," and that the voluntaristic relativism sometimes attributed to him is a myth of careless reading. This accurate view enables G. to place Kierkegaard within the mainstream of the Christian tradition rather than on its fringes, both in terms of the content of historic orthodoxy and in terms of the patristic and pietistic insistence that the truth is to be lived and not just believed.

G. is a student of Paul Holmer. This means that the philosophical partner for reading Kierkegaard is neither the existentialists nor the postmodernists who often play this role, but Wittgenstein. The reading that results all but completely ignores the dialogue with postmodernism and presents a Kierkegaard whose differences from Heidegger and Sartre are more basic than the continuities. The two tendencies of contemporary theory G. finds most helpful in reading Kierkegaard are narrative conceptions of the self (in Kierkegaard, the self as task and the self as becoming) and virtue ethics (in Kierkegaard, the emphasis on the shaping of the passions). The self is free and responsible in such processes of becoming, but *pace* some existentialisms, the self is not constituted by isolated, arbitrary acts of choice.

The heart of this book, Chapters 4–6, presents the gift and task of becoming a Christian in terms of the "theological" virtues: faith, hope, and love. The earlier, preparatory chapters spell out the larger context in Kierkegaard's writings for his account of these virtues. The first concerns the diagnosis of the diseases of reflection (excessive objectivity) characteristic of the age (and not just of Hegelian speculation). The second concerns Kierkegaard's psychology (or anthropology) and the tricky methodological issues involved in the notion that psychology is a distinct discipline from theology but cannot be theologically neutral. The third concerns the virtue ethics that properly overcomes the detachment of esthetic and speculative reflection and the rethinking of the virtue tradition required by the generic religiousness that Johannes Climacus calls Religiousness A. The concluding chapter concerns the social and communal aspects of Kierkegaard's thoughts. G. joins the new majority that rejects atomistic and asocial readings of the corpus in favor of the intersubjective and social concerns that come to the fore most clearly (but not exclusively) in the "second" authorship. Here, as always, G. gives a judicious and balanced account, so much so that the radical nature of Kierkegaard's ideology critique and utopian vision of community doesn't really come through.

G. brings the right preparation to his task. He knows the history of Christian theology, both classical and contemporary, and is able to

make illuminating comparisons on a regular basis. He knows the entire Kierkegaardian corpus and a very large chunk of the secondary literature and draws effectively on both. Finally, he knows his Wittgenstein, his narrative theory, and his virtue ethics, and he is able to use these to bring real illumination to the Kierkegaardian texts. Writing gracefully and graciously, he gives us a splendid account of what is sometimes called Religiousness C, Kierkegaard's account of becoming a Christian once he gets beyond his polemic with Plato, Lessing, and Hegel.

*Fordham University, New York*

MEROLD WESTPHAL

ROMANTICISM AND THE ANGLICAN NEWMAN. By David Goslee. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University, 1996. Pp. xiv + 357. \$44.95.

A bold study that may shock devoted disciples of Newman or baffle faint-hearted scholars. Its imaginative reach is breathtaking and its academic accomplishment is outstanding. Goslee presents an exciting case for constructively engaging (despite widespread protestations to the contrary) our contemporary age with Romanticism and for reinterpreting the Anglican Newman (despite Newman's persistent denials) as uncannily Romantic. Briefly, G. suggests that our age may be more similar to Newman's than we suspect and that Newman's agenda was not as alien to his own age as he thought.

G. applies his training in prose and poetry, rhetoric and composition to his critical analysis of subtexts (that is, text that is inconsistent with the explicit text) within Newman's writings. His unusual study should become a landmark in Newman scholarship, both with regard to his argument and to his method. To read this book perceptively, especially to appreciate its intricate conceptual development, it is crucial to understand the critical nuances in G.'s method. His hermeneutic strategy combines traditional chronology with discontinuous deconstruction. This strategy unveils the progression in Newman's concepts that yield unforeseen conclusions and also subvert and redirect Newman's thought, especially as a controversialist. This method enables G. to focus upon Newman's subtexts, demonstrating their cogency and direction independent of context or intention, thereby generating a fascinating reinterpretation of Newman.

G.'s goal is to rescue Newman from historical, theological, and intellectual marginalization by restoring him to cultural centrality in 19th-century England. G. first offers an astute study of Newman's renunciation of modern thought by exploring the emphasis upon his autonomy in childhood relations with family and friends, by tracing his recourse to patristic spirituality to reject secular trends, and by discussing his reshaping of historical and spiritual realities which he claimed to discover. Next, G. provides a perceptive analysis of the dialogic Romanticism in Newman's writings that expand his key notions. Conscience realigns self and God in a process of mutual redefi-

nition. This quasi-Romantic synthesis is crucial for understanding his emphasis upon spiritual identity, his conviction of personal election, his subjective approach to divine providence, and the interaction between his self-consciousness, self-criticism, and social criticism. Finally, G. argues that there was a progressive collapse of this synthesis because of Newman's religious setbacks in the early 1840s combined with invasive realities that challenged his image of God, eventually leading to his conversion to Catholicism.

This is a controversial study whose originality will elicit reaction and comment from the many disciplines that G. engages courageously and with interdisciplinary dexterity. The notes provide fascinating resources for further study in many fields, and there is an impressive bibliography and an excellent index.

*Saint Louis University*

GERARD MAGILL

KARL BARTH'S CRITICALLY REALISTIC DIALECTICAL THEOLOGY: ITS GENESIS AND DEVELOPMENT 1909–1936. By Bruce L. McCormack. New York: Oxford University, 1995. Pp. xx + 499. \$65.

This is an extraordinarily important volume for understanding the premier Protestant theologian of the 20th century. It subjects to devastating critical scrutiny the commonly received interpretation of the development of Barth's thought, and it introduces the English-speaking theological public to the current state of Barth scholarship in Germany, including such leading Barth scholars as I. Spieckermann, M. Beintker, W. Ruschke, and H. Anzinger, whose work is largely unknown in the U.S. In addition, the book is noteworthy for its thorough treatment of Barth's early break with liberalism and the developments leading up to it, and its full account of the neglected first edition of the Romans commentary, which has never been translated into English.

Barth's theology is "critically realistic" and "dialectical" in emphasizing the dialectic of veiling and unveiling in God's revelation. God unveils himself by veiling himself in creaturely form—in the Incarnation and in human language. We cannot focus on the creaturely form as such, nor can we somehow get beyond it and try to capture the divine content by itself. Instead, the divine content asserts itself in and through the creaturely form. It is a divine miracle, not a human possibility.

The standard interpretation of Barth's theological development distinguishes sharply between the "early Barth" (the period of his "dialectical" theology, epitomized by the second edition of his Romans commentary), and the "later Barth" (the Barth of the *Church Dogmatics*, for whom the dialectical method has been replaced by what Hans Urs von Balthasar called the "turn to analogy"). In presenting his "genetic-historical" treatment of Barth's development, however, M. succeeds in relativizing the sharp distinctions others have seen (e.g. between Ro-



mans I and Romans II, or between Barth's earlier and later dogmatics), emphasizing instead the continuities in Barth's thought from Romans I right through to the end. In contrast to the dominant interpretation, M. claims that Barth always remained a dialectical theologian.

M. challenges the usual view of the decisive importance of Barth's book on Anselm, which is credited with enabling Barth to move beyond a dialectical method (where every theological statement must be balanced by its opposite in order to point to the ineffable truth that lies beyond the antithesis) to a more positive statement. He sees the turn, to the extent that there is one, happening earlier, and he finds nothing in the Anselm book that suggests any decisive influence. Balthasar's error, according to M., was to identify dialectic with a dialectical method. It is not dialectic as a theological method that marks Barth as a dialectical theologian, but the "real" dialectic of veiling and unveiling in divine revelation.

M. stresses the importance of the Göttingen Dogmatics, Barth's first series of lectures on systematic theology. These lectures, dating from 1924 but not published until after Barth's death, prepare the way for the subsequent *Christian Dogmatics* of 1927 and the magisterial *Church Dogmatics* from 1932 on. M. shows how much of the later theological stance was already in place in the Göttingen lectures. One is struck with the continuity rather than the discontinuity of the three dogmatic efforts. Placed in that series, the *Christian Dogmatics* and the *Church Dogmatics* are not nearly as different as commonly supposed. Barth himself tended to exaggerate the newness of his most recent work, beginning with the second edition of the Romans commentary. It served his purposes to stress the discontinuity between the two published versions of the prolegomena because of the deterioration of his relations with his erstwhile colleagues in the "dialectical theology" movement of the 1920s and because of changes in the political situation in Germany in the early 1930s.

In any case, M. believes it is a mistake to look to methodology to explain Barth's development. Barth was never primarily interested in methodological questions but in the subject matter of theology itself. Changes in his methodology resulted from theological decisions. The process was complete by 1936. M. chooses that year as his *terminus ad quem* because Barth's new understanding of the doctrine of election enabled him to operate with a fully christological approach to theology.

This book strikes a blow at the "neo-orthodox" view of Barth—an interpretation which misses the continuing dialectical character of his theology. From now on, any reading of Barth that does not take M.'s work into account will risk perpetuating distortions that have now been shown to be without foundation.

HISTORY OF VATICAN II, VOL. 1: ANNOUNCING AND PREPARING VATICAN COUNCIL II. TOWARD A NEW ERA IN CATHOLICISM. Edited by Giuseppe Alberigo and Joseph A. Komonchak. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis; and Leuven: Peeters, 1995. Pp. xviii + 527.

This is the first of five volumes. There will be one for each session of the council. Volume 1 describes the work of the antepreparatory and preparatory phases. Alberigo is the general editor, and Komonchak the special editor of the American edition. Five authors are represented: Alberigo for the preface, the announcement of the council, and the conclusion, Etienne Fouilloux for the antepreparatory period, Komonchak for the preparatory period, José Oscar Beozzo for the external climate, and Klaus Wittstadt for the eve of the council. An index of names and an index of subjects end the book. Extensive bibliographical references are given in the footnotes. Unfortunately for most readers, there is no further identification of the contributors.

The authors are competent and the quality of the work is high. Having myself worked as consultant to the Secretariat for Christian Unity (where Cardinal Bea made no distinction between members and consultants), I have learned many details about what the other conciliar commissions were doing before the formal opening of the first session.

Yet the book contains a number of mistakes that some readers will not consider minor. Thus Hans Küng is identified as German instead of Swiss (375), and Mossadegh is placed in Iraq instead of Iran (388). The journalist Frank Bernard (468) of *La Croix*, was in reality François Bernard. The Secretariat for Christian Unity did not compose "a second schema on the sources of revelation" (427), but one on the Word of God (as on 272) and another on Scripture and tradition (as on 277). Some characterizations would need further explanations. Thus Cardinals Liénart, Frings, and Alfrink are classified as "relatively open-minded," but Montini, Suenens, and Döpfner as "individuals of open mind" (447); the difference is not explained or justified. Another questionable point is that "Especially in North America, Irish influence probably led to a positive judgment on *De fontibus*" (428).

It is difficult in this kind of book to avoid duplications, to keep the proper balance everywhere, and to make sure that the chapters complement one another harmoniously. The last chapter tends to get lost in details, some of which are of no theological relevance, like the number of bishops who flew from Frankfurt or changed planes there on October 7 (494)! This chapter is more thorough concerning Germany than about other countries. It tells us where many council fathers were lodged, though not all (Suenens's residence with the Brothers of the Christian Schools is omitted).

