

BOOK REVIEWS

PEOPLE OF THE BOOK: CHRISTIAN IDENTITY AND LITERARY CULTURE. David Lyle Jeffrey. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996. Pp. xx + 396. \$37; \$25.

Responding to Harold Bloom's gnostic (and agnostic) reading of the Western literary tradition and to Jacques Derrida's nihilistic denial of meaning, Jeffrey focuses on "the cultural and literary identity among western Christians which the centrality of 'the Book' helped to create" (xv). In a sweeping but by no means superficial survey of the entire development of scriptural interpretation from the apostolic community's reading of the Old Testament to the contemporary use of the Bible in the U.S. to further a cultural myth, J. argues convincingly that the interplay between the book reading us and our reading the book gave birth to a cultural literacy which defines Western civilization and in many ways shows contemporary critical confusion to be the manifestation of the progressive shift of authority from the text to the interpreter.

Central to that literary theory which defines us as a Western Christian culture is the recognition that the "logocentrism" which has become a stumbling block in most poststructural critical theory needs to be correctly understood. The Judeo-Christian tradition of reading is indeed logocentric, but the logos is not the physical word but the person who speaks it, the God of revelation and in particular the Logos who is incarnated. The entire history of the people of the book is one not just of trying to interpret or understand the book, but of trying to understand the person whom the word or book reveals. From the revealed truth of sacred Scriptures to the vast body of secular scriptures that have grown up out of or around it, Christian culture has been a personal quest; and the correct mode of interpretation will therefore always be ethical or personal.

Early chapters trace the growing Christian hermeneutic through the early reading community's development of *topoi* to patristic use of allegory and on into the evangelization of England, which under Alfred included a program of national literacy. Later chapters trace the development of a hermeneutic through Wycliffe's stress on the moral disposition of the reader on to writers like Baxter, Coleridge, and Matthew Arnold, as we watch the authority of the book shift over to the authority of the reader. J. is at his best dealing with medieval material, his own field of expertise; the material and illustrations dealing with the physical book as symbol of truth itself are particularly illuminating. The material on the North American scene shows how even secular voices refute the abusive interpretation of popular fundamentalist preachers by their exposure of the unauthentic reading of a text they may not themselves hold sacred.

Aligning himself with writers like George Steiner, Italo Calvino, and Walker Percy, J. points out that the postmodern charge of logocentrism, the premise that meaning is achievable, even to the uninitiated, is “the stumbling block of a certain type of literature, biblical and otherwise, parable or historical narrative—that it makes a *lack* of critical distance the indispensable condition of ‘getting it right’ ” (371). Thus for J. there are two kinds of readers, the “hard-hearted” and the “broken-hearted.” The hard-hearted reader is concerned with elevating literary theory to the level of primary texts. The broken-hearted reader is in need of repentance and healing. Secular texts of high literary merit, as well as sacred texts, are revelatory and will be accessible to those who are as willing to be read or interpreted by them as they are to read them. Correct reading of any text is ultimately personal, without in any way denying the value and indeed the necessity of critical tools. But what the Christian literary tradition has kept alive is that reading and interpreting are personal activities, recognizing, first of all, the Person behind the word of revelation and the persons behind all texts. J.’s position may not persuade those for whom concepts like transcendence or Incarnation lack truth status, but it does offer a convincing, deeply and widely informed reading of almost 2000 years of a book-oriented culture.

Given the very subject matter one might have wished greater care in the transcribing of Latin, as, e.g., in the citing of “*rex quondam, rexque futuris*” for “*rex quondam, rexque futurus.*”

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PHILIP C. RULE, S.J.

HONEST TO JESUS: JESUS FOR A NEW MILLENNIUM. By Robert W. Funk. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996. Pp. x + 342. \$24.

The well-publicized claim of the Jesus Seminar that “less than 20 percent of the words attributed to Jesus in the gospels were actually spoken by him” raises the question how “honest to Jesus” the founder of the Seminar, Robert Funk, actually is. Generally speaking, I am more impressed by what he affirms than by what he denies, although what he denies is the focus of most media attention.

F. is a scholar of great erudition, and what he writes on the more “objective” matters of biblical languages, the formation of the New Testament canon, and the problems of biblical translation provides valuable information for the beginning student. He has some important things to say on the fragmentation within biblical scholarship. In the sections of the book concerning Jesus’ parables and aphorisms—the two types of material which the Jesus Seminar is prepared to accept as possibly authentic—F. has many valuable comments. He offers an extended exegesis of the parables of “The Good Samaritan” and “The Prodigal Son” and has some insightful observations on Jesus’ rhetoric. However, when he declares that Jesus “does not advise people how to live or how to behave,” he loses some credibility.

F. sees himself as a follower of the 18th-century rationalist Reimarus. Like Reimarus, he believes he is exposing a cover-up, and that those who criticize him and his Seminar are "censors," "bookburners," and "not-so-grand inquisitors." The work of Raymond Brown and John Meier is dismissed as "an apologetic ploy." The evangelical fervor which F. imbibed at a Bible college in Eastern Tennessee has turned into unabashed anticlericalism: "passion for truth was not compatible with that role [of parish minister]."

Reimarus's "theory of fraud" permeates the book's argumentation. F. accepts the view of Dominic Crossan that the Passion Narratives were fabricated on the basis of Old Testament prophecy. Thus the correspondences which once gave assurance that the events of the Passion were in accordance with God's will are now interpreted as evidence of authorial fraud. The miracle stories are "marketing devices" by which Jesus is "assimilated to secular categories." The label of "fiction" can be attached for quite contrary reasons. On the one hand, "if the storyteller does not know the place, time, and customs of the story being narrated, we can be confident that his or her tale is not history." On the other hand, the "assignment of names and the particularization of place enhance verisimilitude in fiction."

I disagree with many of F.'s conclusions. I do not think that apocalyptic sayings by John the Baptist were mistakenly attributed to Jesus. In Matthew's Gospel, the movement is in the opposite direction: the proclamation of the imminence of the kingdom, which only Jesus delivers in Mark (1:15; see Matt 4:17), is placed by Matthew on John's lips as well (Matt 3:2). It may serve the ideology of the Jesus Seminar to play off wisdom sayings against apocalyptic sayings, but introverted and extraverted religious imagery are complementary. Both types of sayings are found within the Synoptic tradition and the Gospel of Thomas, though with different emphases (cf. Saying 3: "The kingdom is inside of you, and it is outside of you"). There is therefore no reason to doubt that Jesus made use of both types of imagery.

F.'s determination to eliminate any connection between the "real" Jesus and the Christ of the creed leads him to reject what is perhaps the most distinctive element in Jesus' teaching: the conviction that his ministry is a special period in which God's kingdom is secretly at work. Jesus' disciples are like wedding guests, for whom ascetical practices are manifestly out of place (Mark 2:19). To exclude such "implicit Christology," F. interprets the saying to mean that "Jesus apparently thought of *life* (emphasis mine) as analogous to a wedding celebration."

I am also troubled by the rejection of those parts of the tradition where Jesus appeals to the authority of the Hebrew Scriptures. When F. declares that Jesus "does not look to Moses or the prophets or the sages of Israel for his wisdom," he is attempting to separate Jesus from his Jewish tradition and to undo an important contribution of the Jewish-Christian dialogue. (I doubt, incidentally, that F.'s substitution of "Judean" for "Jewish" will catch on.) This part of his characteriza-

tion reminds me uncomfortably of the Aryan Jesus proclaimed by certain German Christians during the Third Reich.

The foil for F.'s crusade is the wide-spread ignorance of history, e.g. "Did Jesus become a Christian at his baptism?" But this ignorance is not peculiar to the Church; it pervades our culture. Moreover, if church people are generally ignorant of history, F. seems woefully ignorant of religion. For him "religious truth" seems to mean historical information *about* religion; the experience of religion receives no acknowledgment: spirituality is considered "self-indulgence." He stresses the importance of the imagination and rightly says that "[t]he truths of religion are more like the truths of poetry than the truths of the empirical sciences." Moreover, in the concluding pages F. comments on a number of myths, both ancient and modern. Yet, regrettably, he seems to have no appreciation of the role of myth, the Christian myth included, in the transformation of human consciousness. He refers contemptuously to "the mythical and legendary debris of the Christian tradition."

I agree with F. that a transformation of Christianity is urgently needed, and I believe that a reclaiming of Christian gnosis could have an important role in this process. However, I can see no such role for the secular sage which the Jesus Seminar would like to put in the place of the Jesus of the Gospels. This "modern" Jesus is a typical product of an extraverted positivism which has no sense of the sacred. This is hardly what the new millennium stands in need of. On the contrary, F.'s Jesus is part and parcel of the incubus of rationalism from which we all need deliverance.

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SCHUYLER BROWN

THE LETTER OF JAMES: A NEW TRANSLATION WITH INTRODUCTION AND COMMENTARY. By Luke Timothy Johnson. Anchor Bible. New York: Doubleday, 1995. Pp. xix + 412. \$35.

One is delighted to read a commentary on a New Testament epistle that gives priority to its argumentation and then does justice to that priority. I wholeheartedly commend this commentary on both counts. Johnson's analysis of James is also the most comprehensive, "encyclopedic" work on that letter to date and will on that secondary score alone command attention for decades to come.

J. handles the standard introductory questions in a fresh, even engaging way. He introduces major issues under the following headings: "The Character of the Writing: The Voice" (covering text, language and style, structure, genre and literary relationships, moral and religious perspectives); "Circumstances of Composition: Whose Voice?" (authorship and related issues such as the author's language); "History of Interpretation: How Was the Voice Heard?"; and "Explanation and Interpretation: On Hearing James' Voice."

The last, quite brief section is a most welcome addition to the stated concerns of any commentary. For it challenges the reader to move

beyond the description of what James or any other author is saying to engagement with the author's ideas. This need to engage personally with the text is all the more evident in reading James. For his letter sets forth a protreptic discourse, a form of wisdom that not only includes exhortation but also focuses on a consistent form of behavior, defining its moral teaching in terms of a specific profession of life.

The first section persuasively argues that the aphorisms of James 1:1–27 (a kind of epitome of the work as a whole) can be aligned with 2:1–5:18 in fairly simple fashion. It also introduces, under the more general heading of literary relationships, J.'s refutation of the alleged contradictions between James 2:18–26 and Paul's views on faith in Gal 3 and Rom 4. The refutation serves as a good example of J.'s over-all method in handling major issues. He does not try to cover every aspect of the problem at once. Thus, he first establishes common ground between James and Paul and argues that nevertheless, on the score of justification, they are not talking to one another but each is addressing concerns specific to himself. In his second section, J. breaks the Pauline fixation by demolishing the simplistic conflict models of various scholarly traditions. Accordingly, James can be heard for his own voice, in terms of 108 verses rather than 12, and not as a muting of Paul. Finally, in the commentary proper, J. carefully dissects the meaning of each specific text and integrates it into James's argument as a whole. This technique may require the reader to go back and forth through the commentary. Nevertheless, it insures careful, repositioned looks at the total picture as well as progressively closer attention to all the relevant details, and proves to be more satisfying than a single response.

The third section of the introduction, which covers the entire history of the interpretation of the letter, helps establish this commentary as essential to future research on James. One would be hard-pressed to uncover an approach that J. has not already found and concisely discussed.

The major test of the value of this work, of course, lies in its exposition of the text. Within the confines of the format for the Anchor Bible series, J. has engineered the best approach: he immediately follows his translation of each major section of the text with a view of the passage as a whole; only after this does he repeat smaller portions of the passage, adding particular notes and comment. In this way, J. keeps leading the reader back into the text and to the interrelationships within each major section. Perhaps his treatment of the epitome (1:2–27) is the most important and satisfying instance of this technique. His discernment of different aspects of the polar opposition that is characteristic of James should fascinate the reader. There are three sets of contrasts: that between two measures (one from God, the other from the world), that between attitudes and behaviors consistent with each measure, and that between sham religiosity in speech or appearance and true devotion pure and undefiled before God. J.'s penetrating

analysis has helped me make very good sense out of James for the first time.

In many years of reviewing scholarly books, I do not think I have dealt with any that I found more enlightening and less open to objection on any notable count. I do think that J. "dances about" the theological issue concerning the "sacramental" anointing of the sick. The practice, especially in a context dealing with the power of the community's prayer (5:12–20), might have been more forthrightly addressed. It might be shown to be at least a notable institutionalized, sacramental development of the kind of "training missions" that Jesus had given his own disciples. Mark 6:16 seems similar to "prefiguring" of church ministries known to the Christian readers of texts like the multiplication(s) of loaves (Mark 6:30–44; 8:1–9 and pars.) and the Johannine references to Jesus' having his disciples baptize (3:22; 4:1–2).

In a word, however, regarding all the general and particular aspects of this commentary: *bravo!*

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CHARLES HOMER GIBLIN, S.J.

THE JOHANNINE LETTERS: A COMMENTARY ON 1, 2, AND 3 JOHN. By Georg Strecker. Edited by Harold Attridge. Translated from the German by Linda M. Maloney. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996. Pp. xlv. + 319. \$46.

I was not happy with the choice of Bultmann's slim volume for the first Hermeneia commentary on the Johannine Epistles (1973). Bultmann's attempt to carry his source theory from the Gospel to 1 John was a failure, and the editors should have chosen Schnackenburg's much superior commentary (the English translation of which did not appear until 1992). I have no such complaint about the present replacement. Over twice as long as Bultmann's study, the late Prof. Strecker's commentary (German original 1989) is a worthwhile volume to have in English. If I express disagreements below, that should not distract from my appreciation for the scholarship the book embodies. I found it a wonderful dialogue partner as I reflected on positions taken in my own commentary, of which S. showed generous cognizance.

S. draws on the first attestations of 2–3 John, which are somewhat different than for 1 John, to contend that the short letters were written around A.D. 100 by Presbyter John mentioned by Papias. The Gospel and 1 John were written *later* by other members of the Johannine School. It is very difficult to establish even probabilities about the authorship and relationship of the four Johannine works, but I have problems about some of S.'s reasoning. On the same page, he acknowledges that 1 John lacks the external marks of a letter and yet would designate 1 John as "a homily in the form of a letter" (3). Why "in the form of a letter" when it lacks all the characteristics of a letter? Why not simply a written homily or instruction? That is not a minor point since one of S.'s principal arguments for the thesis that 2–3 John were

written by a different author from 1 John (a thesis I reject) is that the author of the latter does not call himself "the presbyter." However, 2–3 John are genuine letters, and the form of letters demands that the writer identify himself in some way; there is no such expectation in a homily.

Further ramifications of the basic position become apparent later in the volume. The attack on those who deny "Jesus Christ coming (*erchomenon*) in the flesh" in 2 John 7 cannot be interpreted from the chronologically later "has come in the flesh" of 1 John 4:2. Rather the presbyter-author of 2 John is insisting on a chiliast position: Jesus Christ will come again in the flesh to establish a messianic reign on earth. Diotrephes of 3 John who rejects the presbyter and his emissaries is not only a more structured ecclesiastic rejecting one whom he regards as a charismatic claimant of the Spirit but also a representative of emerging orthodoxy rejecting a heretically inclined chiliast. That is a fragile interpretation, for there is little in the rest of the Johannine corpus of Gospel and Epistles that would have oriented a Johannine writer towards eschatological exaggeration. The heretical interpretation would seem even more implausible if the presbyter of 2 John had already written 1 John which reflects a strongly orthodox orientation.

As for 1 John, I agree with S. that probably the same man did not write John and 1 John, but again I am puzzled by the argumentation, e.g., "Whereas 1 John is ecclesiological, the orientation of the Gospel is christological" (5). That difference, however, probably arises from composition at a different moment of community history, with the Gospel written just after struggles with the synagogue(s) over the identity of Jesus and 1 John during inner-community struggles. Similarly we learn little about authorship from the fact that "the author of 1 John betrays no knowledge of any traditions about the life of Jesus" (another of S.'s arguments) if the author had already written up such traditions in his Gospel. (This exemplifies a general difficulty with the volume: I would have preferred more emphatic exposition of the limitations of arguments even when the general thesis may be judged probable.)

Overall I would bring 1 John much closer to the Gospel than S. does, with the result that the theses of the opponents in 1 John may plausibly be related with some consistency to a (mis)reading of the emphases of the Gospel. For S., those criticized in 1 John are docetists who would distinguish the earthly Jesus from the heavenly Christ, whence the emphasis that Jesus Christ came by (*dia*) water and blood, i.e., by his baptism and by his sacrificial death (1 John 5:5). However, 1 John's emphasis on his coming in (*en*) water and spirit suggests that the author also did not agree with the opponents about the community sacraments of baptism and Eucharist, since docetists often did not accept eucharistic reality (182–84). Yet S. would see no polemics against the opponents in the equally strong emphases of the author on

ethics and on claims to be sinless. For me, two factors, viz., the failure of the Gospel to present detailed ethical instructions (since that was not a point of dispute with the synagogue), and a logical connection between denying the full reality of the fleshly career of Jesus and neglecting the importance of believers' life in the flesh, would make a strong case for positing both a christological and an ethical aspect to the error being counteracted. Ethical affirmations in 1 John were meant to guide the community, but that does not dispense with a polemical thrust.

Despite these differences on some general approaches, I agree with much of S.'s detailed exegesis of passages. His judgments show a wide familiarity with the literature, including patristic comments (much more than one normally finds in a commentary); and he is insightful. All future discussions of 1 John will have to take his contributions into account.

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RAYMOND E. BROWN, S.S.

THE RISE OF CHRISTIANITY: A SOCIOLOGIST RECONSIDERS HISTORY. By Rodney Stark. Princeton: Princeton University, 1996. Pp. xiv + 246. \$24.95.

At times someone raises questions that radically challenge the accepted, conventional, time-tested explanations of an area of specialization. Stark, a sociologist, does just that for those who are interested in the beginnings of Christianity. For over a decade he has indefatigably searched for answers to the question: What gave rise to Christianity? In this study he reduces the question to: How did a tiny and obscure messianic movement from the edge of the Roman Empire dislodge classical paganism and become the dominant faith of Western civilization? S. wants to broaden the field beyond the traditional responses given by church historians and historical theologians. He realizes there is an absence of adequate historical information on those early centuries and sets out to "reconstruct the rise of Christianity on the basis of many inferences from modern social scientific theories" (27). He makes use of his own formal theorizing about religion and religious movements. He also uses the arithmetic of the possible and the plausible to test various assumptions. Most of the material has been published previously at least in a preliminary version. Here S. brings it all together in one well-developed, comprehensive response.

S. poses the question of the class basis of Christianity. Against the belief of most historians and sociologists today that Christianity was a movement which drew from the poor, the slaves, the dispossessed, the downtrodden, he argues that an unusual number of Christian converts came from the upper social classes, the empowered, and the privileged. S. reasons that it takes a certain sophistication to understand a new religion and recognize one's need to leave the old for the new; it is

always the privileged class who seek new options. S. shows this to be true today: survey studies of persons attracted to new religions show that a much higher percentage comes from the college-educated group than from those who did not attend college. He argues his thesis further by calling Christianity a "cult movement" in the context of the empire, just as the Mormons were a cult movement in the context of 19th-century America. Statistical surveys of cult groups today demonstrate that converts are well educated and from the privileged class who possess a degree of sophistication. From this evidence, S. infers that "Paul's missionary efforts had its greatest success among the middle and upper middle classes" (45). Today many New Testament historians would agree with S. This question is one of great significance. If Christianity had been a movement from the downtrodden, then the state would surely have treated it as a *political* threat and made every effort to eradicate it in brutal ways. If on the other hand we think of Christianity as a movement of the relatively privileged who had "members, friends, and relatives in high places—often within the imperial family," (46) then we can understand the sporadic persecutions and the times when Christians were pardoned and dealt with in a humane manner.

S. presents two very important factors in the growth of Christianity when he studies the role of women in Christian growth. First, Christian fertility played a significant role in the rise of Christianity. In pagan Greco-Roman society marriage was held in low esteem, prostitution abounded, female infanticide and abortion were encouraged. Therefore there were far fewer women than men. Since Christianity prohibited such practices, girl babies were allowed to live, and women soon outnumbered men in the community. This abundance of Christian women resulted in ever higher birth rates over the years. Second, a high rate of exogamous marriages was crucial to the rise of Christianity. Since there were not enough Christian men, Christian women were permitted to marry pagan men. Exogamous marriages were a great source of converts. Surveys show that inter-marriage today between very committed religious persons and those who are less religious results in the less religious person joining the religion of the more religious. From this S. generalizes that exogamous marriages provided "the early church with a steady flow of secondary converts" (128). He further argues that children born of these marriages were reared as Christian. It was extremely important that Christianity remain open and build bonds with outsiders.

S. also examines how Christianity responded to the misery, chaos, fear, and brutality of Greco-Roman city life, providing "new norms, new kinds of social relationships able to cope with many urgent urban problems" (161). Christianity taught that God loves the world and all of humanity and that Christians please God when they love and are merciful to others. To strangers and aliens Christians offered a basis for attachments and community life; to orphans and widows, a new

and expanded sense of family; to victims of fires, earthquakes, and epidemics, effective nursing service; to cities torn apart by violent ethnic strife, a culture devoid of ethnicity. This was the cultural basis for the revitalization of a Greco-Roman world "groaning under a host of miseries" (212).

Because Christianity was a stronghold of mutual aid, the survival rate in times of crisis was far greater for Christians than for pagans. Christianity's effectiveness in meeting those problems and making life in the cities more tolerable played a major role in its growth and eventual triumph as the state church in the time of Constantine.

S. offers many provocative, fascinating, and challenging theses and presents his evidence in clear, readable prose. He is a careful scholar who tests his sociological assumptions and reconstructions against primary historical records and the views of other scholars. He realizes that social-science models are quite inadequate in some situations but is convinced they can provide insights. His book and its extensive bibliography expose readers to the rich and varied sociological and cultural content of life in the first four Christian centuries and open many avenues for further reflection.

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DOLORES LEE GREELEY, R.S.M.

GNOSTIC TRUTH AND CHRISTIAN HERESY: A STUDY IN THE HISTORY OF GNOSTICISM. By Alastair H. B. Logan. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1996. Pp. xxiv + 373.

Scholars currently engaged in the study of gnosticism fall into two main camps. Most of the North Americans and Germans, including this reviewer, think that the earliest mythological roots of gnosticism developed alongside early Christianity in a heterodox or syncretistic Jewish environment. But a fair number of British and French scholars continue to defend the patristic view that gnosticism emerges from Christian circles. Logan, who belongs to this second camp, attempts to defend the view that gnosticism originated as Christian speculation on the nature of God, salvation, cosmos, the redeemer, etc., by engaging in a detailed analysis of a set of texts that represent what both sides agree to be core examples of gnostic thought, the *Apocryphon of John* and reports of Barbelo and Sethian sects in Irenaeus's *Adversus haereses* I, chaps. 29–30.