As a participant in several of the events under study, I may add some missing details or precisions. The first draft on Judaism that was discussed in April and August by the Secretariat for Unity has a more complex history than is described here (270). Not only Gregory Baum

and John Oesterreicher contributed to it. Oesterreicher had formed an unofficial group that worked with him, discussing ideas and drafting on the interpretation of St. Paul's doctrine on the status of Jews after the coming of the Messiah Jesus. Abbot Leo Rudloff and I were part of this group. We met several times in New Jersey and it was after these meetings that Oesterreicher finalized the report. The subcommission on liturgical questions of the Secretariat for Unity (268) never met; but the members were invited by the chair, Cardinal Martin of Rouen, to send him ideas for an eventual report. Martin simply took my response to his invitation and made it the subcommission's report. There had been no collaboration with the Liturgical Commission. Regarding tradition and Scripture, my book *Holy Writ or Holy Church* (1959) should be mentioned (275 n. 2), for it was a major ingredient in the discussion, even before Congar's *La Tradition et les traditions* came out. In the Secretariat I was the one who made the "early proposal" (276) that the subcommission on the Word of God examine the question of Scripture and tradition. It was vetoed by the chair of the subcommission, Professor Volk (soon afterwards bishop of Mainz), who thought the question insufficiently mature for a conciliar statement. Had my suggestion been followed, the Secretariat would not have had to form belatedly another subcommission on tradition and Scripture as a reaction to the all-but-finished draft *De fontibus* of the Theological Commission. As noted (277), the report of this subcommission arrived too late to influence the text *De fontibus*, though it may have influenced the negative judgment of most bishops on the value of this text.

The authors do not conceal the basic problem that plagued the preparation of the council. This problem came from the Janus-like mind of John XXII, who appointed officials of the Roman curia to supervise the antepreparatory work and to chair most of the preparatory commissions, while he himself spoke more and more frequently and fervently of the coming council in ways that were completely at odds with the views that Cardinal Ottaviani was incorporating into the texts that were being composed. In the long run it was the pastoral openness of the pope that generally, if not universally, prevailed, thanks to the majority of the bishops and to Paul VI. But the painful process of extracting the council from the stronghold of the curia broke the confidence of many Catholics in the Roman leadership of the Church. The persisting crisis of authority that seems to get worse as the end of the century approaches is an unexpected but hardly surprising result of the wavering of Pope John.

*Assumption Center, Brighton, Mass.*

GEORGE H. TAVARD

CHRISTIAN HERMENEUTICS: PAUL RICOEUR AND THE REFIGURING OF THEOLOGY. By James Fodor. New York: Oxford/Clarendon Press, 1995. Pp. xiv + 370. \$65.

Fodor probes the possibility of enriching constructive theology

through the textual hermeneutics of Ricoeur. He starts with the premise that for most people theology can be dismissed because theology seems incapable of dealing with the truth question. To put it in his own words, "The woeful lack of credence accorded to theology in our time is due, at least in part, to theology's devaluing of the referential import of its own discourse" (332). F. reckons that theology ought to be more than an incommensurable language game and requires more than Frei's intratextual meaning. It must give an account of an extralinguistic state of affairs. He looks to Ricoeur's hermeneutical philosophy to mediate such an exploration of the truth-telling or the referential capacity of theology.

As the concept "truth telling" suggests, F. perceives theology to be preeminently practical. He acknowledges the lack of development of a Christian theory of truth and finds the theoretic formulations of truth in the classical philosophical accounts such as correspondence, coherence, and pragmatics to be insufficient for theological accounts. As formulated by F., the theological notion of truth—as the end goal of reference—requires a community (35) and is to be oriented to the authentic participation in a way of life. Christian truth is "instantiated in particular forms of life, in specific practices, behavior, attitudes and ways of thinking" (62). Its truth as a practical truth is best reflected in truthfulness and faithfulness, that is, in the practical stance of a believer towards a person.

The notion of reference is derived from the German philosopher Frege and articulates the capacity of language to go beyond itself to describe a state of affairs of the world. A practical theology, focussed on reference, supposes that the vehicle to explore practical truthfulness is language. F. has turned to Ricoeur's hermeneutics because Ricoeur has examined at length the referential force of language. In the 60s and early 70s Ricoeur sought to fend off the structuralist thesis according to which there was no outside of the text. F. traces the development of the notion of reference in Ricoeur's writings as a response to structuralism. He then shows how subsequently Ricoeur refines the understanding of reference in metaphor and narrative. Poetic or metaphorical reference operates centripetally, forging an indirect reference. This notion of an indirect reference where language creates a nondescriptive or a nonostensive referent is fruitful for theology for this type of reference operates in biblical, if not in theological, language. F. succeeds well in showing how Ricoeur has innovatively married form and content in the biblical genres to reveal the Name of God as the biblical referent. This approach to the idea of revelation has been welcomed by a number of theologians. F. gives a fine and highly readable interpretation of this contribution to biblical theology.

This work is commendable inasmuch as it draws theology into a fresh and potentially innovative examination of its functioning as a practical discipline. But I believe that F., following the lead Ricoeur gives in his more recent writings, could have gone further. In the final

chapter he applies the result of his analysis to explore the referentiality of biblical language in the quest for the historical Jesus. This limitation on the outcome of reference to what appears to me a theoretical issue in theology might have been overcome if F. had adopted more wholeheartedly Ricoeur's shift of terminology from reference to refiguration. On more than one occasion in his later works Ricoeur has declared his preference for the concept of refiguration, dropping the language of reference, because refiguration expresses better the capacity of narratives to have an innovative effect on human initiative. F. does not fully explore the potential of this terminological shift, which meant a move away from text to action, a move beyond the linguistic turn, attesting to the primacy of human action over language. The title of Ricoeur's 1986 collection of articles, *Du texte à l'action*, says it all. Truth telling in theology as a refiguration of human action and passion has more to do with testimony, initiative, and the practical competency to live Christian faith than with the historical or nonhistorical referentiality of biblical narrative. This potential of Ricoeur's practical hermeneutics for theology needs largely to be worked out yet.

*Saint Paul University, Ottawa*

JOHN VAN DEN HENGEL, S.C.J.

HANDBOOK OF CATHOLIC THEOLOGY. Edited by Wolfgang Beinert and Francis Schüssler Fiorenza. Translated from the German by Paul Duggan et al. New York: Crossroad, 1995. Pp. xiv + 783. \$75.

Its comprehensive title notwithstanding, readers of this manual should not expect entries on topics in moral, historical or pastoral theology. This is an English translation of Beinert's *Lexikon der katholischen Dogmatik* (1987), a reference work of dogmatic theology in which the material is arranged alphabetically and viewed from a particularly Catholic perspective.

The Catholic historical consciousness that displaced neo-Scholasticism at Vatican II has given rise to several dictionaries and encyclopedias expressly intended to present English readers with broad overviews of postconciliar Catholic theology in all its frequently dismaying pluralism. Unlike the *New Dictionary of Theology* (1987) edited by Joseph Komonchak et al., this book is not primarily intended for preachers or teachers at the secondary or college levels; it is more appropriate for use at the graduate level. Unlike the *HarperCollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism* (1955) with its 4,200 entries and scores of contributors, this is substantially the work of eleven German theologians, each responsible for a particular tract of Catholic dogmatic theology. More comparable to this handbook is the *Systematic Theology: Roman Catholic Perspectives* (1991) edited by Fiorenza and John Galvin but arranged according to tracts. An even better analogue is Ludwig Ott's preconciliar *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma*, the vademecum on both sides of the Atlantic not only of professors but of seminarians and graduate students.

Perhaps a tour de force like Ott's is no longer possible for one theologian. Beinert, a professor at the University of Regensburg, enlisted ten other German theologians to join him in subdividing and contributing essays in their areas of specialization. Most of the contributors are not well known in the U.S.

What one encounters here are eleven tracts: foundational theology; God; creation; theological anthropology; Christology/soteriology; Mariology; ecclesiology; pneumatology; grace; sacraments; and eschatology. Although I personally would have preferred to see the tracts maintained intact in eleven chapters, B. or his publisher preferred a lexical arrangement. The German edition, however, conveniently provides a table of contents that overviews the eleven themes and identifies the subdivisions or entries to be found under each. Thus one is able to piece together an entire tract and all that a particular author contributed to a topic. For some reason that escapes me, this English edition omits this table of contents and thereby diminishes the usefulness of the volume for readers who might want more than a succinct treatment of a single concept.

The National Council of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Doctrine recently faulted Richard McBrien's *Catholicism* for giving insufficient weight to magisterial teaching and treating the teaching of popes and theologians as "just another voice" alongside those of private theologians. The accusation has been leveled at other earlier works like the volume by Anthony Kosnik et al., *Human Sexuality* (1977). B. astutely eludes such criticism by requiring that each entry adhere to the same pattern. After a brief definition of a concept, there follow the same five sections: biblical background; history of theology; church teaching; ecumenical perspectives; and systematic reflections. Thus, to the satisfaction of doctrinal committees, magisterial teaching is clearly delineated from contemporary theological opinion. But at the same time, contemporary theological interpretation and ecumenical differences also receive their fair consideration, and the entire volume is given a unity it would not otherwise enjoy.

Well over 90 percent of this handbook is the work of B. and his German collaborators, with a focus that is decidedly, though not unexpectedly, European. Fiorenza helped prepare the English edition by enlisting a team of American theologians to join him in writing some five pages of "contemporary issues" for each of the eleven tracts treated. Fiorenza also appears primarily responsible for preparing the bibliographies after each entry, replacing the German works with English titles. The only difficulty with this reasonable modification is that an allusion made to a title found in the German bibliography may well be omitted in the English, e.g. the reference to G. Greshake on satisfaction theory (649). The reader must look up the German original to find the reference.

This is to cavil, however, about what is unquestionably a real service to English readers of theology for whom German is an intimidating even if not impossible challenge. The biblical, historical, and ecumeni-

cal sections in each entry make this a valuable reference tool for more than Catholic theologians. Over 50 tables and charts, most of which appear to be by B. make this an attractive tool for anyone teaching theology at the graduate level. F. gives credit to Frank Oveis for initiating the idea for an English edition of this volume. Both deserve to be congratulated. Seminarians and graduate students in theology have good reason to thank them, particularly when it comes time for comprehensive examinations.

*Saint Louis University*

RONALD MODRAS

GOD, CREATION, AND CONTEMPORARY PHYSICS. By Mark William Worthing. *Theology and the Sciences*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996. Pp. vii + 260.

Worthing sets forth clearly and extensively the whole panoply of 20th-century progress in the physical sciences. If one is in need of a not-too-technical rundown of modern physics and cosmology—and the metaphysical and theological problems that seemingly arise—one has it here in abundance: the Big Bang, the design argument from initial conditions, indeterminism, chaos theory, the anthropic principle, the future of the physical universe. Along with the facts comes a lot of speculation by some leading lights of the scientific community (Hawking, Wheeler, Dyson, Tipler) whom W. approaches with courteous respect, even though some of their theories, e.g. plural universes, are unwarranted by the *scientific* facts. W., as befits a teacher at a Lutheran seminary in Adelaide, never for an instant forgets that there is a wide gap between what the scientists are saying about God-as-Creator and the transcendent God of Christian thought. Love is not exactly a given in scientific thought.

For, unhappily, scientists who wrestle with philosophical or theological implications (which is a positive gain in itself) are equating their concept of God with the God of the deists, unaware that theology has dismissed the divine clockmaker as a diminished and misleading metaphor for the Creator and Sustainer. The universe may have been sent on its way 15 billion years ago, but simply to equate the Big Bang with the loving and creative act of God is to do injustice to the latter. The freely given act of creation, theologically speaking, is coterminous with the life of the universe, not something that is operative merely at the beginning of time. Hawking, Davies, and others who make this inadequate identification are missing seriously a major part of the argument for God's existence. The universe is contingent throughout its existence and contingency needs explanation.

Some of W.'s chapter headings alone illustrate just how far he is prepared to set the discussion ground firmly in the purview of the new scientist-philosophers: Is God still active in the universe? Did God create the universe out of nothing? One has the feeling throughout the book that W.'s main audience is largely that of the scientific community which is being advised that the concept of God so frequently in

dulged in by the natural theologians of today is not that of 2000 years of Christian reflection. Even so, theologians in search of the scientific background of the debate will profit by this scholarly book which clearly gives the scientific facts before considering any metaphysical speculation arising out of them.