The argument depends upon a complex hypothesis concerning the various redactions and textual history of the two versions (a long and short, each represented by two manuscripts) of the *Apocryphon of John*. In addition, L. employs segments of related topoi from other gnostic writings and advances theories about their editing and relationships along the way. Readers who want to tread their way through the argument would do well to equip themselves with the parallel text edition of the *Apocryphon of John* (M. Waldstein and F. Wisse, ed., *The Apocryphon of John: Synopsis of Nag Hammadi Codices II, 1; III, 1 and*

IV, 1 with BG 8502, 2 [Leiden: Brill, 1995]). In addition, xeroxing L.'s charts of the development of the gnostic myth and redaction levels of the *Apocryphon of John* (55–56) so they can be at hand makes for easier reading. Most of the book consists in a detailed exegesis of the versions of the *Apocryphon of John*, which necessarily jumps back and forth between the long and short recensions. It contains valuable insights into the complexities of the heavenly emanations, into the various treatments of Sophia (Wisdom) that appear to be layered in the texts, the variations of the creation of humanity and of the redeemer's descent as savior. But L. begins with a hypothesis (xx) that is so necessary to his reconstructed myth, the priority of Irenaeus's Barbelo gnostic myth in *Adv. haer.* I, 29, that he cannot at the same time have demonstrated its priority. Consequently, his refutation of suggestions concerning the originating gnostic myth advanced by other scholars is not as complete as he suggests.

More problematic still are such generalizations about the development of early Christian theology and liturgy, such as that "it was the 'Gnostics' of Irenaeus who, by their myth of the primal anointing and perfection of the heavenly Son, were the first to claim to be Christians precisely because of that chrism, and who may even have been responsible for the introduction of postbaptismal anointing into 'orthodox' Christianity!" (19). While it is highly likely that some gnostic sects practiced a baptismal rite that involved chrismation, liturgical theologians should not rush out and attribute "orthodox" Christian practice to the gnostics. Toward the end, L. attributes the "gnostic influence" claim to G. Lampe (280), not to what his own analysis has demonstrated. Similarly, when all is said and done, L. has not demonstrated that the gnostic myth he reconstructs has derived its Old Testament exegesis from the ideas of Paul and John or its Sophia redeemer system from Christ and Wisdom in Hebrews and the Psalms, all filtered through Platonism and the gnostic baptismal rite (22). The argument for dependence on Hebrews is asserted rather than tightly argued at every point (94, 181–82, 195).

As a study of gnostic myth-making and system building, this book is a seminal work. But we have some way to go before the significance of this material for the history of Christian theology and liturgy is established.

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PHEME PERKINS

SEVEN DOORS TO ISLAM: SPIRITUALITY AND THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF MUSLIMS. By John Renard. Berkeley: University of California, 1996. Pp. xvi + 333. \$45; \$16.95.

In this survey of Islamic religiosity, Renard enters the house of Islam through seven gates: Islamic revelation, prayer, ethics, symbolism, society, learning, and mysticism. These seven themes are woven together in the conclusion and viewed through the prism of the Qur'anic prophet

Joseph. Islamic theology, religious law, and philosophy fall outside R.'s purview, because he maintains that "the writings of professional theologians and jurists have generally had little direct influence on the everyday lives of the vast majority of Muslims" (xiv). He also, rather consciously, brushes aside the scholarly tradition of rigorous studies on Islamic spirituality. As a result, the book is heavily oriented toward the experiential side of Islamic spirituality rather than toward the systematic expression of the religious life of Muslims. Clearly intended for the undergraduate textbook market, the book does not attempt to break new ground in analyzing the spiritual life of Islam but rather assembles a group of essays, focussed on topics that are intertwined with phenomena of Islamic religiosity.

Renard understands his "seven doors" to open into seven rooms and invites the readers to enter one after another. Somewhat confusedly, he has his readers follow an ascending spiral course to the uppermost floor which, at the same time, is the innermost center of the house. The journey to the central peak of this inner pyramid is actually interpreted by R. as the discovery of the Muslim's deep inner core.

To cover such a vast journey to both the loftiest apex and inmost depth of Islam, stretching horizontally across the religious geography of the Muslim world and descending vertically into the depth of the Muslim soul, R. bases himself on a somewhat flexible and amorphous definition of spirituality (xiii) and defines Muslim religious life broadly as "the whole range of pious practice and creative endeavor that is inspired by and fosters spiritual growth" (xiv). In developing these seven stages of his imaginative and highly interpretive overview, R. seeks to combine various methods: assembling an anthology of spiritual themes, probing a selection of written sources, surveying the visual data of artifacts, including occasional references to historical circumstances, and taking some cues from the biographies of Muslim mystics and poets. This hybrid methodology produces a house richly furnished in symbolic ornament, covered with mirrors, and draped with monumental tapestries. The many and variegated images blend into one another as if in an undifferentiated stream of consciousness.

The highly subjective picture of Islam painted by R. makes for interesting perusal and inspiring leisure reading. If a comparison may be made between a spiritual and a political adventure, one might be tempted to see R.'s effort to capture the inner contours of Islam through his *Seven Doors* as not unlike Lawrence of Arabia's portrayal of the political reality of the Arabs in *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. R.'s *Seven Doors* reads like a spiritual adventure, one written in a very pleasant and entertaining style. Throughout the work, the author consistently demonstrates his skill as a writer who knows how to engage his readers without exhausting them despite the many cultural and spiritual details they are asked to absorb.

R. communicates his personal apperception of Islam through the incorporation of a wide range of symbols and images. However, he

hardly offers an introduction to Islamic spirituality that would provide the future scholar with the solid religious foundation on which the house of Islam, with all its spiritual dimensions, rests. While the scholar of the history of Islamic religion may find R.'s work lacking the firm spine of scholarly rigor, the reader wishing to savor a taste of Islamic spirituality may welcome it as a multifaceted introduction.

Yale University

GERHARD BOWERING, S.J.

ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENTS AND BELIEF IN GOD. By Graham Oppy. New York: Cambridge University, 1996. Pp. xviii + 376. \$59.95.

This is not a beach book. In his exhaustive (and often exhausting) survey of the various types of ontological arguments for the existence of God, Oppy places extensive demands on the reader's attention and reading skills. It is at once the virtue and challenge of this book that we are presented with meticulous reconstructions of historical forms of the argument, together with variations and objections (and often objections to the objections) that are both amazing and intimidating in their thoroughness. O. offers us a taxonomy of variations on the general theme that is historically useful (although he claims disinterest in the fine points of historical exegesis) and logically insightful. In addition to the main text, the book contains an appendix of some 130 pages, in which O. surveys virtually every significant discussion of the various forms of the ontological argument in the recent literature (the earliest reference I noticed on cursory examination of the summary was an 1896 article in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* by one C. Webb).

If this were all the book offered, we would have what amounts to an extremely thorough and extensive annotated bibliography, certainly a useful and valuable contribution, but not any significant contribution to the *status questionis*. But O. is after much bigger game. He wants to show that *no* form of the ontological argument gives "dispositionally reasonable agnostics—theists, atheists—a reason to change their views" (xii). That is, "there cannot be a dialectically effective ontological argument" (116), and in fact this conclusion can be established in advance of examining any particular form of the argument. This leads O. to conclude further that these arguments are of no use even to those who accept their conclusions; that is, they cannot establish that belief in God is reasonable. On the other hand, ontological *dis*proofs of the existence of God suffer the same dialectical defects: they cannot prove that belief in God is unreasonable. "There is no other use to which ontological arguments can be adapted by theists or atheists. Given their dialectical impotence, there is no other purpose that they can successfully achieve. Thus, I conclude that ontological arguments are completely worthless. While the history and analysis of ontological arguments makes for interesting reading, the critical verdict of that reading is entirely negative" (199).

There is something discomfiting about this pessimistic conclusion. O. bases it on a general feature he discerns in ontological arguments: "No matter how they are interpreted, these arguments have one reading on which every reasonable person will agree that they are invalid, and another reading on which those who are not antecedently convinced of the truth of the conclusion of the argument can reasonably reject one of the premises" (114). What is unsatisfying about this general approach is that it relies on what many would consider a one-dimensional and inadequate concept of rationality. This inadequacy is compounded by O.'s limitation of the term "argument" to apply to "a set of sentences, one of which is claimed to follow logically from the rest" (xv). This last presupposition virtually guarantees that no project like Anselm's "faith seeking understanding" can possibly succeed.

Finally, O. uncritically assimilates belief *in* God to belief *that* God exists. One feature of discussion of the nature of God by authors as diverse as Thomas Aquinas and Kierkegaard is that God *cannot* be said to exist as one being among others. God, in other words, does not belong to the extension of any predicate, so the name "God" is not a name like any other. Perhaps the real problem is not with ontological arguments as they are situated within a faith community, but rather with the procrustean bed into which modern philosophers of religion have tried to force them. About this latter project O.'s negative judgment may be entirely accurate.

In taking the approach he does, O. misses the opportunity to examine the much more interesting question of how arguments of the type provided by Anselm or Descartes might be related to the faith of believers, where "faith" is understood as a much richer concept than the crabbed and desiccated "belief that God exists." But this is perhaps more a critique of the entire tradition of modern philosophy of religion than of O.'s scholarly and careful analysis of its treatment of ontological arguments. Concerning the real questions about arguments about belief *in* God, D. Z. Phillips is certainly right in his comment, "They would say that I was blind to the truth, and I should say the same of them. Of one thing I am certain: in this context, philosophy alone will not bring the blind to see" (*The Concept of Prayer* 160).

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T. MICHAEL McNULTY, S.J.

EVENTS OF GRACE: NATURALISM, EXISTENTIALISM, AND THEOLOGY. By Charley D. Hardwick. New York: Cambridge University, 1996. Pp. xvi + 309. \$54.95.

One of the most startling and original books of theology to appear in years. Hardwick's essay in Christian theology begins from the proposition that "theologians must take far more seriously the possibility that naturalism provides the true account of our world, and indeed in its materialist or physicalist version" (xi). Drawing upon the nonre-

ductive physicalism of John F. Post's *The Faces of Existence* and the religious naturalist thought of Henry Nelson Wieman, H. uses naturalism not to define the content of faith but rather as a constraint on what faith *cannot* say. As the most powerful intellectual force in modern culture, naturalism (as exemplified especially by physics) sets boundaries for any contemporary claim to knowledge (71, 6). Some will take issue with H.'s appeals to science in behalf of physicalist naturalism, since many scientists involved in the religion-and-science dialogue have become increasingly favorable toward assertions of specific divine agency. (See, for instance, the writings of John Polkinghorne and the volumes on divine action edited by Robert John Russell, Nancey Murphy, et. al.) Moreover H.'s admission of "emergent properties" and the explanatory (though not causal) autonomy of domains outside physics, such as anthropology and psychology, raise questions as to just how physical his physicalism really is.