W. points out the dangers of the ongoing dialogue. Too much emphasis on the transcendence of God leads to the isolation of the universe as a valueless field of study; too much emphasis on the immanence of God leads to the reduction of God to a mere metaphor for physical reality. Also there is a very strong temptation for both scientists and theologians to use and confuse the metaphors of each other's discipline. Tipler's latest book includes a theory of the final resurrection of everybody based on pure physics. Pannenberg has appropriated field theory for his exploration of the Holy Spirit in a manner which some regard as dangerous. Theology evolves, but so does science—at an alarming rate. The Big Bang is almost universally established, but who can tell what the latest story will be in another hundred years? Quantum physics has had a phenomenal success, but then so did Newtonian physics. Scientific truth is always partial truth. The best that one can hope for in the science-theology debate is not identity but consonance; but that is something worth striving for.

With this in mind, W. makes a welcome addition to scholars such as Polkinghorne, Torrance, Russell, McMullin, and Peacocke, who, as committed Christians, welcome all new scientific advances into God's creation.

*Concordia University, Montreal*

MARK DOUGHTY

THE STRUGGLE FOR THEOLOGY'S SOUL: CONTESTING SCRIPTURE IN CHRISTOLOGY. By William M. Thompson. New York: Crossroad, 1996. Pp. xii + 310. \$39.95.

Thompson addresses a pressing issue in contemporary Christology: How is the Bible a source for and the *norma normans* of theological inquiries into the person and work of Jesus Christ? His answer brings together the actual practice of biblical interpretation and reflection on the method that has emerged in this endeavor—a “pneumatic” or “participatory” hermeneutics, characterized by its “noninvasiveness.”

In his prelude and postlude, T. reminds us that Scripture possesses many levels of meaning through which God's word is spoken. To attend to the full significance of biblical texts, T. adopts what he calls a “family practice” approach to exegesis and theology that unites a range of scholarly disciplines. Three proposals guide his work: that Christology entails a “struggle” or “contest” over the true meaning of the Bible; that Christology and biblical studies are two aspects of a single inquiry into divine revelation; and that this kind of inquiry demands a “meditative” form. Guided by these proposals, the body of the book is a series of inquiries/meditations in response to a primary question: What does Scripture teach us about Christology?



At the risk of distortion, I will succinctly state some aspects of T.'s answer to that focal question. The Hebrew Psalms play a role in Christology by initiating us into the deepest aspirations and questions of the human heart and also into the meditative process that is required if we want to delve into the mystery of Christ. Each of the Synoptic Gospels teaches us crucial aspects of Christology. Matthew shows that we must participate in the Church, if we are to know the person and work of Christ. According to Mark, our knowledge of Christ comes only with the challenge of living as his disciples. Luke highlights how we may discover Christ through a dialectic of participation and distance in our relation to God in the Holy Spirit. John demonstrates that an inquiry into the mystery of Jesus Christ must unfold in relation to critical reflection on the mystery of the triune God. Wisdom Literature, especially Proverbs, contributes to Christology by inviting us to take up new issues, e.g. the function of feminine images in our understanding of Christ, the Spirit, and God. Biblical texts that present Jesus Christ's saving work include those that convey a notion of exchange or substitution (Romans 8:3; Galatians 3:13; 2 Corinthians 5:21). Although we may judge today that the term "substitution" is no longer adequate, we must find ways to speak about the reality to which this word has referred within the Church's rich christological tradition.

Along with returning to biblical texts that have played major roles in theology, we should also consider neglected portions of Scripture. Ready to assist us in this selection and interpretation of texts are the Church's "cloud of witnesses," its saints and spiritual writers (e.g. the French School of spirituality). In light of their writings, T. considers anew biblical testimony to the infancy of Jesus in Matthew and Luke. These passages attest that a sense of wonder and a readiness to listen, especially to the voices of the vulnerable and victims, can lead us to a better appreciation of God's saving work in Jesus Christ.

T. concludes by reflecting on what his inquiries/meditations have shown. One of his observations is that a Christology rooted in Scripture requires the self-involvement of its writer and readers. He also points out that this kind of Christology must be meditative (i.e., narrative) in imitation of biblical testimony. For this reason, my terse, flat summaries above risk distorting what is better expressed in T.'s more imaginative, self-involving discourse.

This synthetic book exhibits what it advocates. While respecting the differences among academic disciplines, it displays how scholarly specialties can work together in order to shed light on the person and work of Jesus Christ. Along with extensive and judicious use of the Bible, it draws on trustworthy exegesis, historical theology, systematic theology, and spiritual writings. It would contribute well to upper level courses in biblical hermeneutics as well as in Christology.

**RAISING ABEL: THE RECOVERY OF THE ESCHATOLOGICAL IMAGINATION.** By James Alison. New York: Crossroad, 1996. Pp. 203. \$19.95.

Alison argues for the recovery of the eschatological imagination, utilizing the cultural studies of R. Girard. His leitmotif is the enjoinder to follow Christ's example of fixing our minds on things that are above (Colossians 3:2). Once demythologized, the heavenly "above" is not just celestial topography but the merciful love of God pouring down into the here and now. Creative contact with this "above" results in the redirection of deficient desires through an unmasking of scapegoating mechanisms in church and society. We are acculturated to be creatures of imitative desire (A. even speaks of "socialized hypnosis"), coveting that which others want for themselves. Violence erupts when the imitative desires of persons or groups are frustrated. Individuals become arbitrarily labeled as unclean, are cast to the margins of the group, and even tortured.

A. contends that Jesus' eschatological imagination, expressive of God's love for and in the person of an innocent victim, interrupts the murderous cycle of violence. By giving us the vision of an open heaven with the risen victim, Jesus subverts mythological fears of cosmic clashes (apocalypticism), social revolutions, and secular programs for the progressive liberalization of society all at once. He allows victims to create divine paternity for themselves and to experience the Holy Spirit as their defense attorney (paraclete). Most importantly, he nourishes our imagination so that we too can envision a God who will not just rescue us from the artificial status of victimhood but will enliven our passions "to be seduced by the beauty and joy that alone can serve to recreate in us ever deeper desires which will never be frustrated" (195). A.'s victims are purveyors of a more flexible paradigm for overcoming mutually rivalistic imitation and ingrained patterns of sacralized violence.

A. rightly recognizes that the suppression of all desire undermines not only the human but also the divine situation. A truly eschatological (as opposed to a merely apocalyptic) vision of the Lamb is nothing if not imbued with real marital love (190-91). The complete eradication of imitative desire from the human heart is in fact at odds with Jesus' eschatological imagination. Jesus' point is rather to remold all death-dealing desire into one that rains downward from the gift of life on high.

Despite its powerful rhetorical appeal, the book is not without faults. The term "imagination" is never adequately defined. It is unclear why Christ's (and our) grasp of the subtle but flexible way in which God's reign enters human affairs should be limited to the imagination; A. gives short shrift to the determinative role of faith. Moreover, many of the texts A. interprets as subversive of apocalypticism actually derive from the martyrdom of members of the earliest apostolic community. Their burden was endured creatively and patiently, as A. emphasizes, but not without a constant commitment to specific liturgical practices,

a particular devotional stance towards God, and a rule of faith. The confession of faith that the crucified victim was the Lord shapes the construction of those texts in a vivid way.

Another criticism concerns the reality of forgiveness. One must applaud A.'s construal of eschatology as God's approach to us in the form of forgiving victim. However, it appears tendentious to focus on Cain's creative ability to accept forgiveness from a miraculously risen Abel without also mentioning Cain's act of contrition; one searches in vain for a serious grappling with the question of personal responsibility. I would likewise argue, against A., that a New Testament ethics is still possible provided that it skirts neither the communal vision of eschatology nor the personal taking stock of self found in the Gospels.

None of this detracts from the frequent profundity of A.'s book. Its didactic potential is hard to exaggerate: imagine combining Girard's theory of sacred violence with Balthasar's sensitivity to the drama of love in God's crucified form and couple this with a Dostoyevskian ear for the disruptive power of Scripture. Some will be alarmed by the absence of an extensive scholarly apparatus, though this does not make the work less erudite. Rather than tiresome expatiation of secondary literature, A. opts for "little stories" drawn both from the Bible and from the lives of Brazilian prostitutes dying of AIDS. The significance of this approach has been underrated. Even while deriving a universal claim from God's final reshaping of the cosmos, Christian eschatology can never detach itself from the story-shaped witness of women and men who place God's glory above their own. If eschatology is to take its cue from the mind of Jesus, then it must begin with little stories.

*Catholic University of America, D.C.*

PETER CASARELLA

CHURCH TEACHING AUTHORITY: HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL STUDIES. By John P. Boyle. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1995. Pp. vi + 241. \$38.95.

Who has the capacity to teach in the Church, and under what conditions, and in what manner those who possess the authority to teach exercise it responsibly and wisely continue to be disputed questions. As his subtitle indicates, Boyle offers historical analysis and constructive interpretation that shed light on this issue. He believes there is nothing disjunctive in the relationship between the historical and theological approaches to church authority. B.'s historical analysis leads naturally to theological proposals and his theological interpretation finds a rich context for its judgments in the findings of historical research.

B. begins by sketching the modern conceptualization of the term "ordinary magisterium," the practice of which, particularly since the pontificate of Paul VI, has defined the crisis of ecclesial teaching authority. A careful study of materials in the Vatican archives allows B. to present the exchange of correspondence that led to the first papal

use of the term in Pius IX's letter *Tuas libenter*, itself a response to the perceived threat to the prerogatives of the magisterium posed by Döllinger's Munich Theological Congress of 1863. B. argues from textual evidence that Cardinal von Reisach and the Cardinal Secretary of State Antonelli directly influenced the pope's use of this term and the authority it ascribed to the pope and the bishops. But B. presents a larger sphere of influence by showing that it was von Reisach's reading of Josef Kleutgen's *Theologie der Vorzeit*, with its definition of an "ordinary and perpetual" magisterium, and Kleutgen's own reliance on the post-Reformation controversial theology of Bellarmine that offered less direct, though no less consequential, influences on the conceptualization of the ordinary magisterium in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The practice of the ordinary magisterium in modern times often carries with it the assumption that the teaching charism is exclusive to the magisterium. B. puts this tendency into relief by examining particular issues that illuminate this practice. The paradox of the magisterium's appeal to natural-law argumentation in offering much of its teaching is that a supposedly universal medium of truth is authoritatively taught by privileged interpretation. B. faults the magisterium for taking too juridical an approach to natural-law argumentation in its teaching and claims that the more proper register for the voice of hierarchical teaching is a prophetic one. Fine historical analysis clarifies the issue of the reception of church teaching by pointing to shifting understandings of the "obedience" (*obsequium*) owed to the magisterium. Particularly helpful is B.'s appeal to the Jansenist controversy as a context for modern interpretations that understand *obsequium* as an "internal submission" of the mind and will. B. is concerned that such an understanding of *obsequium* can sever obedience from an authentic act of faith that admits of varying degrees of commitment, and he commends an understanding of reception as "assimilation [of teaching] into the life of the church" (140).

If B.'s study falters at all, it is in two chapters on the role of teaching authority in the revised Code of Canon Law and on the 1990 Instruction on the Ecclesial Vocation of the Theologian, where an overly-detailed rehearsal of the texts interrupts B.'s narrative flow. A culminating chapter on "Problems and Prospects" for church teaching authority again picks up the pace of the book's interpretive current by showing the implications of the ecclesiology of Vatican II for a more adequate conception of teaching authority. Understanding the Church as a "community of religious and moral discernment" (168), B. judiciously argues, presupposes a teaching authority measured by ongoing dialogue among all the faithful and fostered by a kenosis of the Holy Spirit to the whole Church that yet acknowledges the human limitations into which the Spirit is emptied. B.'s elaboration of this important insight might have been aided by enlisting the help of liberation and feminist theologians. And his appropriate lament that the theologian is reduced to a "loner" (171-75) in a hierarchically modeled

Church might have been better served by considering the history of that conceptualization.

But these small suggestions for improvement do not diminish the achievement of an excellent piece of historical and theological scholarship that deserves a wide reading.

*Fairfield University, Connecticut*

JOHN E. THIEL

IMAGINER L'ÉGLISE CATHOLIQUE. By Ghislain Lafont. Paris: Cerf, 1995. Pp. 286. Fr. 150.

The heart of this book consists in a very comprehensive and generally moderate set of proposals for ecclesiastical reforms that Lafont, a Benedictine monk who has taught both in France and in Rome, considers to be in line with Vatican II.

L. begins with a rapid survey (in some 80 pages) of the past two millennia. The first thousand years, he maintains, were dominated by a neo-Platonic mysticism in which truth was viewed as descending from a unitary divine source through a series of hierarchical mediations. In the second millennium, beginning with Gregory VII, the process of mediation was institutionalized in a highly centralized system of authority modeled on the imperial ideals of ancient Rome. This authoritarian system, perpetuated through the early 20th century, collided with the modern mentality, which exalts experience and technical reason. In its resulting alienation from the dominant culture, the Church was reduced to the status of a shrinking minority. Today, with the end of the modern age, the Church stands at a new juncture in which a fresh evangelization can be successful, provided that the Church is willing to move beyond the culturally conditioned structures inherited from previous centuries.

Vatican II, L. then explains, proposed the vision of the Church as a structured communion under the leadership of the Holy Spirit. It depicted institutions as proceeding from the power of the Spirit and as presupposing charisms. Without rejecting the language of dogma, the council gave preference to imagery and narrative. It proposed an epistemology of the probable in which dogmatic formulas were recognized as secondary and merely approximative forms of discourse. Whereas authority and obedience have generally been conceived in terms of jurisdiction and obligation, this need not be so in a more personalistic and communitarian Church.

In the second half of this work L. proposes a number of concrete reforms, which he regards as following from his historical analysis. Like many others, he would like to see divorced and remarried Catholics, in certain instances, admitted to the sacraments. A married clergy, he holds, could coexist with a celibate clergy in the Latin rite. He favors the election of bishops by a local electoral college. More adventurously, he suggests that the sacrament of the anointing of the sick could be administered by lay chaplains. He would like to see a rite

of consecration for male virgins, and he expresses doubt about the authority of the Holy See to release religious from the obligation of their solemn vows.

Under the rubric of collegiality L. would radically reform the present Roman curia. He believes that with greater decentralization and with reciprocal visits between dioceses, and particularly between Rome and other local churches, the Roman congregations might become superfluous. For similar reasons he proposes to do away with the present system of nunciatures and apostolic delegations.

L. obviously has a good command of his materials, but some criticisms come to mind. Although the historical sketch of the first 80 pages has a certain basis in truth, it does not do justice to the complexity of the reality. The use of biblical narrative and imagery has pervaded Christianity since the beginnings, and was not initiated by Vatican II. Dogmatic formulas are surely derivative from more fundamental styles of discourse (biblical and creedal), but it does not follow that they are only probable and approximative.

It would be impossible to give a global judgment on all L.'s reform proposals. Each of them would have to be discussed in much greater detail than the scope of his book permits. For example, his views on the admission of divorced and remarried Catholics to the Eucharist would have to be reviewed in light of the recent exchanges between several German bishops and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which go into the pros and cons in much greater detail than L. does. Whether unordained chaplains could administer the sacrament of the sick would have to be weighed against the teaching of Trent and other councils. In the absence of any such discussion, the proposals in this book could be written off as merely personal opinions. More theological rigor seems to be called for.

Similar objections arise regarding L.'s recommendations for the restructuring of the Roman curia and the diplomatic corps of the Holy See. Occasional contacts between heads of episcopal conferences and the bishop of Rome would hardly be an adequate substitute. The idea of roving ambassadors and reciprocal visitations is appealing, but they could not supplant the permanent structures now in place that provide for greater continuity and consistency.

I am aware that the authority of popes and councils, with their dogmatic enunciations and legislative decrees, can seem oppressive. But in the face of the doctrinal and disciplinary confusion currently afflicting many Christian communities, the Catholic Church stands as the chief guardian of universality and orthodoxy. A major shift toward greater tentativeness, flexibility, and local autonomy could undermine the specific strengths of Roman Catholicism. Far from making the Church more appealing, such measures might undercut the whole program of Catholic evangelization.

**THE IDEA OF AN ETHICAL COMMUNITY.** By John Charvet. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University, 1995. Pp. vii + 226. \$35.

Charvet offers a valuable and intriguing contribution to a quarter-century-long debate within moral philosophy occasioned largely by the work of John Rawls. In constructing a creative and substantially original argument about the possibility of ethical existence, C. evaluates the thought of classical social philosophers (Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Kant, Hume, Mill) and recent theorists (Anscomb, Sidgwick, Nagel, Parfit, Gewirth, Dworkin, Williams) who seek to harmonize the standpoints of self-interest and morality. C. masterfully probes the literature of moral philosophy for inconsistencies and incoherence, but occasionally exaggerates the fallout from the thump of straw men hitting the pavement.

Part 1 presents elements of C.'s understanding of self-interest: desire-fulfillment theory, prudential rationality, personal identity and autonomy. Part 2 critiques standard theories of egoism, Kantian rationalism and utilitarianism, pointing out inadequacies and clearing ground for the constructive work of the final section. In Part 3 C. addresses the problematic of determining and sharing authoritative social norms, with chapters on common good, political association and principles of just cooperation.

C.'s argument reflects his fundamental commitment to an antirealist perspective on morality. In rejecting the realist claim that human actions can be measured against a world of values and norms independent of our subjective choices, C. dismisses theistic and natural-law varieties of foundationalism which amount, he claims, to projections of moral authority onto external sources. Human desire alone is a legitimate creator of value. Yet C. also takes issue with the communitarians, whom he accuses of eschewing all appeal to abstract reflection in a sole reliance upon the authority of existing social norms. The book suffers seriously from a hasty rejection of the communitarians, who are named and dealt with almost exclusively in footnotes. The failure to engage such lines of argumentation as Walzer's nuanced defense of immanent social criticism means that C. deals the communitarians at most a glancing blow and regrettably misses an opportunity for constructive dialogue.

What C. favors is a Rawlsian-style contractarianism stripped of its tendency toward excessive atomism. He offers helpful suggestions for resolving some key conflicts in Rawls (especially the inability to justify moral constraints once we acknowledge self-interest as the fundamental human motive), but his own account leaves numerous serious tensions unresolved. Among them are incomplete or unconvincing accounts of the necessary balance between the individual and social, self-interested and other-regarding, public and private aspects of human existence. These result in intractable problematics in C.'s version of the place of equality and human rights within human community. The lacunae in C.'s consideration of the possibilities of building an

ethical community could be filled if he offered a more robust account of how persons generally form their versions of the good—namely, by adherence to religious beliefs or metaphysical commitments. To his credit, this is precisely what Rawls has done in his later work, where he acknowledges (albeit in the process of bracketing it out from political consideration) the formation of comprehensive doctrines of the good on the part of members of society in their capacity as private citizens.

Such a Rawlsian move would strengthen C.'s argument, especially since his final chapters identify as the most promising basis for social order and cooperation the common desire for human flourishing and the development of our full potential precisely under the guidance of conceptions of the good. It is this line of argumentation which holds out hope for a rapprochement between antirealists like C. and those of us with a prior commitment to a realist perspective on morality.

*Emory University, Atlanta*

THOMAS MASSARO, S.J.

THE CHURCH AS POLIS: FROM POLITICAL THEOLOGY TO THEOLOGICAL POLITICS AS EXEMPLIFIED BY JÜRGEN MOLTMANN AND STANLEY HAUERWAS. By Arne Rasmusson. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1995. Pp. 418. \$34.95.

The idea of a study juxtaposing Moltmann and Hauerwas struck me as odd and probably unfruitful. Yet Rasmusson has done just that with admirable power and clarity. He illuminates his central concern, the Church's relationship to broader society, by carefully discussing each figure's theology and drawing attention to important parallels and dissimilarities between them.

R.'s basic argument is that central elements of Moltmann's understanding of the Church are more consistently and viably worked out in Hauerwas's brand of Radical Reformation theology. This explains why his treatment of Hauerwas is thorough and sometimes too generous, while significant areas of Moltmann's theology are left undiscussed, e.g. his social doctrine of the Trinity.

R. sees inherent tensions in Moltmann's political theology. Moltmann's goal of mediating Christianity and modernity has, in practice, meant giving Christian legitimacy to modernity, including "beliefs in progress and in politics as a mean for consciously forming the future" (11) and in the "ideals of autonomy and self-realization" (99).

R. finds tension between this mediating project and the also prominent trend in Moltmann's thought to "stress the primacy of the Christian narrative" (376). This trend increasingly results in an "account of ecclesial discipleship" (193). This account describes the Church as a "contrast society whose life of common discipleship witnesses to an alternative social and political practice" (376). It also stresses "the ethical normativeness of Jesus, the community character of the Christian ethics, the eschatological horizon and the centrality given to living out the messianic peace" (71).



R. is right, I think, to see in Moltmann both a mediating legitimization of modernity and a church-based discipleship ethic. He also seems right to suggest that there are severe limits to which these can be reconciled. What bothers me is that this reading of Moltmann depends on a contrast between his early and later works. The mediating project is best represented by *Theology of Hope*. The ecclesial discipleship trend becomes clear in *The Way of Jesus Christ*. While R. does not compare these works in an ahistorical way, the severity of the tensions he finds in Moltmann depends on the distance between the early and late work, especially on the distance between these two books.

I wonder if there is not a more generous way of reading Moltmann, perhaps something like the way R. reads Hauerwas. R.'s use of Hauerwas is based on Hauerwas's later work. This later work is allowed to interpret and appraise the earlier work. This explains, e.g., why R. seldom cites Hauerwas's first two or three published books. Whatever the merits of one reading over the other, it is worth noting that R. does not read Moltmann in the same way or with the same generosity that he reads Hauerwas.

R. argues that for Moltmann's theology to go forward, it must either more strongly adopt a revisionist approach to the Christian tradition or more consistently follow the logic of his ecclesial discipleship ethic. Hauerwas is used to show how the latter, discipleship ethic, can be worked out in a consistent and viable way.

R. views their respective understandings of politics as the key difference between Moltmann and Hauerwas. For Moltmann, the horizon for Christian theology is the struggle for emancipation through political power at the national and international level. But for Hauerwas, the Church is the locus of a new or different politics. The Church's story provides an alternative, true politics through which the world's political claims are judged and interpreted.

Focusing on this notion that the Church is an alternative *polis*, R. offers an exposition of Hauerwas's theological politics. This exposition incorporates the other well-known features of Hauerwas's thought, including the role of virtue, Scripture, narrative, and the frequent charge that he is a sectarian.

This is the best overview of Hauerwas's project that I have encountered—certainly better than anything Hauerwas himself has provided. While R.'s discussion of Moltmann is not suitable as an introduction to Moltmann's thought (too much of Moltmann's explicit theology is left undiscussed), it is an excellent introduction to Hauerwas's work. Indeed, R. grasps what few have: the focal point for Hauerwas's thinking (at least since the late 1980s) is the Church trying to live in fidelity to the biblical story, especially to the story of God's dealing with us in Jesus. It is in service to this focus on the Church, and not because they are important in themselves, that Hauerwas attends to virtue, narrative, community, etc. R.'s recognition of the Church's centrality should

help those new to Hauerwas's thought gain entrance into his enormous body of work.

*First Mennonite Church, Allentown, Pa.* JOSEPH J. KOTVA, JR.

**SHIITE ISLAM: POLITY, IDEOLOGY, AND CREED.** By Yann Richard. Translated from the French by Antonia Nevill. *Studies in Social Discontinuity*. Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1995. Pp. xiii + 241. \$54.95; \$21.95.

There is probably no phenomenon that has pushed its way so decisively into Western consciousness in the last two decades than has Shiite Islam. Yet at the same time it has remained almost a closed book to us, seemingly embodying the very essence of difference and foreignness. Though Shiites are a small minority within the Islamic world, Ayatollah Khomeini and the guerillas of Hezbollah stand as convenient symbols of all that is to be feared from an Islam now stretching from Indonesia to Indiana.