For H., no personal deity exists. "God exists" is nonreferential and yet objectively true, since a distinct deity has no place within the physicalist inventory of existing entities and yet "God exists" functions valuationally (not ontologically) to articulate a specific mode of seeing the world. By embracing a physicalist account of the world and construing faith as self-understanding, H. weds naturalism to the sort of existentialism he expounded in an earlier monograph on Fritz Buri. As one might expect from a student of Buri's thought, the relationship to Bultmann is twofold. Bultmann is lauded for inaugurating the agenda of demythologization and for construing faith as self-understanding, yet upbraided for retaining a personal God and so rendering his own existentialist position incoherent. In effect H. seeks to carry forward Bultmann's stated premises with radical consistency. If faith is simply self-understanding, then a personal God is redundant. A certain doublesidedness also characterizes H.'s relationship to Schubert Ogden, who in his view succeeds in rendering doctrines existentially yet fails to break fundamentally with theism. Both classical theism and revisionary theism unconvincingly assert a personal God linked to a cosmic teleology and a final conservation of value (i.e. an afterlife or its equivalent). Since H. presupposes the falsity of classical or supernaturalistic theism, the real targets of his argument are revisionary theists such as Langdon Gilkey, Charles Hartshorne, and Ogden.

To make his case, H. has to connect the natural world as rendered by contemporary physics and the subjective realm disclosed in both existentialist analysis and Christian theology. He does this by means of three "bridge principles": an exhaustively existentialist conception of faith, a notion of "transformation" (based on Wieman) that interprets God's action naturalistically as that which confers abundance on human life, and a concept of Christian faith as a "seeing-as." Yet do these bridges really cross the water? The first principle seems to be planted only on one side and thus not a bridge at all. The second connects the physical with the theological, but at the price of vagueness ("God" as

whatever confers abundance?). The third principle of "seeing-as" is planted on both sides of the water and yet (pace H.) it still remains difficult to distinguish from Wittgensteinian noncognitivism.

Readers unsympathetic with naturalism may be surprised by the force of H.'s argumentation and the degree to which his argument anticipates and circumvents possible objections. Moreover, his "valuational" approach to theology has clear historical precedents in such authors as Augustine, Luther, Ritschl, and H. Richard Niebuhr. Those disagreeing with H.'s premises will benefit from his well-crafted presentations of grace (115–57), Christology (209–53), and eschatology (254–87). Those agreeing with H. on the failure of traditional theism will be provoked to consider just how far theology can and should go in dispensing with a personal God altogether. Given H.'s own appeals for candor and clarity, it seems fitting though to underscore a question that he poses but never quite answers: "How . . . can such central Christian notions as 'forgiveness' and 'justification' be rendered without a personal God?" If "only a personal God, it would seem, can carry the religious centrality of love in Christianity" (14), then how can Christian thinkers embrace H.'s naturalistic program for theology without throwing out the proverbial baby with the bathwater?

In the history of Christian theology, it has often been the radicals who forced liberals and conservatives alike to redefine their agendas. So with D. F. Strauss, Ludwig Feuerbach, Arthur Drews, and Thomas Altizer. If H.'s book precipitates a reassessment of basic theological issues, then it will become for all an "event of grace" indeed.

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MICHAEL J. McCLYMOND

FRAGMENTS OF THE SPIRIT: NATURE, VIOLENCE, AND THE RENEWAL OF CREATION. By Mark I. Wallace. New York: Continuum, 1996. Pp. xii + 237. \$29.95.

Wallace here presents "a postmetaphysical model of the Spirit" (171). While his first concern is the ecological crisis, he focuses not on the details of an immanent ecological collapse but on the construction of a pneumatology that can allow for the kind of other-centered concern that W. considers the only remedy to ecological disaster and the concomitant violence wrought by anthropocentric understandings of creation.

W.'s postmodern position comes into relief in his rejection of both the "assurance of knowledge" offered by metaphysics (Ogden) and the "thoroughgoing historicism" of neopragmatism (Rorty). He proposes the "wager of belief," recognizing that this wager is based on fragmented intimations of hope rather than on philosophical or narrative foundations. Wittgenstein's performative notion of truth serves here in its constructive emphasis on provisional positions which demonstrate an "agapic utility." Similarly, W.'s Reformed commitment to Scripture leads him to a "postmodern *ad fontes* theology," in which theology is

understood more along the lines of a rhetorical art than a philosophical discipline. This position, he argues, best engages the "heterogeneity and instability" of Scripture, as it privileges the lens of "wisdom" rather than the lens of "narrative."

The approach of rhetoric/wisdom is particularly helpful for W. as he addresses the intersection of sacrifice and violence as it is legitimized in a religion characterized by the dialectic of mimesis-violence described by Girard. A text that moves from the story of Abraham and Isaac to the account of the death visited on those who deceive the Spirit in Acts cannot be adequately confronted, according to W., by the homogenizing theology of foundationalist theodicies based on metaphysics (Swinburne) or narrative (Thiemann).

W. thus constructs a pneumatology that highlights the classical tradition's understanding of the Spirit as the bond of love uniting the first two persons of the Trinity. This enabling of perichoretic unity is exploited by W. in a presentation of the Spirit as the bond of life between human and nonhuman, between all things and their "other" (Lévinas). The Spirit functions as both "personal agent" and "inanimate force," making transparent the distinction between "thou" and "it" and thus allowing for a genuine community of life among all forms of creation. Indeed, W.'s insistence that the Spirit is "a natural being" in a work that also discusses the Spirit's role in the immanent Trinity almost seems to suggest the postulation of a created hypostasis, albeit this time a nonanthropological one. His argument that theology should be pneumatocentric rather than christocentric is seen in his emphasis on biblical texts that portray Jesus ("Christ" is not used) as leaving the stage to make way for the Spirit: the anthropological focus yields to (nay, is superseded by) the biophilic.

W.'s project leaves several intriguing loose ends for Christian theology, though whether he intends to make an explicitly "Christian" case is an open question. He rejects McFague's pantheism as less than fully earth-centered in its maintenance of a God who transcends creation, describing his approach, against McFague's "Christian paganism," as a "revisionary paganism." This seems inconsistent with his attention to Scripture, in which God is seen as intimately involved with, yet author of, all life. (It goes without saying that he finds a notion such as providence to be "untenable.") Also unclear is how a project that insists on the heterogeneity of the portrayal of the Spirit (particularly as regards violence) in Scripture can finally argue for the Spirit to be understood in a "nonsacrificial" manner. Finally, W.'s turn to modern theodicy in the face of violence and evil seems to neglect that this is a fairly recent category that is not universally embraced by Christian theologians, who turn to *theology* when philosophical and narrative strategies fail.

These questions, however, merely point to the complex texture of W.'s constructive reflections on the Spirit, reflections well grounded in his compact presentation of postmodernity. This is an excellent piece of

work, lucid to the point of luminosity, delivering clarity without sacrificing the *fascinans*. By his careful engagement with the contemporary mind (indeed, by his attentive analysis of his own doubts), W. has produced a book that is both intellectually stimulating and religiously compelling.

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NANCY A. DALLAVALLE

THE SPIRITUAL QUEST: TRANSCENDENCE IN MYTH, RELIGION AND SCIENCE. By Robert M. Torrance. Berkeley: University of California, 1995. Pp. xvii + 367.

The "spiritual quest" of the title is considered the culminating expression of a universal activity by which humanity is defined, in large part, as human. The quest is viewed as a formative activity which finds many and varied expressions. Torrance examines this activity from its essential foundations or preconditions, its social, biological, psychological, and linguistic bases. This grounding in the structure of human nature, of course, accounts for its presence in every part of the world, and hence prompts T. to examine religious and "quest" behavior in ritual and myth, spirit possession, shamanism, and visions. He surveys cultural areas as diverse as Australia, Eurasia, Africa, and native America. Parts 1 and 6 examine the preconditions of the quest and close with considerations toward a theory or synoptic vision of its nature and structure. In between, the major portion of the book looks at the various expressions that the quest has taken in different times and places, mainly but not exclusively in tribal societies.

Religion is one source of the spiritual quest, but T. does not identify the two. The quest, from his perspective, is more fundamental. The individual's search is grounded in the biological, psychological, and linguistic conditions of human life and culture, without which society and religions would themselves be inconceivable. T. ranges far and wide in dialogue with thinkers who may have something to say about the development of the self (Kant, Darwin, Monod, Freud, Piaget) or of human speech (Saussure, Chomsky, Peirce), and in some ways the very breadth and selectivity of the survey leaves the reader with the sense that T. has painted a persuasive picture but not a very sharp one. He argues, for example, that the spiritual quest is "the creative process par excellence," that "we are at best homo sapiens not in the flesh but in the spirit, that is in unrealized potentiality." Hard to disagree with, but hard to know what to make of it.

Part 6 tells us what to make of it and this section should engage the theologian more fully than Part 1; in the former, in "A Ternary Process" and "The Reality of Transcendence," T. puts together a theory of quest. Two of the principal characteristics of the quest are its variety and open-ended nature; and the tripartite structure of the rite of passage (Van Gennep's separation, transition, and incorporation) can help us understand the quest, especially since the results of, say, a vision

quest are never fully predictable. For T. the vision quest epitomizes the self-transcendence of the human person. Using analogies from physics and biological evolution, he concludes: "The tripartite structure of the rite of passage and vision quest is deeply rooted, therefore, in a reality shaped and reshaped by time—the reality of structured process, of self-transcendence through repeated transformation of an intrinsically mobile equilibrium in a direction that can never be known" (269).

The final chapter begins by asking what the object of this quest is, the goal incessantly pursued but never fully attained. T. turns to C. S. Peirce and K. Popper to give shape to his answer: the quest is to transcend subjective experience through objective knowledge of a larger reality. This quest takes place not only in science and religion but in language itself and in narrative movement.

A brief summary does not do justice to T.'s closely reasoned argument and dialogue with other authors. For the anthropologically informed reader it does not seem necessary to demonstrate that the variety of religious impulses cannot be reduced to common denominators. Other readers may find the final chapter more tantalizing than conclusive. Even though T. clearly takes a position in his approach to understanding "the questing animal," the nature of the spiritual quest itself seems to preclude arriving at some conclusion, nor does it offer the consolation that the search itself, while inevitable, is nonetheless worth the effort. At any rate, T. provides a fruitful perspective from which to view issues of fundamental theology. While professional theologians may not want to wrestle with shamans and visionaries, they cannot avoid the nature of transcendence, and that is what T. grapples with so productively here.

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EDWARD M. O'FLAHERTY, S.J.

THE TRUTH OF BROKEN SYMBOLS. By Robert Cummings Neville. SUNY Series in Religious Studies. Albany: State University of New York, 1996. Pp. xxv + 320. \$19.95.

"Religious symbols symbolize the infinite but themselves are finite. . . . A broken symbol is one that effectively engages us but whose limitations are also known" (x). Neville's purpose in this closely reasoned book is to argue for the validity of such broken symbols not only in theology but also in the prayer life of individuals and in the organization of church and society. Heaven, for example, is not literally a place where one sees God "face to face" and is reunited with family and friends after death. But it still has an objective referent which can be investigated theologically. Likewise, the notion of heaven conditions the hopes for salvation of the individual Christian, shapes the liturgical life of the Church, and impacts upon the conventional sense of morality even of secular societies like the U.S. Neville thus chooses a middle-ground position between a fundamentalism that insists upon the literal truth of biblical symbols and a psychological or sociological

reductionism that treats religious symbols as mere subjective fantasy and/or the inevitable outgrowth of unconscious needs and desires.

In his opening chapter N. defends the strictly representational character of religious symbols even as he allows for their equally important functions in shaping the devotional life of individuals and the organizational life of churches and civil communities. In Chapter 2, perhaps the most original (and controversial) part, N. argues that "all religious symbols have a primary reference directly or indirectly . . . to boundary conditions contrasting the finite and the infinite" (47). Thus the symbol of God as personal or even tripersonal cannot be understood literally since it refers both to what is finite, namely, the notion of person, and to the transpersonal or infinite which lies beyond the representation of God as personal and "is the creator of persons, personality and personhood" (224). Chapter 3 deals with the meaning of symbols both with respect to their situation within interdefining and overlapping symbol-systems and in terms of the actual use made of them by individuals. Chapters 4-5 lay out the different contexts in which religious symbols are used: theological, devotional and organizational. Chapter 6 addresses the current feminist critique of patriarchal symbols in Christianity and other world religions with the contention that religious symbols can have unintended negative social consequences because of their continued involvement in an unjust or oppressive cultural context. The final chapter sums up N.'s argument by focusing on the truth of religious symbols now from the organizational perspective of church and society, then in terms of the devotional life of the individual believer, and finally from the attempt at objectivity and rational understanding in theological reflection. Obviously, what counts as "true" in one context may not be equally true in another. What feeds the devotional life of the individual, for example, may be seen as false or at least misleading by professional theologians.

This is not an easy book to read, still less to critique, partly because of the intricate subject matter and partly because N. brings to bear upon the issue of religious symbolism a philosophical/theological system which he has patiently worked out over many years in a long series of books. At the same time, the book is certainly worth the time and effort required to master its contents because of the sheer wealth of information and insights which it provides. I single out for critique only one point. N. returns repeatedly to the question whether the divine is to be understood as personal or transpersonal. I agree with him that personhood implies determinateness and thus finitude; to be a person is to be defined in terms of one's relations to other persons. Likewise, I agree that the divine as such must be seen as infinite or indeterminate. Yet, would it not be possible to argue that, while the divine persons are fully determinate and thus "finite" in terms of their relations to one another and to their creatures, they nevertheless share in the infinity and indeterminacy of the godhead, their common nature? If so, then personhood, unlike other religious symbols which are

strictly finite (e.g. God as the "rock" of my salvation), might point to something intrinsic to divinity rather than simply to the boundary between the finite and the infinite. Clearly the matter deserves further discussion.

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JOSEPH A. BRACKEN, S.J.

RATIONALITY IN SCIENCE, RELIGION, AND EVERYDAY LIFE: A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF FOUR MODELS OF RATIONALITY. Mikael Stenmark. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1995. Pp. xi + 392. \$32.95.

One of Stenmark's main objectives in this work is to argue "against a too narrow conception of what 'rationality' is all about" (2). He succeeds in this objective insofar as he distances himself from classical analytic positions, all of which are explored in some detail as aspects of the formal evidential model of rationality: "the verification principle, Flew's falsification principle, Popper's falsification principle, the evidential principle, the proportionality principle, the rule principle, and the principles of simplicity, scope and explanatory power" (173). He fails to develop a broader conception of rationality to the extent that he insists that "rationality must be clearly disconnected from truth" (221): "What a person believes may be rational but false, or irrational but true" (287). Because of this highly formal and analytic distinction between rationality and knowledge, S. claims that "the debate on whether people actually are rational in believing in God or the sacred is in fact over!" (14).

S. is masterful in his exposition and criticism of formal evidentialism, which holds that "it is rational to accept a proposition (belief, theory, and the like) only if, and to the extent that, there are good reasons (or evidence) to believe that it is true" (41). He sympathetically portrays the evidentialists' dream of a "rule-governed procedure" for the whole field of rationality that would produce conclusions as ironclad as those of mathematics and logic (57). In the final analysis, however, he finds every version of formal evidentialism to be "self-referentially incoherent" and therefore "self-refuting" (80).

The second model of rationality is social evidentialism, a derivative of Kuhn's "practice-oriented model of scientific rationality" (141). In this model, S. recognizes "two individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions of rationality": the evidential principle (a belief is rationally acceptable only if it is arrived at by a person who exercises informed judgment), and the social principle (a belief is rationally acceptable only if it has been exposed to or tested against the judgments of a community of relevant expertise). Because this model is centered on judgment as the focal point of rationality, it provides a framework for understanding science as "fallible and open to reconsideration when necessary" (130). In the skillful act of forming a scientific judgment, the scientist makes a commitment to theory that goes beyond a simplistic or mechanical view of the evidence (135).

S. holds that "social evidentialism gives a good, maybe even the best, account of scientific rationality we have at present," but does not find it adequate as a "general model of rationality" (193). In developing presumptionism, the model he prefers, S. does not sharply demarcate it from social evidentialism as he does from formal evidentialism. In keeping with social evidentialism, he maintains that "*judgment* is the primary mode of evaluation open to us" (215). S. makes his most dramatic break with the analytic tradition both in this affirmation of judgment and in the correlative assertion that "[t]he central category of rationality is a rational person not a rational belief" (216). However, to the extent that social evidentialism follows formal evidentialism in demanding "a constant search for evidence or reasons," S. argues that it is "not a rational way of governing one's believing" (210).

In contrast to both forms of evidentialism, presumptionism is based on the axiom of reasonable demand: "One cannot reasonably demand of a person what that person cannot possibly do" (194). S. intends to "construe rationality *realistically*" (208). The outcome of this approach is the claim that "rather than needing a special reason for everything they believe, [people] must be ready to give up their beliefs if special reasons to change or reject them emerge. . . . The proper initial attitude is taken to be believing, not disbelieving" (25). This is perhaps the high-water mark of S.'s withdrawal from the analytic tradition and approach to a fully developed postcritical philosophy.

In his concluding analysis, S. strives to dissociate presumptionism from contextualism, which holds that "What is rational or irrational can be determined only internally, from within a context (practice); there exist no context-independent standards of rationality" (303). Again he uses the argument from self-referential inconsistency with devastating effect to show that if the principle of contextualism is true, it can never be brought to bear on an opposing view: "contextualists can disagree only with each other, not with people who disagree with them, since they have different and incompatible conceptions of truth" (344).

It is not clear why S. considers his version of presumptionism immune from a similar critique, since he holds that "what is rational to believe is always relative to a particular situation . . . What is rational for you need not be rational for me" (230). When rationality is so sharply separated from the notion of truth, it is true that atheists can no longer challenge the rationality of religious believers (and vice versa), but it also makes it impossible to challenge the rationality of various forms of superstition and prejudice; for example, we could no longer judge that the practice of witchcraft or the persecution of witches were both forms of irrational behavior. In the last analysis, this aspect of S.'s position seems self-defeating, narrow, and unrealistic.

GOD OWES US NOTHING: A BRIEF REMARK ON PASCAL'S SAD RELIGION AND ON THE SPIRIT OF JANSENISM. By Leszek Kolakowski. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1995. Pp. x + 238. \$22.95.

Questions about grace are a sea without shore or bottom. In this highly readable work Kolakowski, a Polish philosopher best known for his critique of Marxist theory, launches into that sea in two related yet independent essays, "Augustine and the Jansenists" and "Pascal's Sad Religion." Both are erudite, combining historical scholarship and philosophical analysis.

In the first, K. analyzes the five condemned propositions of Jansenius and argues that they are genuine reflections of Jansenist positions and of Augustinian teaching on grace. Hence K.'s revisionist thesis: condemnation of the propositions implied repudiation of Augustine's position and a major mutation in the Western Church, for by "de-Augustinizing" itself the Church opened a door to emerging modernity. Two world views clashed: the Renaissance's optimism and aborning modernity's vision with its esteem of individual autonomy, creativity, and change; and the austerity of the Augustinian-Jansenist vision with its sense of alienation in a world that is God's implacable foe. Papal condemnations of Jansenism effectively opted for the former, for Jesuit leniency over Jansenist rigorism, for a benevolent God who overlooks the peccadillos of the bourgeoisie and the nobility, for a Pelagian anthropology. Hidden in this strategy for survival was the Church's abandonment of a millennium of Augustinianism.

The second essay examines the *Pensées*. Not just a collection of aphorisms, it is an apologetic for Christianity (not Jansenism) that, while inspired by Jansenism, surpassed it. K. includes an insightful analysis of Pascal's wager, the *pari*, that is an antidote to facile misreadings. In his anti-Enlightenment thrust, Pascal is our contemporary.

K.'s thesis is inviting. Yet one might argue that a movement that looked askance at the "natural," beggared Aquinas's integration of nature and grace, translated Nominalism's diremption of the two into a form of life, and harbored a gnostic streak exceeding Augustine's in distrust of bodiliness merited censure. Against K.'s contention that urbanization's abetting of individual freedom disposed society to a Pelagian outlook one might note that the Reformation's Augustinian revival took wing in urban centers. Or one might question K.'s interpretation of texts (e.g. *ST* 1-2, q. 109, a. 3, 5, and 7) or some of his conclusions (e.g., that catering to modernity, the Church adopted the Jesuit idea that salvation is neither offered nor denied gratuitously, or that the new catechism is semi-Pelagian). But the axial issue remains K.'s questionable thesis that "Jansenism is faultlessly derived from Augustine's theology" and that censure of one is rejection of the other.

K. takes Augustine's stress on grace to be, as for Jansenists, abdication of human freedom. However, Augustine's thick notion of grace does not compromise his concern with autonomy. Nor can his profound moral psychology, which K. does not probe, be reduced to his late

anti-Pelagian polemic. For K., freedom seems to reside in choice, liberty of indifference, sheer indeterminacy, freedom from constraint, ability to sin. This is not Augustine's view of freedom; motiveless choosing, independence of all desire are unintelligible; and sin is unfreedom, a will mortgaged to its evil past. Augustine never equated free will with freedom from constraint; the latter, generally *liberum arbitrium*, is an ability to act on desire and expresses itself in acts sinful or virtuous, though only the latter expresses authentic freedom, being what one is meant to be. Being determined to the good is as necessary for freedom as light for seeing; such determination begets the necessity that all love knows. Being free is being able to sort out good values from bad and respond accordingly. To refuse to act in accord with what we judge best is to render ourselves unintelligible. The refusal defies our motives. It adds nothing to the attribution of agency to wrap into every consent to motivating good an unexpressed power of refusal. Moreover, because all willing is continuously time-bound, Augustine's God never enters from without to make conquests of a moment within, but is the seductive power of the good ever present in any biography's seamless narrative.

Perhaps there is another obstacle to threading Jansenism to Augustine. Conflicting 17th-century parties share a mindset seeking system and clarity and tending to reduce analogy to univocity. Causal action attributed to humans was simply ratcheted up when applied to God, thereby shrinking God, sustainer of all causal activity, to one more agent intervening in a line of finite agents, thus easing the way to deism and atheism, as God, filler of gaps, became an otiose hypothesis. To the extent that Jansenists shared this mentality they impoverished grace, their strong emphasis on it notwithstanding, for God became one more, perhaps disruptive, player in the human arena with a percentage of responsibility for good works assigned to God and humans, or human agency collapsed altogether. But Augustine and Thomas viewed divine agency as the enabler of human freedom, not its competitor. They espoused no determinism of grace but two orders of efficacy, the mystery of whose relationship outstrips the capacity of theology's broken discourse to span the distance between language about God and language about humans. The issue for them was not whether grace and freedom are compatible, but whether freedom is even possible apart from grace. Utter transcendence entails utter immanence; one is most autonomous when most dependent on the gracing God.

Read in this light, K.'s fascinating book and its debatable thesis raise intriguing historical and theological questions well worth pursuing.