The modest title of the first chapter, "A Few Words About Shiism," gives us a feel for the tone of Richard's valuable book. It does not ambition being a complete history and handbook of Shiism, yet it contains a wealth of material and leads us easily through the developments of history and the contemporary Iranian scene. It is sufficiently comprehensive to be an introductory textbook, yet it also offers insights that will interest the expert. R. does not pretend to be the detached orientalist giving us "the facts." He acknowledges from the beginning a personal engagement with his subject, which makes him a more trustworthy guide than one who imagines, or pretends, he has no such commitments.

R.'s presentation of Shiism is necessarily dominated by Iran, but he is careful to remind us that Shiism emerged and developed for centuries among the Arabs rather than the Persians. It was not until the 16th century that Iran "converted" to Shiism and created a cultural split between that country and the rest of the Muslim world. A most interesting chapter deals with what R. considers the two characteristic Iranian contributions to Shiism. The first is political: the formation of a clergy and the radicalization of religious discourse in a tradition which had been marked by a certain quietism and avoidance of conflict. The second is cultural: the development of powerfully emotive rites to celebrate the martyrdom of the Prophet's successors, the Imams. The first development has taken place largely in this century, and it is certainly R.'s strength that he can present what is usually judged a monolithic theocracy as a place in which intellectual ferment is still much in evidence. His presentation of the intellectual history of modern Iran and the development of Islamic revolutionary thinking is, perhaps, the most useful aspect of the book and serves as its unifying thread.

A chapter on Shiite Islam in other parts of the Muslim world con-

tains very useful sketches especially of places of political significance: Iraq, Lebanon, and Afghanistan. R. also draws on the work of anthropologists and ethnologists to good effect and offers some of his own intriguing insights into issues of ritual, the place of women, and the nature of sexuality in a religion that sanctions temporary marriage, or "pleasure marriage."

This book is generally well translated, with just an occasional lapse where it sounds more French than English. Occasionally the rendering of R.'s French equivalents for Arabic and Persian terms suffers from a lack of knowledge of the original languages. The transliteration system is quirky, and it seems unhelpful to transliterate Arabic with a Persian accent. Such a system makes it difficult for students to recognize terms they may already know in a standard transliteration. The glossary and bibliography are very valuable additions.

*Columbia University, New York.*

DANIEL A. MADIGAN, S.J.

## SHORTER NOTICES

**MARY: GLIMPSES OF THE MOTHER OF JESUS.** By Beverly Roberts Gaventa. Columbia: University of South Carolina, 1996. Pp. xiv + 164. \$34.95

A refreshingly sane book that undertakes a task so obvious that it is hard to see why nobody ever thought of it before. Gaventa, a "Protestant" (not further specified) and a mother, writes individual chapters on the character of Mary as portrayed, respectively, in Matthew, Luke-Acts, John, and the Protoevangelium of James (this text is given in an appendix). The portraits are primarily literary, rather than historical or theological; an initial chapter delineates and briefly assesses the latter two approaches and then gives an exposition of G.'s "literary quest for Mary." There is a brief concluding chapter.

The biblical material offers few surprises even to nonspecialists; G. is clear, systematic, and gives useful endnotes. Matthew's Mary is exclusively Jesus' mother, saved by God from the threat of destruction. In Luke, Mary has three distinct but related roles: model disciple, prophet, and (the most complex) mother. For John, the (unnamed) mother of Jesus primarily exemplifies Jesus' earthly

family, from which he deliberately separates himself just before dying (John 2 and 19).

In a more extensive introduction to the Protoevangelium of James, G. situates this unique work with regard to second-century Marian writings and themes, before considering the possible circumstances of its composition and its characterization of Mary. The Protoevangelium consists of "the unfolding drama . . . of maintaining and defending Mary's sacred purity" (110). This Mary is set apart, precisely not a model. G.'s final chapter, though, taking account of all her findings in these texts, demonstrates Mary's involvement in the "scandal of the gospel," and suggests that, as vulnerable, reflecting on events, and witnessing to Jesus, she is indeed a model for Christians.

G.'s careful attention to her four primary texts, her use of material from varied sources, ancient and modern, and her commitment to a "generous critique" of them (in Boyarin's phrase), all contribute significantly to the pleasure of reading this book.

PATRICIA M. McDONALD, S.H.C.J.  
*Mount Saint Mary's College*  
*Emmitsburg, Md.*

ON THE GENRE AND MESSAGE OF REVELATION: STAR VISIONS AND SKY JOURNEYS. By Bruce J. Malina, Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1995. Pp. xvii + 317.

Malina holds that the author of the Book of Revelation was a sky prophet who had sky visions. To understand them properly, we must interpret these visions against the background of sky phenomena as these would have been seen and understood in the first-century Mediterranean world. John describes things he saw in the sky, and we need to take him at his word. To support his thesis, M. eschews modern commentators and exegetes and interacts instead with astronomic writers of antiquity.

Without the detailed argumentation, some sample conclusions would include: Jesus is presented as the controller of the pole of the universe and the cosmic stars. He is identified with the zodiacal Aries, the Lamb/Ram, "standing as if slain," i.e., always depicted with its head bending backwards to Taurus. The occupants of the 24 thrones are guardians of various sectors of the sky. The four living creatures refer to the constellations Leo, Taurus, Scorpio, and Pegasus. The beast from the sea is the constellation Cetus; that from the land, whose number is 666, is the constellation Deltoton (Triangle). The seven seals, trumpets, and bowls are comets. The recurring references to hymns reflect the then-common belief in the music of the spheres.

Revelation was not written in a situation of persecution. The central problem (as the "edicts" to the seven churches show) was rather that those who said they worshiped the cosmic Lord were being deceived into idolatry—thus shaming, dishonoring the one God of all. Further, nothing in the book referred to the future, it revealed what was literally written in the stars and influenced social and political realities at the time. The present-oriented, vertical (up-and-down, sky-earth) astral prophecy was later misunderstood and, as it were, laid on

its side, thus giving a horizontal (now-and-later), futurist orientation. M. argues his case with much erudition; for readers rusty on their equatorial zodiacs, he supplies a number of charts and diagrams of the ancient sky.

MICHAEL D. GUINAN, O.F.M.  
*Franciscan School of Theology*  
*Berkeley*

GOD, COSMOS, AND HUMANKIND: THE WORLD OF EARLY CHRISTIAN SYMBOLISM. By Gerhart B. Ladner. Translated from the German by Thomas Dunlap. Berkeley: University of California, 1995. Pp. vii + 334. \$45.

This book is the work of a much-honored scholar and a man of great age (Ladner was born in 1905, and the original German edition of this work was published in 1992). It seems appropriate to call attention to the author's years because the approach he takes to his vast subject does more than suggest scholarly command; it also reflects the simplicity and even optimism that, in ideal circumstances, are the fruit of a long and productive life.

L.'s aim is to explore the theological, cosmological, and anthropological symbolism, not only visual but also linguistic, of ancient Christianity. To this end he touches briefly upon virtually every conceivable aspect of these different areas of symbolism. Under cosmology, e.g., he deals with geometry, botany, zoology, and mineralogy; and in the three sections devoted to anthropology he treats such topics as the divine image in the human person, the liturgy, and etymology. The text is accompanied by 138 illustrations in black and white and ten in color.

Having set himself to accomplish such a large task within the confines of relatively few pages, L. is necessarily selective and cursory. "Simplicity" is the word that was used previously, and L.'s simplicity is that of someone who is thoroughly familiar with an extensive field of knowledge and is abler than most to make it understandable.

It is not clear whether L. is successful in satisfactorily answering the question that he asks at the very outset of his book: Can symbolism still be experienced and recognized as a vital and living force? One wonders whether the question is even apropos in the context of the book as a whole. Nonetheless L.'s optimism—the more precious for being informed and knowledgeable—manifests itself when he concludes his work by affirming that symbolism can indeed still be vital and living, and that new symbolisms can be created “that touch us with the thrill of the holy and lift us beyond ourselves” (271).

BONIFACE RAMSEY, O.P.  
St. Vincent Ferrer Priory, N.Y.

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND CHRISTIAN INITIATION IN THE EAST SYRIAN TRADITION. By Joseph Chalassery. Rome: St. Thomas Christian Fellowship, 1995. Pp. li + 250.

Chalassery's doctoral dissertation covers much of the same material as S. Brock's *Holy Spirit in the Syrian Baptismal Tradition* (Kottayam, India, 1979), except that C. has studied only the early East Syrian sources. C.'s is a more expansive treatment. It duplicates some of the work of E.-P. Siman's *L'Expérience de l'Esprit par l'Eglise* (Paris, 1971). C. first analyzes the theological content of the rites of initiation as found in the *Odes of Solomon*, *The Syriac Didascalia*, *The Acts of Thomas*, Aphrahat, Ephrem and Narsai. This study of the early Syrian authors serves as a background for Part 2 which studies the liturgies of baptism and the Eucharist. The last part focuses on the effects of the Spirit given in initiation.

One is surprised to find no reference in the text to G. Winkler's contention that the Syrians shaped their baptismal liturgy after Jesus' baptism in the Jordan, and that it was not cathartic but charismatic. That there is no mention of this in C.'s presentation on the purifying moment of the Syrian rites is symptomatic of the book. There is attention to the actual

theological and liturgical texts, but insufficient reflection on the larger issues raised by the other scholar's liturgical research. Ecumenically significant is Narsai's emphasis on the Holy Spirit transforming not only the eucharistic elements, but also the assembled congregation (87). With justification much has been made of the feminine Spirit in the earliest Syriac sources. But from the late fourth and fifth centuries, under Greek influence, the Holy Spirit was understood to be masculine. By the time of Timothy II in the 14th century, the oil, symbol of the Spirit, was looked upon as the male seed (111). The epiclesis opens up avenues for the relationship between pneumatology and Christology, when “the Holy Spirit becomes the content of the eucharistic body of Christ” (179).

While his book has too much the character of fulfilling the requirements of a doctoral program, and is somewhat wooden, C. has gathered together a number of important texts from diverse sources, valuable for anyone interested in pneumatology or in Syriac rites.

KILIAN McDONNELL, O.S.B.  
Collegeville, Minn.

CHRISTIAN PLAIN STYLE: THE EVOLUTION OF A SPIRITUAL IDEAL. By Peter Auksi. Montreal: McGill-Queens' University, 1995. Pp. xii + 371. \$49.95.

Auksi, a professor of English, examines the ideal of literary simplicity, called the plain style in rhetoric, from Christian origins to the English Reformation. His aim is to identify “the reasons for the evolving interest in, and justifications of, rhetorical plainness in the literary culture of the Christian church in western Europe” (10). The main reason that became commonplace is that the Bible has a humble style and that Jesus Christ and Paul urge simplicity. Divine simplicity, manifest in the Incarnation and the Passion, offers an additional motive, as does the aspiration to address the widest audience, including those who are illiterate (human simplicity).

Each chapter conveys an impressive amount of research and offers skillful analyses of the reasons commending the plain style in specific literary milieux: classical Greek and Roman rhetoric, the Bible, Augustine and Paul, the Church Fathers, Middle Ages, Reformation, Renaissance, and English Reformation. The reception of Paul's and Augustine's advice on simplicity is evident in various settings. This book celebrates the spiritual and moral impulse of simplicity in Christian discourse, while the final chapter laments and ponders its loss.

For all its erudition, this book leaves important avenues unexplored. What are we to make of the fact that the appeal to simplicity throughout Christian history has often been accompanied by complex forms of rhetorical and dialectical reasoning, even by those who commend simplicity? A.'s treatment of biblical materials does not fully address recent research on the rhetorical nature of biblical literature. This book inspires many questions about the significance of the plain style for biblical hermeneutics and theological method, but these are left for others to explore.

BRADFORD E. HINZE

*Marquette University, Milwaukee*

THOMAS AQUINAS: SPIRITUAL MASTER. By Robert Barron. Crossroad Spiritual Legacy Series. New York: Crossroad, 1996. Pp. 178. \$14.95.