THE IMAGE OF GOD: GENDER MODELS IN JUDAEO-CHRISTIAN TRADITION. Edited by Kari Elisabeth Børresen. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995 [1991]. Pp. 291. \$21.

These ten essays, some of which were previously published in another form, date from 1981–1989, and were first made available in Børresen's native Norway by Solum Forlag. A major objective of this collection is to demonstrate that only when both men and women are understood to be theomorphic (possessing God-likeness) does theology become a fully human discourse.

Following B.'s brief introduction which provides a reminder that defining females as fully God-like is a postpatriarchal Western development, each contributor addresses how the "image of God" has been construed from different disciplinary perspectives. Arranged chronologically, the essays survey understandings of the image of God with a focus on gender differences beginning with biblical times: in Gen 1:26–28 and Gen 2–3 (Phyllis Bird); in early Jewish texts and Temple practices (Anders Hultgård); in Gal 3:28 and 1 Cor 11:2–16 (Lone Fatum); and continuing with major formative periods of Christianity: in early mainstream Christian and gnostic sources (Giulia Sfameni Gasparro, Kari Vogt); interpretations of Gen 1:27 and 1 Cor 11:7 by patristic and medieval authors (Børresen); in the writings of Luther and Calvin (Jane Dempsey Douglas); and in contemporary feminist hermeneutics in dialogue with the findings presented in the other essays (Rosemary Radford Ruether). The primary sources examined are predominantly male because few writings by females are available. Many, but not all, of the contributors provide helpful bibliographies.

Reflecting ecumenical breadth, the collection includes contributions by Methodists, Lutherans, Presbyterians and Catholics. Although the subtitle highlights the "Judeo-Christian tradition," there are no contributions by Jewish scholars. In addition, although B. describes the collection as "international," there are no essays by Asian, African, African-American, or Latina theologians. The contributors are from Western Europe and the U.S.

The subtitle also includes a reference to "gender models," but no explanation of what is meant by model is provided. Gender is treated both as a biological given (which would more often be referred to as "sex" in current literature), and as a socially and culturally shaped network of assumptions (the more usual current understanding of gender).

Although much of the material will likely be familiar to feminist theologians, the advantages of this collection consist in having the research on the developing tradition of God-likeness gathered into one volume and in bringing fresh and challenging insight to some already well-known terrain. A highly provocative essay is that of Lone Fatum from Denmark, who argues that the uncritical egalitarian interpretation given to Gal 3:28 by feminist scholars on apologetic grounds has prevented them from sufficiently addressing problems associated with

it and with 1 Cor 11:2–16. Her analysis leads her to conclude that Paul's reference to male and female in Gal 3:28 presupposes the abolition of biological sexual (reproductive) distinction and does not relate to socially constructed gender categories. Paul, reflecting his preference for celibacy, is arguing that in Christ the concern of Christians for sexuality ought to be nonexistent. It is therefore hermeneutically unfeasible to draw support for equality for women in the social sphere from Gal 3:28; in 1 Cor 11:2–16, Paul clearly demonstrates that he supports existing societal gender policy independently of Christ.

In B.'s own essays, research from earlier writings is in evidence, but her succinct correlation of the arguments of Bonaventure and Aquinas on why women lack God-likeness as females with their objections to the ordination of women to the priesthood is particularly convincing and makes a thought-provoking contribution. Her analysis demonstrates that the modern redefinition of human God-likeness as including women as females undercuts the scholastic sexology upon which the tradition forbidding the ordination of women has been based.

A shortcoming of the collection is the absence of a more thorough treatment of Genesis 2–3 by a biblical scholar, since Eve (as helpmate and/or temptress of Adam) plays such a predominant role in determining women's secondary status in the Christian tradition. Bird devotes eight and one-half pages to Gen 1:26–28, summarizing her 1981 argument that the reference to male and female anticipates the directive to "increase and multiply," but only two and one-half pages to Gen 2–3. The collection would also have been enhanced by an index of terms and authors, since several of the essays address the same concepts and sources. In spite of some weaknesses, a graduate course on theological anthropology or feminist theology would find this a valuable collection for supplementary and even required reading.

Duquesne University, Pittsburgh

ANNE M. CLIFFORD

MARY THROUGH THE CENTURIES: HER PLACE IN THE HISTORY OF CULTURE. By Jaroslav Pelikan. New Haven: Yale University, 1996. Pp. x + 267; illus. 18 b/w, 18 color. \$25.

This companion volume to *Jesus through the Centuries* (1985) explores the progression of Marian devotion through a series of vignettes treated in roughly chronological order. To chart Mary's hold on the imagination of the West, Pelikan, a grand master of historical theology, draws from a wealth of sources, including painting, sculpture, icons, architecture, music, literature, poetry, prayers, and visions, in addition to theology and official doctrine. From brief New Testament references to typology that associated her with the biblical figures of Eve, Wisdom, and the bride of the Song of Songs; from the great Theotokos and virginity debates to the spiritual nature of icons; from the medieval flowering of her role as mediatrix to the Reformers' emphasis on her faith; from 19th-century visions to the 20th century's Assump-

tion definition and Vatican II (a brief two and one-half pages), Mary stands out as the most influential woman in the history of religions.

While P.'s methods are historical, three intriguing systematic assumptions govern his exposition. First, that the Marian tradition is a prime example of how doctrine develops, an original idea producing ever new ramifications through the centuries. Next, that Mary is a true *pontifex maximus*, for her symbol functions as a bridge (*pons*) between diverse cultures and traditions, linking Judaism and Christianity, Christianity and Islam (Maryam as the most important female figure in the Qur'an), Eastern and Latin Christianity, rich and poor, and different races (Guadalupe, the Black Madonnas). Again, that Mary is to be cherished as the most outstanding example of the Eternal Feminine. In answer to the running question of just how a "humble peasant girl from Nazareth" with sparse New Testament references became the subject of such sublime and even extravagant speculation, P. quotes Goethe's *Faust*: "the Eternal Feminine leads us upward" (175, 223). The figure of Mary shows what women can be and lures human hearts into the vision of God.

The strengths of this volume include its ecumenical scope, its use of diverse sources, its wealth of erudite detail, its interesting connections, and its readability—which make key moments of the Marian tradition accessible to an educated reading public.

There is an occasional odd sentence, e.g., "Christian asceticism certainly predated Christianity" (113), and an occasional error, e.g., the influential *Mary: A History of Doctrine and Devotion* was written not by Carol but by Hilda Graef (225). It is somewhat disappointing that P. gives such short shrift to the 20th century, focusing only on the Assumption dogma while eschewing genuine developments that have occurred in ecumenical, liberation, and feminist theologies. His endorsement of the hermeneutic of the Eternal Feminine is far from acceptable to thinkers who have analyzed it as a male construal of ideal womanhood which leads actual women to political and spiritual dead ends. In point of fact, P. explicitly chooses not to grapple with critical thinking about the Marian tradition that has appeared in contemporary scholarship, admitting it only to dismiss it as trendy.

On balance, therefore, this book fills a niche as an informative synthesis of what has been; it is less than helpful in discerning how that past might be a liberating prologue.

Fordham University, New York

ELIZABETH A. JOHNSON

SEEING THROUGH TEXTS: DOING THEOLOGY AMONG THE ŚRĪVAIṢṆAVAS OF SOUTH INDIA. By Francis X. Clooney, S.J. SUNY Series Toward a Comparative Philosophy of Religions. Albany: State University of New York, 1996. Pp. xxii + 351. \$24.95.

Clooney is a student of the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition within South-East Indian Hinduism. His book is an exercise in "comparative theology," a

theological subdiscipline C. has helped define as an encounter between cherished religious commitments: “seeing Christianity and Śrīvaiṣṇavism together” (39).

A first chapter introduces the ninth-century song cycle *Tiruvāymōli* and its saintly author, Śaṭakōpan, one of a circle of sages so united with the Lord Viṣṇu that his writings created theological tradition. For six centuries, they elicited exegesis, interpretation, and commentary, offered by *Acāyas* (teachers) inspired by the great twelfth-century thinker Rāmānuja. Their writings became canonical; the tradition continues to this day. In Chapters 2–3, C. moves us (in more ways than one) to accompany him, first through *Tiruvāymōli*, then through five teachers’ interpretative “takes” on it; *Tiruvāymōli*, they show, is meditation, narrative, and drama. In a beautiful fourth chapter, these three functions turn into an invitation to participative understanding, along with the Śrīvaiṣṇava tradition, of *Tiruvāymōli* as a guide on the road to union with God.

A final chapter, modestly subtitled “Some Marginal Insights, Presented in Reflections,” brings in the theological harvest of the exercise: *Tiruvāymōli* invites any theologian to become a *prapanna*—one so “surrendered” as to have deeply savored, deeply enough to admit intellectual defeat before mystery. “Mystery” here is not so much the Mystery of Mysteries “in itself,” but Mystery as expressed in and mediated by texts that have fashioned (Gadamer’s *Bildung*) generations of Indian saints and sages living by the unspeakable desire for abandon to the Unknown that remains Unknowable. They did so in thought and text and action, using *Tiruvāymōli* and the commentaries on it as guides to contemplation, life, and practical decision making. The foundation of this method of doing theology as well as its fruit is “a carefully cultivated intellectual virtue which extends the scholar to the limit and which can profitably inform the whole comparative enterprise. It is the ability to suspend . . . the quest for . . . system, to plead a kind of helplessness, at least for now. It is the cultivation of an openness not only to questions, but also to events, encounters, inclusions, and without protection” (310).

Echoes of Socrates? Yes, and in two ways. What we hear is not just Socrates observing he was wise enough to acknowledge his ignorance, but also Justin Martyr’s profession of faith in the divine Logos known in Jesus Christ and for that reason also recognizable in the culture at large, through the utterances of the likes of Socrates.

This reviewer’s theological tastes and insights have been shaped to a significant extent by training in literature both classical and modern. Simply from this point of view, what C. does is delightful: ever so carefully, he introduces us, presumed literates, to great souls who have ventured to write elegantly and wittily, at the risk of being misunderstood, to bear witness to the inner affinity—in themselves *and* in their readers—with the Unknowable, in quest of loving union. Unable, perhaps, to share their “take” on the Transcendent, we can be educated by

their deeply educated fascination with It. Thus, in C.'s company, ignorance turns into blessing; by enlightening us about what has happened on the way to God and to a truer self in India he teaches us Christian theology; we become more deeply Christian for pursuing understanding and love at their speechless best. In reading texts in this fashion, "one is thrust forward in a kind of ecstasy, always *from* one's home position, but not limited within its boundaries anymore" (309).

In the Great Tradition, this method of theologizing is not really new, thank God. Clement of Alexandria, the Cappadocians, Evagrius, and Augustine drew the best out of the world of letters that had civilized them; contentedly, they incorporated these *spolia Aegyptiorum* into the Tradition's journey through the desert on the way to the Promised Land. Medieval Christians developed and orchestrated the pagan convention of courtly love to explore the human potential not only for inner civilization and mutual regard, but also for mysticism, as C. S. Lewis showed in *The Allegory of Love*. Dante consistently mines both Scripture and the literature of Rome and Greece as he travels from the Pit of Hell toward the Presence of God. A 14th-century French poet discovers morality in (of all people) Ovid. Chaucer quotes Paul to explain that everything written is Scripture for our instruction. Why? Because it is integral to the Great Tradition to want to bring the whole world home to God. Late medieval nominalism, post-Reformation confessionalization, and Enlightenment rationalism drove this desire into abeyance, as if the world were merely a stage on which the salvation of (a portion of) humankind is enacted. But at Vatican II, we witnessed the recovery of Jesus' phrase "kingdom of God," absent from Denzinger until the council. After a centuries-long dry spell, filled with self-important argument over sin and salvation at the expense of the praise of God and the pursuit of a reverent, loving, discerning love of the world, it is wonderful to watch the Great Tradition recovered and its generous vision restored.

Loyola University, Chicago

FRANS JOZEF VAN BEECK, S.J.

THE ENCHANTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY: A STUDY OF THEOLOGY AND CULTURE. By Kieran Flanagan. New York: St. Martin's, 1996. Pp. xiv + 293. \$69.95

Flanagan offers us a highly original, often brilliant, if sometimes quirky, *tour de force* that deserves to rank on any short-list of thoughtful books (of which, alas, there is a very meager supply) truly correlating theology and sociology. He avoids facile subordination of sociology to theology, as if sociology were merely an auxiliary science providing theology with "facts." He espouses a thorough-going hermeneutical understanding of sociology. Following the usage of the pre-eminent French sociological theorist, Pierre Bourdieu, F. speaks of a "reflexive" sociology.

Reflexive sociology has emerged as sociology, itself a product of and

earlier celebrator of modernity, comes face to face with postmodernity. New themes of anxiety, the body, risk, and the problems of constituting any anchored self-identity have surfaced. Postmoderns (indeed, even chastened moderns, such as the critical theorists of the Frankfurt School who figure prominently in this account, especially Walter Benjamin) now have their own reasons for fleeing a purely secular reason gone mad. Reflexive sociology probes its own ways of distorting and concealing what it studies, even as it reveals. It includes a strong dose of a hermeneutic of suspicion about the power, in the reproduction of culture in modernity, to commodify everything, to steal and trivialize the sacred in order to sell soap or beer.

Sociologists have turned again to culture as a central category because of the challenges of postmodernity. Thus, "sociological forms of reflexivity . . . can shift the sociologist from a reading of the surface of culture to a decipherment that embodies an issue of theology. But if the reading points towards seeking a trace of God, then assumptions about what is concealed turn to issues of what has been misappropriated, what is missing from the site that has been stolen, that might signify other states of affairs, those relating to God" (143).

The word "enchantment" in the title evokes Max Weber's fears of modernity ushering in an "iron cage" which would disenchant the world. Classic tragic or pessimistic readings of the situation of modernity by sociologists such as Weber and Georg Simmel (who could speak in a classic essay of "the tragedy of culture") guided us to the distortions of modernity without giving any easy solutions or ways out. It seemed that modernity, like hell, has no exit. F. senses that the bleak and secularizing forces of modernity have been partly spent (or seen through). Postmodernity's critical reaction to a linear technical rationality and its openness to play and the apophatic leads to a paradox: "The form that effects disbelief can also actuate belief" (143).

Like Peter Berger whom he evokes, F. is highly critical of trendy liberal theologians who rushed to embrace modernity whole cloth just as secular reason saw its sinister shadow sides. He is no more gentle toward theologians who work with the notion of inculturation. He considers them naive about the dialectic tensions in any culture, about the way in which, in reproducing itself, it also reproduces inequality, hegemony, injustice. "There is a sense that theologians do not know how to think in relation to culture in terms sociologists would recognize. They might say this does not matter. But it does, given the crisis of culture they are surrounded by, with numbers falling and an entropy and disillusion settling into traditional Christianity" (98).

His subtitle carries the brunt of F.'s critique of theologians, who are the main addressees of the book: theologians miss new opportunities to see how the same culture which fosters disbelief can become a site for belief. "The most serious charge sociology can make against theologians is that they have failed to provide the cultural means of generating religious commitment" (183).

The categories theologians use to understand culture remain impoverished. "The cultural field does not 'naturally' organize itself in a disinterested manner . . . On the field of culture wars are fought over position, over the siting of the forms of representation and reproduction. . . . There are definite agendas for securing territories that presuppose the endless exercise of symbolic violence between the tastemakers, the symbol brokers and those who manufacture images of virtual reality" (190). Theologians, following the naively passive dialogue of celebration of culture espoused by *Gaudium et spes* or in most theories of inculturation, are like lambs awaiting slaughter. They have abdicated their instruments of defense and do not know the argot of the cultural field.

This is an immensely learned book. Thoughtful discussion of sociologists encompass Anthony Giddens, Clifford Geertz, Nicolas Luhmann, Georg Simmel, Erving Goffman, Weber, and Durkheim. Pierre Bordieu becomes the master narrator, however, of the main sociological story line. Philosophical and theological comments range adroitly across Charles Taylor, Nicholas of Cusa, H. Richard Niebuhr, and Jean Luc Marion. But Hans Urs von Balthasar—that most sociologically tutored of modern theologians who turned to Simmel and Goffman to get his theory of dramaturgy—gets the last word. As I read I kept thinking, "David Tracy would love this book." But I also kept wondering, "Could someone less erudite than Tracy follow the argument as closely?" F. infuriated progressive liturgists in England by his earlier writings about liturgy for their very conservative stance. If some of F.'s remarks seem aligned to conservative positions, however, the mind that generated them is both radical and fresh.

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JOHN A. COLEMAN, S.J.

MAX WEBER AND DEMOCRATIC POLITICS. By Peter Breiner. Ithaca: Cornell University, 1996. Pp. xvi + 237. \$39.95.

In his essay "Politics as a Vocation," written toward the end of World War I, Max Weber set forth his classic distinction between a political ethic of "absolute ends" and one of "political responsibility." He then used this distinction within the context of his overall sociological theory of power and authority to argue largely against radical democratic movements in favor of accommodation to the political struggle among professional politicians involved in party machines and civil administration. For Weber, politics, the realm of the possible, is more likely to be destroyed by world-transcending commitments than positively transformed by them.

Breiner seeks to rescue Weber from this antidemocratic conclusion by drawing on elements of Weber's own theory. To do this, however, he has to contest Weber's overly sharp contrast between value choice and scientific social analysis. Indeed, B. claims that Weber's own prudential assessment of politics already constrains his sociological typologies

in the direction of party-governed rather than participatory democracy. Moreover, Weber's formulation of ultimate values as categorially separate from social-science reason undermines efforts to seek moral reform through the thick consequentialism of everyday politics. To make his democratic case B. has to go behind Weber's rejection of Kant's rational grounding for a political ethic to some combination of Rousseau's politics of moral education and, in veiled form, to Habermas's rational ethic of public discourse.

In making these appeals B. wants to reknit the prudential with the "scientific" components of an adequate political ethic. In wresting politics back from "responsible professionals" he contends that Weber could argue for the need for democratic publics of the general citizenry to hold politicians accountable to wider estimations of the common good, at the core of which is the very commitment to the cultivation of personal dignity through sustained argument about what citizens might legislate for themselves over and above their narrow self interests.

Ethicists and theologians will want to critique B.'s own effort to hold together responsibility and personal commitments through the idea of "moral luck," surely a thin replacement for the theological notions of providence and grace that have provided classic contexts for the tragic ironies of human intention and historical necessities. They will also want to say much more about the basis for an underlying commitment to persons as self-legislating citizens concerned about the common good. While B. himself barely discusses Weber's understanding of religion in this regard, theologians can find ways to relate theories of the church to the need for real publics that mediate between the absolute claims of ultimate personhood and the often transient realizations of them in our ordinary association.

B.'s argument is dense, tight, and mostly confined to the actual theoretical apparatus of Weber's thought. It best serves only advanced readers of the Weberian literature. In spite of the great importance of Weber's own historical context in the collapse of Europe's received monarchies and estates and the abortive birth of democracy in Germany, B. unfortunately does little to interpret Weber's theoretical choices within the range of societal choices he actually faced. Thus, the only vantage point from which B. assesses him is Rousseau's, surely not the only and certainly not the best choice for a viable democratic theory that can respond effectively to Weber's claims. While his exploration of Weber's thought is admirably complex and detailed, it too gets buried in limited options rather than backing away and, for instance, exploring the way federalist theories might strengthen the argument for a plurality of countervailing publics, or how a more complex theory of state sovereignty, as in Montesquieu and American traditions, might critique and correct Weber's tragic myopia about the possibilities of democratic politics.

ERIC VOEGELIN AND THE GOOD SOCIETY. By John J. Ranieri. Columbia: University of Missouri, 1995. Pp. ix + 275. \$39.95.

As a student in Voegelin's courses in political theory and comparative government at Louisiana State University 50 years ago, I was impressed by his extraordinarily thorough and insightful coverage of history and institutions, but I had little awareness that he was developing an elaborate and profound philosophical position. When that awareness came, it seemed to me that Voegelin was moving from the concreteness of historical investigation and reflection to the abstractness of speculative philosophy. In this highly competent study of Voegelin's thought, Ranieri confirms that impression by presenting the developed system of philosophy with subordinated attention to Voegelin's study of history, and by marking some of the points at which he turned from a more history-dependent methodology to one that used historical study to exemplify dimensions of the philosophy of consciousness.

This turn permitted the clarification and systematization of human experience which then could be applied critically and normatively to the understanding and achievement of the good society—the central concern of R.'s book. That is a discernible development, but perhaps not a fully defensible one. For example, Voegelin's explanation in *The New Science of Politics* of the emergence of totalitarianism is history-specific: Totalitarianism arises out of the degeneration of a particular Christian understanding of human nature and history. It is inexplicable and unintelligible apart from its historical antecedents. In the philosophical account, totalitarianism occurs with the collapse of metaxy—the tension between “the order of reality known in consciousness and the concrete social orders created by human beings” (5). It is a “derailment” of attunement to reality. Doubtless the derailment has a particular history, but presumably it can occur at any time, and does not presuppose the particular history of the earlier, and more influential, explanation. I am not convinced that this more general, “loss of tension” explanation improves on the more concretely historical one, although it serves as a useful warning against attempts to resolve the human predicament fully and finally under conditions of temporality. Curiously, R. does not mention Joachim of Flora, who occupies a central role in Voegelin's account of the “immanentization of the eschaton.”

R. deserves very high marks for knowledge of this difficult material, clarity of presentation, and avoidance of the tendency to uncritical adulation that afflicts some Voegelin admirers. His is a critical account, not simply expository. He is attentive especially to weaknesses that can be addressed in theological terms, such as Voegelin's apparent lack of a sense of sin. On the other hand, he moves to protect Voegelin against charges of being an ideologue of conservatism, by pointing out that he was critical not only of “activist dreamers” of the left, but also of fascists and fascism. I find this defense somewhat unconvincing,

because Voegelin's primary political value was order, not justice, and his warnings against losing the tension of existence were directed mainly against those who would risk disorder for a more just society. One wonders also why Voegelin is the darling of many right-wing intellectuals.

While expressing appreciation for R.'s work, I wished also for more acknowledgment of Voegelin's critics, more inquiry into why he was so controversial, and more interplay with contemporary issues and thinkers. Those additions would provide a clearer explanation of why this enormously erudite man was and is a truly important philosopher. R.'s Introduction sets up the methodological contrast between Voegelin and Alfred Schutz, but does not exploit it significantly. The treatment lights up and moves away from abstraction when R. presents the exchange between Voegelin and Hannah Arendt. A comparison with, for example, Reinhold Niebuhr on maintaining the tension, on "Beyond History," and on the meaning and significance of the Resurrection would have been pertinent, and would have added an exciting dimension.