Barron repaints the usual portrait of Aquinas the rationalist theologian by skillfully depicting him as a spiritual master whose systematic theology amounts to a spiritual direction which challenges the illusory pretensions of sinners and expands the consciousness of spiritual seekers. B. focuses on the dominating themes of Aquinas's Christology, theology of God and creation, and theological anthropology. He interprets Thomas's theological theses as instructive nuggets of spiritual wisdom, construing objections to Thomas's positions as sinners' attempts to establish positions independent of God, and Tho-

mas's replies as the master's adroit parry to such stratagems.

Aquinas's God is uncanny, playful, and infinitely ecstatic; his proofs for God's existence serve to decenter our egos, while his theses of God's simplicity and immutability portray a transcendent whirlwind of energy beyond "the beings." Aquinas's Christ is the burning center where the ecstasy of God and the ecstasy of the human unite. Thomas's creation spirituality is a metaphysics of the gospel which underscores creatures' utter dependence upon God and fosters an attitude of esthetic arrest before creation's beauty; creaturehood is a *relation* to God, and *creatio ex nihilo* means that all secularity shines with the light of the sacred. Thomas's "soulful" anthropology stresses the human as God's image, the union of flesh and spirit whose goal is God.

Small books may miss some nuances: Thomas actually corrects Pseudo-Dionysius's notion of self-diffusive goodness while retaining the language; his theology is not really an "anti-doctrine" since he is a positive as well as negative theologian; and his view of the beatific vision is not entirely free of Platonist dualist influences. None of these details detracts, however, from B.'s valuable and successful attempt to represent Aquinas in a refreshing and original manner as one of the Christian tradition's great spiritual masters.

GREGORY P. ROCCA, O.P.

*The Dominican School, Berkeley*

THE RENAISSANCE ANTICHRIST: LUCA SIGNORELLI'S ORVIETO FRESCOS. By Jonathan B. Riess. Princeton: Princeton University, 1995. Pp. 232. \$59.50.

At the close of the 15th century, Orvieto experienced a series of events which presaged evidence of divine displeasure. Terrible rainstorms, plague, civil strife, the threat of invasion, and appalling apparitions in the sky were seen as apocalyptic warnings. In that era of spiritual discomfort, the painter Luca Signorelli was commissioned to decorate the walls and vaults of the San Brizio Chapel in the Orvieto Cathedral. The main

theme chosen for the chapel decoration was the Rule of the Antichrist, complemented by scenes of the Last Judgment, the Resurrection of the Dead, Redemption, and Damnation.

Riess deftly unveils much of the mystery that has surrounded Signorelli's frescoes for nearly 500 years. By placing the visually stunning images in the context of the historical, theological, and political influences shaping Orvieto at the dawn of the 16th century, he enables the reader better to understand the culture of Renaissance Italy and the forces that helped shape later well-known masterpieces, such as Raphael's stanze and Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling at the Vatican.

One criticism of the book must be mentioned. While Signorelli's dazzling frescoes are the most monumental portrayal of the Antichrist found in the Renaissance, Princeton University Press has done them a disservice by relying too much on old, inferior black-and-white images taken from Alinari and other photographic archives in Italy. For a more complete look at these frescoes in their true detail and color, one should consult Riess's *Luca Signorelli: The San Brizio Chapel, Orvieto* (N.Y.: George Braziller, 1995), where one gets better visuals with a more concise text at half the price.

MICHAEL MORRIS, O.P.  
*The Dominican School, Berkeley*

VEHICLE FOR GOD: THE METAPHORICAL THEOLOGY OF EBERHARD JÜNGEL. By Roland D. Zimany. Macon, Ga.: Mercer University, 1994. Pp. x + 180. \$25.

As Zimany describes Jüngel's theological achievements, neo-orthodoxy did not end with Karl Barth. In its European *Sitz im Leben* the movement has survived with considerable success as a result of exchanges with the thought of Heidegger and Bultmann. It seems that even Barth approved of the nuances to his own thinking toward the end of his life.

God is certainly the first truism in any Reform theology. Thus, J.'s God still comes to us from the Bible. In fact, his very Being is "coming," and

this is no mere fideism; certainty can emerge, typically, when a person encounters Jesus' parables. Despite the heritage of Bultmann's focus on biblical form, the content of the words of the text are the entrance into us. So all of our questions about God are quite inappropriate, since they presume the need for an objective answer; rather, God is an event leaving us confident of having participated in ultimacy. The complete Christian response could only be formulated by the dogma of the Trinity: What is going on with the Cross and Resurrection? Can a monistic God satisfy such queries?

The unbeliever, too, fares well in such a perspective. Knowing the intellectual restrictions a faith commitment can produce (and this is the advance beyond Barth), J. does not hesitate to employ Heideggerian categories. With the experience of Nothingness there are two possibilities: existential anxiety or an affirmation of Being. People begin to take God seriously when circumstances force them to confront this distinction between Being and non-being. But J.'s theology is not naïve; no truly satisfying contact with God emerges in a philosophical world. Intimations are possible, yet a better way is to be found in God's coming to us in the Word. Faith allows this to happen in us. Indeed, "without faith, God would not be missed"; there would only be the Heideggerian alternative. And lastly, the Holy Spirit's love will effectively seal the Christian's bond to this self-bestowing God.

J.'s writings are notably difficult, and much has not been translated (an extensive 25-page bibliography is appended). This book, however, assuredly makes him less daunting and gives us a sense of what J. has been up to. The title is reminiscent of Wittgenstein: theology is at least a vehicle for "grammar," i.e. rules for determining the sense in which "God is to be understood." J.'s contribution is that our language echoes the limits of metaphors.

J. M. DITTBERNER  
*St. Paul Seminary, Minn.*

JESUS, SON OF GOD, SON OF MARY, IMMANUEL. By Donald J. Goergen, O.P. A Theology of Jesus Series. Collegeville: Glazier/Liturgical, 1995. Pp. viii + 278. \$19.95.

In the fourth and final volume of this series, Goergen attempts what he calls a "hermeneutical reconstruction" (viii). Having previously analyzed the Jesus of historiography (vols. 1-2) and the Jesus of faith (vol. 3), he now travels a familiar path in contemporary Christology by trying to account for Jesus as the incarnate Word of God without shrinking the full scope of his humanity.

The opening chapter provides a solid foundation on which to build any constructive Christology. It includes six useful criteria for doing Christology and an outright rejection of both docetic and adoptionistic approaches to the personhood of Jesus Christ. Tapping the work of Rahner and Schillebeeckx among many others, G. also offers a stimulating and instructive chapter on Jesus as a metapersonal symbol of God's presence. In somewhat random fashion, G. covers a number of hotly contested issues, one of which is Jesus' uniqueness. G. makes an extended and persuasive argument that Jesus' uniqueness consists primarily in his sinlessness, which symbolizes the singular and total integration of the divine and the human in the Word made flesh. Included in G.'s material on Jesus' sinlessness is a balanced discussion on the thorny question of impeccability, that is, the (im)possibility for Jesus to sin.

Whetting the reader's appetite on a range of topics such as Jesus Christ's preexistence, kenosis, self-knowledge, freedom, and relationship with the Holy Spirit, G. tends to summarize uncritically the work of authors who seemingly give expression to his own views. E.g., he explicates in an entirely sympathetic manner Schoonenberg's very disputable claims that the pre-incarnate Word is an apersonal mode of being, and that Jesus is a human *person*, the personal embodiment of the divine Word. Overall, G.'s "hermeneutical reconstruction" is

more like an initial sketch than a detailed portrait. It succeeds more as a string of commentaries on contemporary christological issues than as a systematic "theology of Jesus." The book is readable and occasionally provocative. Both eclectic and extensive, the bibliography is especially useful.

PAUL E. RITT

*St. John's Seminary, Brighton*

GOD'S SPIRIT: TRANSFORMING A WORLD IN CRISIS. By Geiko Müller-Fahrenholz. Translated from the German by John Cumming. New York: Continuum, 1995. Pp. xiv + 176. \$19.95.

Müller-Fahrenholz explores the power of the Spirit to address the world's needs, via a theology of creation and the economy summarized by the notion of "ecodomy." He is most persuasive as an engaged observer of the problem, moving in short, impressionistic chapters to an analysis of the situation as a cycle of cynicism, fundamentalism, and violentism. He describes the manifold stumbling blocks between nations and peoples that result, using examples drawn from the general assemblies of the WCC in Canberra and Seoul, where the green agenda of rich nations is met with resentment by the subhuman living conditions and debt crisis of the poor nations.

Having drawn on R. J. Lifton's description of "psychic numbing" as the problem, M.'s description of the power of the Spirit as the power of truth, solidarity, and endurance is correspondingly psychological in orientation. While his borrowings from historical and systematic theology are somewhat scattershot, his pastoral sense emerges strongly in his suggestion that the consolation of the Spirit should not be seen as a privatized comfort and in his discussion of the social dimension of the forgiveness of sins. His considerable experience in the international and ecumenical context serves him well here, as he insists on the need for coordination in aid programs (and has no patience with those comfortable churches



whose global reach extends to the addition of a bit of "African" music or dancing). He is less persuasive in his broad analysis of the "postpetroleum age" to come, relying on assertions of a yet-to-be-seen increase in the importance of local and regional economies and decrease in international travel. Yet his "ecodominical covenant" remains inspiring, from his invocation of Hildegard's notion of *viriditas* to the recovery of the "primordial wisdom" of the Sabbath.

NANCY A. DALLAVALLE  
*Fairfield University, Conn.*

THE CANON LAW, LETTER AND SPIRIT: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO THE CODE OF CANON LAW. Edited by Gerard Sheehy et al. Prepared for the Canon Law Society of Great Britain and Ireland. Collegeville: Glazier/Liturgical, 1995. Pp. xxv + 1060. \$99.95.

Relying largely on the 1917 Code (and its commentators as "a sure guide"), the Revision Process (completed in 1982), and the commentary of Luigi Chiappetta (Naples, 1988), the editors of this new commentary emphasize the Roman school and its agenda. This orientation apparently conforms to "the ecclesiological imperative" (454 n. 4) which thematizes the commentary. Given its pastoral objective, however, parish priests (especially in the British Isles) will find it a useful guide for assessing current practice. Yet a more systematic bibliography would have been helpful. Moreover, given the complexity of this collaborative enterprise, it is not surprising that the text misses out in several details.

The general reader coming upon this commentary could easily imagine that the Church has no problems or difficulties. The distinguished contributors present their remarks on each of the 1752 canons succinctly and persuasively; by and large, they combine current information with literacy. If the genre by definition means continual analysis, the footnotes reveal the underlying synthesis in the Roman primacy, another variation on legal positivism: "It is the clear view of this commentary that

the term *obsequium* of Can. 752 (with its corollary reference in Can. 753) is properly translated as 'submission' " (419 n. 1). That other canonists voice other readings does not merit attention. Since the canons make no provision for dissent, questions like the appointment of bishops, the role of the Roman curia, the law of celibacy, the place of divorced and remarrieds in the Church, and the ordination of married men become non-issues. So the "submerged metaphor" which controls this commentary illustrates an outmoded ecclesiology associated with an *ecclesia docens* and an *ecclesia discens*.

Surely, if there were an "ecclesiological imperative" relative to the current *Code of Canon Law* (1983), it would be found in the ten principles of revision promulgated by the Synod of Bishops in 1967. Reflecting the broad ecclesiology of Vatican II, these principles act as norms rendering the canons both intelligible and credible. This commentary—with one exception (no. 2631)—does not refer to these principles in any recognizable way. This omission perhaps signals the unfinished business for the Church and the various canon law societies dispersed throughout the world. In the meantime, we are grateful that the editors of this handsome volume have enhanced our understanding of canonical practice. Their stance, inspired by confidence and dedication, reveals the canonist fundamentally as one who serves. They remind us once again that canon law is both a science and an art.

JOHN P. MCINTYRE, S.J.  
*Saint Paul University, Ottawa*

"COMMUNION WITH THE CHURCH" AND THE CODE OF CANON LAW. By Robert J. Kaslyn. Lewiston, N.Y.: Mellen, 1994. Pp. vi + 297. \$99.95.

This commentary on canon 209.1, the obligation of the Christian faithful to maintain communion with the Church, recalls Pope John Paul II's observation that the Code of Canon Law reflects conciliar teachings, particularly the ecclesiology of the dogmatic and pastoral constitutions of

the Church. In his analysis of the *fontes* of the canon, Kaslyn discovers a *communio* ecclesiology requiring further systematization by theologians. He examines the redaction and content of the canon in light of theological-juridical principles, the ecclesiology of the Code, and the importance of *communio*. He points to a new orientation in canon law based on the concept of the people of God and the radical equality of the Christian faithful which calls for a reinterpretation of traditional perceptions and church teaching on several issues. This relationship between theology and canon law separates the latter from civil law theories and demands a *novus habitus mentis* of all engaged in canonical interpretation.

K. demonstrates how fidelity in maintaining communion serves the order of the Church and honors God's desire to establish a relationship with His people. Communion, experienced in prayer, common worship, and service, supports the baptismal responsibility of participation in the threefold office of Christ. Other canons in the Code referring to a *communio* ecclesiology are studied under the threefold distinction of *communio fidelium*, *communio ecclesiarum*, and *communio hierarchica*. K. applies the principles of *communio* to challenges facing the Church and pertaining to faith, sacraments, and governance. K. considers Rahner's theological system of unity as foundational to the development of a *communio* ecclesiology. He gives ample evidence of the dynamic nature of *communio* originating in the Trinity, finding expression in the life and mission of the Church and bringing all to eternal union with God.

Dulles commends the book as a "thorough, luminous, and judicious study of the concept of communion." This reviewer recommends it to bishops, ecclesiologists, theologians, ecumenists and canonists—everyone concerned with church process and structures.

ROSE McDERMOTT, S.S.J.  
Catholic University of America

A HEALTHY RIVALRY: HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE CHURCH. By Rik Torfs. Louvain Theological & Pastoral Monographs. Louvain: Peeters; and Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995. Pp. vi + 125. Fr.b. 595.

The "healthy rivalry" of Torfs's title refers to a patient and respectful dialogue among all those who care for the Church and the reform of its structures. T. favors an innovative, pragmatic, and responsible effort to establish "a genuine culture of law" within the Church based on the human rights specified in the 1983 *Code of Canon Law*, esp. canons 208-233. Some readers might recall with a groan a past canonical culture, and wonder why any progressive reformer would suggest its return. T. advocates another kind of legal culture in which human and Christian rights are taken seriously by hierarchy and fellow Catholics alike. He calls for the promotion of a culture of law in contrast to the juridical vindication of rights, because the Church does not have an independent judiciary which can compel respect for rights.

After introductory chapters on the Church's mixed relations with human rights, and on his "dynamic" approach to canon law, i.e., making creative use of the "open norms" in the canons, T. examines the canonical rights themselves, first as a package, then three of them specifically: equality, freedom of expression, and freedom of theological research. T.'s strategy to make the rights real is twofold: (1) to insist on the fundamental nature of these canonical rights, i.e., that they enjoy a true "formal supremacy" or juridical superiority in relationship to other canonical norms, and (2) to vindicate or enforce the rights by working gradually and persistently for them in a variety of fora—administrative tribunals, reconciliation and arbitration procedures, and "bureaus for disputes."

T. writes very well, and his book is clear, good-natured, balanced and stimulating. His choice of expressions, use of examples, and summary restatements make reading it a pleasure. He concludes with a helpful se-

lect bibliography in which he cites many Dutch, Belgian, and German sources. The book will be of interest to anyone concerned about structural church renewal.

JAMES A. CORDEN  
*Washington Theological Union*

IN GOOD COMPANY: THE CHURCH AS POLIS. By Stanley Hauerwas. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1995. Pp. xii + 268. \$29.95.

Hauerwas's 18th book presents Church as a practice whereby Christians are formed for and by an alternative *polis*: "Christian salvation means becoming a certain kind of person, one who can enjoy the end of life that the Christian community commends" (8). To appreciate this *polis* requires "playing" with masters, i.e., "in good company."

Chapters 1-4 are entitled "In Protestant Company." H. begins with an atypical endorsement of cultural or Constantinian Christianity: he requires that Christianity be at least as embodied as he found it in Ireland. He follows this with a chapter devoted to sermonizing against American Protestant gnosticism. Then he develops the claim that Christianity is not primarily an intellectual problem to be solved but a practical challenge of discipleship. H. considers the "company" of Catholics next. At Notre Dame, he came to the Wittgensteinian insight that the term "Catholic" does not name a set of beliefs but a world of practices. Catholics contribute least to ecumenism when they appeal to standards of another *polis*. This leads to a critique of John Paul II's *Laborem exercens* for aspiring to universality but succeeding only in being platitudinous; in contrast *Centesimus annus* "could signal a return to the radical ecclesial vision of *Rerum novarum*" (126).

The final section begins by relating ethics to worship. "Ethics has a task peculiar to itself, that task is to assemble reminders from the training we receive in worship" (156). Next, an appraisal of Jonsen and Toulmin on casuistry leads H. to caution against moral theory that comes from but dis-

penses with tradition. A final essay relates the "Body of Christ" to the embodiment of Christ's Kingdom as conduct and not "mere belief." H. conceives his text as "forcing Christians to take themselves seriously as Christians" (12). Its reception will likely hinge on how seriously one takes the claims that the biblical narratives are our only opening to God and ethics is always circumscribed by tradition.

JOSEPH WOODILL  
*John the Baptist Church  
Alpha, N.J.*

PROGRESS IN UNITY? FIFTY YEARS OF THEOLOGY WITHIN THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES, 1945-1995: A STUDY GUIDE. By Martien E. Brinkman. Louvain Theological & Pastoral Monographs. Louvain: Peeters, 1995. Pp. vii + 180. Fr. b. 595.

When academia became its primary residence, theology lost close touch with the life of the churches. Many theologians are hardly aware of the remarkable ecumenical advances of our time and the thinking that undergirds them. So Brinkman, a Dutch Reformed theologian, has crafted this study guide, a sketch of the theology developed under the auspices of the World Council of Churches, primarily by the Faith and Order Commission. It focuses on the results of the WCC initiatives and includes an ample bibliography. It is a menu to a rich theological banquet.

B.'s first chapter describes the Faith and Order Commission before and after its incorporation into the WCC. Succeeding chapters introduce the convergences discovered on the relation of Scripture and tradition; on the fundamentals of faith via a common explication of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed; on baptism, Eucharist, and ministry in the 1982 Lima text. B. then devotes a chapter to the latter three. Baptism exhibits the strongest ecumenical convergence. Agreements on the Eucharist have not overcome the impasse over intercommunion. Agreements on ministry do not yet encompass apostolic succession, the ordination of women, and the primacy

of the bishop of Rome. After a short treatment of Church and kingdom comes a final chapter on "Ecumenicals and Evangelicals," showing how each camp came to understand its need for the other. The chapter delineates the churches' major new challenge of forging authentic mutuality between the white, literate, economically secure Christians of the North and the nonliterate poor Christians of color who live primarily in the Southern hemisphere.

Ecumenists will find this text a helpful refresher course. The book will orient academic theologians, and especially systematians, to resources that they cannot afford to ignore.

JON NILSON  
*Loyola University, Chicago*

**KANTIAN ETHICS ALMOST WITHOUT APOLOGY.** By Marcia W. Baron. Ithaca: Cornell University, 1995. Pp. xiii + 244. \$32.50.

In a clear and carefully argued presentation, Baron seeks to defend the emphasis on duty in Kant's ethics against two common objections: that it leaves no room for a category of supererogatory actions, and that it neglects, or even rejects, the moral import of motives such as love, sympathy, or loyalty. Her treatment is judicious in identifying the moral intuitions which form the bases for these objections and is eminently fair in articulating the arguments which other philosophers have offered in their support.

B.'s defense of Kant makes the case that both objections issue, for the most part, from assumptions about moral excellence and moral agency which differ in important ways from Kant's; in consequence, the objections fail to appreciate how his construal of duty is conceptually supple enough to encompass the moral concerns motivating such criticism. B. accordingly provides an account of duty, referenced to a broad selection of Kantian texts, which shows the artificiality of reading Kant's ethics in terms of sharp dichotomies between virtue

and duty or between affect and reason.

This work will be of particular interest to readers who have been following recent philosophical discussions of issues such as impartiality and partiality in ethics or the apparent tension between acting from friendship (or love) and acting on principle. It also quite nicely exemplifies some significant developments which have taken place in the interpretation of Kant's ethics, most notably an increased recognition that Kant "is far more concerned with character and conduct over a long period of time than with the moral worth or lack thereof of isolated actions" (187).

PHILIP J. ROSSI, S.J.  
*Marquette University, Milwaukee*

**DEONTOLOGY AND TELEOLOGY: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE NORMATIVE DEBATE IN ROMAN CATHOLIC MORAL THEOLOGY.** By Todd A. Salzman. Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium. Leuven: Peeters, 1995. Pp. xvii + 555. Fr.b. 2,900.

Salzman argues for the need to clarify the enormous linguistic disputes that are paralyzing an otherwise rich period in the evolving tradition of Catholic normative ethics. Toward this end, he revisits the contributions of the philosopher C. D. Broad who distinguished deontology and teleology, analyzes the unique contributions of each of the main revisionists (Schueller, Fuchs, Knauer, and Janssens), and studies the traditional development of the *fontes moralitatis* from the Fourth Lateran until the Second Vatican Council. He ably inserts the revisionists into the tradition, arguing cogently that their use of the concept "object" is as faithful to the tradition as is its use in *Veritatis splendor*.

In transforming his doctoral dissertation into the present form, S. is clearly an avid interlocutor who ably negotiates the messy terminology in contemporary moral theology. Indeed, he presents a more accurate understanding of the major participants than any previous commentator. Ow-

ing to the conceptual difficulties, however, no writer could present a completely correct account of these theologians. Moreover, S.'s decision to establish correct terminology by relying nearly exclusively on the philosophical writings of Broad and William Frankena is helpful to a point, e.g., his claim that proportionalism is not a concrete normative method. But he sacrifices some nuance for clarity, and the concerns of moral theologians are at times marginalized, e.g., the notion of goodness conforms more to Frankena's aretaic descriptions than any theological concept of responding to grace. Still, by sorting out some of the fundamental concepts used by this century's great moral theologians, S. provides a striking *apologia* for some very credible work.

JAMES F. KEENAN, S.J.  
*Weston Jesuit School of Theology*

**EMBODYING FORGIVENESS: A THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS.** By L. Gregory Jones. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995. Pp. xix + 313. \$28; \$18.

Jones challenges contemporary presumptions that forgiveness is too costly or ineffective by reclaiming its proper theological context. He claims that the intelligibility of forgiveness and the normative contours of its embodiment derive from a Christian understanding of the ongoing, reconciling activity of our self-giving, triune God. Forgiveness as such is not primarily an act or word, but a way of life for persons and communities committed to embodying the loving communion that constitutes God's very being. Forgiveness is best learned within the Church and through its specific practices (e.g. baptism, Eucharist, prayer). But as God's reconciling activity is unbounded, Christians are called to embody forgiveness and to seek its analogues in all contexts.

J.'s argument is well served by numerous examples from literature, film, and real life that effectively embody his theological claims. These demonstrate, moreover, that the me-

chanics of forgiveness cannot be abstracted from particular lives and contexts. Characterizing forgiveness as a craft, J. frees the reader from rigid structural considerations and illuminates the endlessly creative character of God's reconciling love.

Equally important is the book's subtext. Refusing to divorce questions of theology and ethics from ecclesiology, the sacraments, and the saints, J. offers a compelling argument for how Christians ought to think about the moral life. Moreover, he overcomes the tired distinctions of private/public, sacred/secular by awakening the moral imagination to eschatological, transcendent possibilities. J. could further develop his insight that practicing forgiveness permits greater knowledge of God and self.

Notwithstanding J.'s emphasis on the importance of practices, his practical prescriptions are relatively few. Moreover, as J.'s selection of human exemplars is dominated by heroic figures in extraordinary circumstances, the reader is left wondering how forgiveness takes shape in the more prosaic contexts of the American workplace and family life (matrimony is conspicuously absent from J.'s discussion of the Church's sacraments/practices). Nevertheless, J. provides a much needed theological proposal for negotiating the recent discussion of forgiveness.

STEPHEN D. MILES  
*Boston College*

**BECOMING GOOD, BECOMING HOLY: ON THE RELATIONSHIP OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS AND SPIRITUALITY.** By Mark O'Keefe, O.S.B. New York: Paulist, 1995. Pp. 182. \$11.95.

O'Keefe represents and further develops the growing interest that some Catholic moralists have in conversing with the field of spirituality. He combines here original essays with some revised versions of earlier works. O.'s thinking on the themes of conversion, deification, and prayer are particularly rich for moralists to reflect upon and integrate into their research on character formation and decision

making. O. also succeeds in allaying any scholarly fears that engaging with spirituality will lead to pietistic devotionism and individualism. This success is accomplished by presenting a vision of spirituality grounded in an awareness of liturgical and communal reality. He holds that spirituality and ethics complete one another in the individual's appropriation of self-transcendence and in the ecclesial celebration of communal worship.

Reflected in O.'s call to attend to prayer, conversion, and deification is an effort to articulate a more authentic ethic for the Christian as Christian. His approach takes seriously the claim that the Christian is a new creation. Christian ethics is not a matter of coming to identify unique Christian behavior, but of being faithful to the Christian identity in the discernment of right behavior. Ethics and spirituality must take each other seriously because failure to do so will "make them even more remote from the actual lives of Christian people . . . and perpetuate the reduction of moral theology to moral problem solving and trivializing of spirituality to disembodied discussions of prayer" (41).

This book is a worthy collateral text to any course in fundamental moral theology; but it can also be read by all Christian ethicists in order to stimulate and deepen the conversation between ethics and spirituality.

JAMES KEATING

*Pontifical College Josephinum*

WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED: LITURGY AND THE MORAL LIFE. By Harmon L. Smith. Cleveland: Pilgrim, 1995. Pp. xiii + 265. \$14.95.

Christian liturgy, says Smith, is a profoundly moral act in that it offers to Christians the most fundamental sense of identity and vision from which moral living and acting must flow. While others have examined the relationship of liturgy and ethics, S. offers a distinctive focus on the way in which different aspects of the liturgy (confession and witness, greetings, offering and intercession, Scripture and proclamation, and sending forth)

form the Christian moral life and can inform the complex moral questions that confront Christians in contemporary society. (It is nonetheless notable that S. does not engage in explicit dialogue with earlier studies offered by, e.g., Timothy Sedgewick, William Willimon, and Don Sailers. Perhaps less to be expected, but even more fruitful would be a dialogue with the growing body of literature on liturgy and justice.)

Still, S.'s effort to demonstrate how the elements of the liturgy might enlighten particular, complex moral issues seems, at times, to stretch too thin our understanding of the liturgy's moral relevance. It is not that the liturgy is unimportant to our vision of and our response to particular moral questions—surely, the liturgy holds a foundational place in any ethics that would call itself Christian—but the response to moral questions would seem to require, as well, norms that mediate between vision, attitudes, and dispositions and the concrete complexity of moral issues. Perhaps this is the point at which S.'s laudably ecumenical approach encounters a distinctively Catholic assumption that "reason informed by faith" yields moral norms necessary for mediating between Christian identity and moral decisions.

Readers of this fine book will certainly come away with fresh insights into the unity of liturgy and ethics as well as the provocation to ponder the many theological and ethical issues raised by S.'s wide-ranging reflections.

MARK O'KEEFE, O.S.B.

*St. Meinrad School of Theology*

HOMOSEXUALITY: CATHOLIC TEACHING AND PASTORAL PRACTICE. By Gerald D. Coleman, S.S. New York: Paulist, 1995. Pp. x + 207. \$14.95.

Coleman offers thorough discussions of what is known about homosexuality, of official church teaching in regard to homosexual orientation, behavior, and the dignity and rights of homosexual persons, as well as suggestions for employing this teaching in pastoral practice. He explores

the meaning of homosexuality, its causes, the AIDS situation, discrimination against gays and lesbians, as well as the biblical foundations of church teaching.

C.'s chief concern seems to be how to present official teaching so as to promote a compassionate pastoral practice that would protect and promote the human rights of homosexual persons. He returns repeatedly to the central truth that all persons are made in the image and likeness of God, and to the compassion of Jesus for the afflicted and oppressed. He seeks to dispel myths and false information about homosexual persons, and invites pastoral ministers to honest engagement with their own possible homophobia.

What I found most interesting about the book was what it did not say or do. There is no critical reflection on official teaching, no engagement with other moral views on the topic, except for some exegesis of pertinent scriptural texts. There is no indication of where C. stands on civil rights legislation to protect the rights of gays and lesbians, or on the propriety of their serving in the military. He does repeat the official church position that sexual orientation is no basis for affirmative action policy and explains why homosexual marriage is to be rejected. No mention is made of the ordination of known homosexual persons.

Within these limits, the book is full of wise practical advice on how to deal with teenagers wrestling with sexual identity, with parents of homosexual children, with AIDS sufferers and their families. C. breaks no new ground. A great deal more could and should be said about Catholic teaching and pastoral practice, but if we could get as far as C. takes us, it would be a significant step forward.

JAMES P. HANIGAN

*Duquesne University, Pittsburgh*

**BODY, SOUL, AND BIOETHICS.** By Gilbert C. Meilaender. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1995. Pp. 134. \$21.95.

In just a few pages, Meilaender of-

fers a superb critique of much of what is wrong with bioethics today. His critique of the four-principles approach (Principlism), offered in the first chapter, is the most compelling I have read. The real problem, as M. points out, is not that Principlism ignores virtues, or emotions, or is too abstract, or that it confuses principles with rules. The real problem is that it is antifoundational. Principlism, casuistry, and Engelhardt's libertarianism are all alike in that each is an attempt to arrive at a public-policy solution to bioethics without addressing the foundational issues, such as what is to count as a harm or a benefit, to whom do these principles apply, and how are they to be used in cases in which they seem to conflict. All these contemporary theories, according to M., simply devolve into respect for autonomy, and are ultimately procedural rather than substantive. But the real debates in bioethics are not so much over procedure as they are over substantive issues such as criteria for membership in the moral community, and whether suffering has any meaning.

From this excellent beginning chapter, M. offers careful critiques of current arguments about the ethics of abortion, reproductive technologies, and embryo research. He also has included an extraordinarily insightful essay on the "dualism" of contemporary bioethics, emphasizing as it does the split between being a person and being a human body. Following Ramsey, M. argues in sound philosophical and Christian terms that being human is about being an embodied soul, or an ensouled body.

My only disappointments are that the book is quite short and that, while it offers a fine critique, there is little in the way of a positive alternative view. I hope M. is busily at work on such a project.

DANIEL P. SULMASY, O.F.M., M.D.  
*Georgetown Univ. Medical Center*

**ETHICS IN BUSINESS; FAITH AT WORK.** By James M. Childs, Jr. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995. Pp. xi + 165.

The stated purpose of Childs's book is "to help Christians in business to actualize their own vocation or ministry in the context of the ethical challenges of business and economic life" (11). Toward this end Childs relies on a Christian understanding of vocation that is grounded in biblical sources and Reformation theology. But he also claims that modern Catholic social thought since *Rerum novarum* (1891) has gradually adopted this Reformation doctrine of vocation. He brings other key themes from Christian theology, including covenantal ethics, love, Christian witness, the universal priesthood, and the reign of God to bear on a number of issues in business ethics.

A key idea throughout the book is the need to overcome the separation between faith and practical life, in this case economic life. Childs does well to recommend an ecumenical model in which parties involved in dialogue do not surrender their perspective, but exchange ideas and lay the basis for mutual cooperation. Therefore, there is no such thing as "Christian business ethics," but Christian ethics does shed a reformist light on issues in business ethics. Childs wisely does not rely on a happy coincidence of good ethics and profitable business practice (or even long-run profitability); conflicts in value are taken seriously. We must determine the right thing to do based on our convictions, not our calculations.

Although the book breaks little new ground, it will be a helpful reader for students and businesspersons. My primary criticism concerns the limits of dialogue. While dialogue is always necessary and important, one might insist on the need for more structural business and economic reform, even without adopting a liberationist or an anticapitalist ideology.

RICHARD C. BAYER  
Fordham University, New York

WORSHIP IN TRANSITION: THE LITURGICAL MOVEMENT IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. By John R. K. Fenwick and Bryan D. Spinks. New York: Con-

tinuum, 1995. Pp. viii + 202. \$17.95.

This is an informative book, a handy one-volume history of this century's liturgical movement. Not only have there been changes in Christian worship. There have also been shifts in how this activity is viewed and in what worshipers expect of it.

Yet this is also a frustrating book. While Fenwick and Spinks remind us at the outset that they have not written "a definitive history" and that their own identity as Church of England presbyters is reflected in the choices of what history to write, nevertheless it is a frustrating book for this American reader. Perhaps I should not expect to find much about the liturgical movement in North America, but an eight-page "snapshot" is hardly adequate. However, my task is to describe briefly the book that F. and S. have written, not to complain about what is missing.

There are 19 chapters, ranging in length from four to 16 pages, which present a modest and very selective treatment of individuals, events, and scholarship that have contributed to this century's changes in Christian worship—its structure, content, style, setting, tone, etc. The ecumenical character of the liturgical movement and its scholarship are rightly noted and discussed. Most helpful are the first two chapters. Here we are reminded what the liturgical movement is and what constitutes its chief features. These include a recovery of worship's communal dynamic, rediscovery of the early Church as a model, rediscovery of the Bible, of the Lord's Supper, of other Christian traditions, and of the intimate relationship that is to exist between proclamation and social involvement.

MICHAEL B. AUNE  
*Pacific Lutheran Theol. Seminary*  
Berkeley

UNSECLAR MEDIA: MAKING NEWS OF RELIGION IN AMERICA. By Mark Silk. Urbana: University of Illinois, 1995. Pp. xiii + 181. \$19.95.

Few professionals, politicians included, are more devoted to media



bashing than the clergy. And many a church-going reporter has had to sit squirming in the pew while a preacher reamed out "the media" for its coverage of a papal visit, an abortion debate, or that week's apprehension of a pedophile priest. Son of the respected *New York Times* economics columnist Leonard Silk, staff writer for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, and faculty member at Emory University, Silk delivers a compact, original, and perceptive analysis of the what has been considered the tension between the press and religion, and demonstrates how much, historically and culturally, the American press and religion have in common.

S. does not address the tension as much as explore the attitudes that inform the standard religion writer's approach to religious news events. Historically, American newspapers have moved from the Penny Press of the 1830s, when the renegade Catholic publisher of the *New York Herald*, James Gordon Bennett, first treated religion as real news, through the turn of the century, when religion was relegated to the Saturday reli-

gion page, to today's concentration on religion and social change.

Far from being an agent of secularism, S. argues, the press approaches religious issues from a series of religious categories, which he calls *topoi*, moral principles which frame each story, such as good works, tolerance, hypocrisy, false prophecy, inclusion, supernatural belief, and religious decline. Because the press has absorbed standard American religious values, reporters and editors presume that churches should feed the poor, that hypocritical preachers like Jimmy Swaggert should be exposed, that David Koresh's cult was a menace, that Muslims and Jews should be portrayed as "fitting in" to American culture. The same mindset, unfortunately, leads to squishy, uncritical coverage of "supernatural" phenomena like angels and alleged apparitions of the Blessed Virgin at Medjugorje and in Atlanta, Georgia. Thus, the press's pro-religion bias gets in the way of more complex religious truth.

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH, S.J.  
Fordham University, New York

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