R.'s book is a welcome and useful contribution to secondary literature on Voegelin. It is not a book for beginners, however, and should be read with some previous acquaintance with Voegelin's work.

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THEODORE R. WEBER

CIVIL SOCIETY, CIVIL RELIGION. By Andrew Shanks. Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1995. Pp. x + 250.

Shanks has written an interesting book about the role of religion in the maintenance of civil societies. He takes his readers on a learned interpretive tour of Machiavelli, Hobbes, Spinoza, Rousseau, Hegel, Heidegger, Nietzsche, Arendt, Weil, Levinas, and Patočka, among others, in an attempt to develop a civil theology for a civil practice of religion. In the undertaking S. produces a working model for a postliberationist social theology.

S. uses the familiar term "civil religion" but in a way that is intentionally different from Robert Bellah's usage. For S., civil religion is not a mere reflection and sanctioning of the congeries of official public institutions within a society. For his purpose he redefines civil religion as the conscious critical commitment of religious people to their identity as citizens. In this way civil religion (and its theoretical counterpart, civil theology) is like political or liberation religion/theology. But it differs from liberation and political theologies in that civil religion (and its theology) is non-confessional: it does not require (or even recommend) fealty to any particular faith community, though it does not preclude loyalty to one's confessional tradition either.

S.'s civil religion is nonconfessional and ecumenical in the broadest sense and seeks to implement anything that contributes to the general good of political culture. In an overview of historical approximations of

what he has in mind here, S. concludes that Hegel came closest to formulating the type of civil religion he is advocating. That is, Hegel thought that Christianity's ideas should outgrow the church, becoming embodied in the state as an expression of a universal ethic. Without of course recommending a Hegelian role for the state, he believes that religions perform best in society when they transcend their parochialism.

S. says it is the business of civil theology, as *theology* per se, to identify what is revelatory in events and ideas, to analyze these events and ideas, and to incorporate them into a civil theological framework. The quintessential revelatory experiences of the 20th century are those of the traumatized, and therefore civil theology must entail a commitment to the "solidarity of the shaken," a phrase and concept borrowed from the Czech thinker Jan Patočka, who saw the possibility for this solidarity in a new kind of Christian faith, a faith that eschews certainty and is committed to historical alertness, a faith without any trace of "ahistorical sacrality of ecstasy" (126).

In an especially noteworthy chapter, S. offers an example of civil-theological historical alertness to the revelatory experiences of the "shaken" victims of 20th-century totalitarianism. S. believes the events issuing from the totalitarian experience were used as a revelatory vehicle by two distinct (but for his purposes complimentary) thinkers, Hannah Arendt and Simone Weil. Each thinker wrestled with the psychic impact of totalitarianism, and each recommended steps toward recovering civil society. But each had her specific concerns and optic: Arendt spoke of isonomy chastened by authority, and Weil of democracies tempered by moral or political absolutes. S. sees in the ideas of these two women the basic problematic of civil theology: the retention of the *civil* in the pursuit of isonomy and the retention of *theology* in its commitment to authority and absolute value. (Must we presume authority and value are analogues of God?) But S. repeatedly stresses that the theology of civil theology is civil, not confessional.

The upshot of his civil theology and civil religion is civil faith. But civil faith "does not depend upon Christian faith as its propaedeutic, neither does it have to be in any way in competition with Christian faith" (210). It is another kind of faith: "a faith in God mediated through faith in the city" (210).

Someone might ask why S. speaks of theology or the theologian at all? His thesis could be that of any moderate theistic (or deistic) *philosopher* or social *ethicist*. However, this well-reasoned and well-written book does offer a compelling method for a social theology and so provides an alternative to the confessional confines of liberationist theory. Many scholars of religion may be indebted to S. for that alone.

SELF-OWNERSHIP, FREEDOM, AND EQUALITY. By G. A. Cohen. New York: Cambridge University, 1995. Pp. x + 277. \$54.95; \$18.95.

This work by a distinguished Oxford scholar undertakes a detailed criticism of a "self-ownership" thesis that underlies Robert Nozick's libertarian defense of capitalism. The libertarian principle of self-ownership argues that all persons enjoy full and exclusive rights of control and use over themselves and their powers. Therefore they owe no service or products to anyone else that they have not contracted to supply. Each person is owned by himself/herself and so must be free to do as he/she pleases, as long as it does not harm anyone else. To this Nozick adds that the resources of the world, prior to their appropriation by individuals, belong to no one, so that by inference persons may gather unlimited quantities of natural resources, if again this appropriation does not harm anyone. Any effort to coerce redistribution of wealth through taxation or welfare programs violates self-ownership and is therefore a form of enslavement.

Cohen argues that this principle of self-ownership undermines not only equality but also personal freedom and autonomy. It violates justice, which C. claims is the most fundamental political value. C. draws upon Marxist critiques of capitalism, but acknowledges as deficient some of the claims Marxists have made in the past. One can hardly claim today that Marxist socialism is inevitable, a claim that rested on assumptions that a united proletarian force would bring socialism about and that society would produce an abundance of goods that would assure enough equal goods for all. Many Marxists, moreover, imply the principle of self-ownership in arguing for workers' ownership of their own labor power.

In responding to Nozick, C. employs a deductive method of analysis that places a heavy demand on readers. It includes examining the main premises of Nozick's arguments, weighing possible ways of interpreting each of the premises (including interpretations by other commentators), evaluating the consistency of each premise, contrasting Nozick's views with those of Rawls, R. M. Dworkin, and others, then evaluating the logical consistency of all the contending arguments, leading to statements of C.'s own positions.

The following points summarize some of C.'s major criticisms of Nozick's libertarianism. Even if property rights have been achieved fairly (which is often not the case), they frequently lead to an unacceptable amount of power over others. Capitalist libertarianism, far from achieving freedom for all, sacrifices the liberty of those who lack the conditions and power necessary for achieving true freedom, as in the case of propertyless workers. "To have money is to have freedom." Libertarianism assumes that the resources of the earth, prior to appropriation through private property, belong to no one. Viewing these resources as belonging to all leads to a different perspective of common ownership (a view that would support socialism). Nozick argues that both freedom and justice are observed as long as the appropriation of

property "does no harm to another." But the inequality this generates does harm others and limits their freedom.

C. concludes with an interesting autobiographical account of his life (his immigrant parents' espousal of Marxism, his own efforts to maintain the values of socialism in face of disillusionment with Soviet Communism). C. offers a skillful, serious critique of libertarianism, but one which, as my description of his method should clearly indicate, will chiefly benefit only those already deeply engaged in the Nozick-Rawls-Marxist debate or who are interested enough to work through the challenge of mastering his heavy deductive method of analysis.

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ARTHUR F. MCGOVERN, S.J.

RELATIONSHIP MORALITY. By James Kellenberger. University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 1995. Pp. ix + 450. \$57.50; \$19.95.

Perhaps because we teeter at the edge of a postmodern world without certainty, consensus, or even the possibility of closure, our struggle with questions such as whether our basic moral judgments can be justified, and if so, on what grounds often seem doomed to failure. We continue to sense that our moral convictions have some source beyond the deep passions by which we hold them. But the explanations of this foundation postulated in ages past no longer prove convincing. Most of us are well aware of the faults that accompany theories of obligation which emphasize consequences, internal coherence, or the origins of morality in divine command. Indeed many would concur with Kellenberger that the very desire for a strong ethical criterion from which might proceed all the tenets of morality is problematic. Still we query: Does this mean our moral judgments are altogether baseless?

No, argues K. Thorough and precise, his detailed, sometimes plodding, account of what lies at the center of the moral life is not an easy read. However, scholars interested in exploring a cogent alternative to nonfoundationalism will find the effort worthwhile.

For K., everything hinges on the claim that we can as individuals have the moral experience of coming into the presence of another person, appreciate his or her inherent worth, and thereby discover that we stand in a person-to-person relationship, which by implication extends each to all including ourself. Though its plausibility can be established, this cannot be proven, because it "rests on facts familiar to all, but whose significance is not" (61). This foundational insight is not always recognized or retained, even though it "stares us steadily in the face" (58), because we have grown comfortable with the blinding self-deceptions fueled by our passions and selfishness.

K. argues that this person-to-person relationship is the foundation for what is traditionally highlighted by both deontological and utilitarian theories of obligation. Not only do relationships function as the source and form of all our obligations, they also ground other elements of ethics as well. For example, without denying that social factors will

inescapably specify the dictates of distributive justice, he demonstrates how his theory of relationship morality handles the problem of wicked communities better than its communitarian competitors.

Like any good theorist K. stresses the comprehensiveness of his hypothesis. For example he demonstrates that an appreciation of the inherent worth of persons morally requires that we adopt certain attitudes toward them ranging from love and compassion to respect. This rules out other sorts of interior desires and acts, whose proscription cannot be adequately accounted for when we understand ourselves to be acting "merely" on principle. Similarly, relationship morality can explain why there is no rule, like "family first," whereby moral conflicts can be neatly adjudicated. This is so because in such situations, ultimately we are comparing the moral demands of different relationships. Indeed while their compatibility with the inherent worth of persons provides a test for our decisions, there can be much disagreement about what accords with that worth.

K. also examines the coherence of his theory about relationship morality with Christian faith convictions. He notes its compatibility with those elements in that tradition which emphasize that persons are created in the image of God and its continuity with sin morality, which he argues "more deeply reflects our moral experience than guilt and shame morality" (386). K. is clear however that because they are based on the inherent worth of persons, our moral obligations are independent of our convictions about and/or duties to God.

Coming into the presence of persons has several interesting ramifications. Implied in its emphasis on persons is the present or future possibility of encountering nonhuman persons, the rejection of speciesism, and an invitation to reform our treatment of both animals and the environment on the basis that they have an inherent value analogous to that recognized in persons. While it will not solve the dilemmas faced by those wrestling with the requirements of sustainable development, this line of thought takes account of both the moral repugnance we experience at the gratuitous destruction of any life form, place, or ecological system and also of our intuition that the life of a dog is worth less than the life of a person.

Without a doubt the practical implications K. associates with relationship morality will be among its most controversial features. What it will mean concretely to view our enemies as persons of inherent worth he has only begun to explore in this volume. But, as his analysis suggests, the challenges to conventional moral wisdom about war, moral realism, forgiveness, and the like will be tremendous.

SEX, GENDER, AND CHRISTIAN ETHICS. By Lisa Sowle Cahill. *New Studies in Christian Ethics*. New York: Cambridge University, 1996. Pp. xvii + 327. \$49.50; \$16.95.

Here is the most comprehensive treatment of sexuality in Christian ethics, certainly Catholic moral theology, available today. Cahill situates herself over against both modern liberalism and postmodernism. She brings together critiques of both in her concern for responsible public policy and the national moral debate out of which it must arise. Because central elements in postmodernism insist on the impossibility of consensus or meaningful communication amid diversity, and liberal individualism argues that individual autonomy dictates procedural, rather than substantive agreements in public-policy debates, C. views them as incapable of supporting either true human flourishing or the degree of community necessary for that flourishing.

As in much of C.'s work, the central focus here is on ethical method. Her overarching methodological commitment in this book is refuting postmodernism's rejection of any "possible unanimity between two rational minds" (Lyotard, 234). While she acknowledges that the grand narratives and universalist theories that the Enlightenment contributed to modernism unjustly masked and silenced human diversity, C. convincingly argues that there is in human experience, for all its diversity, enough in common to make the application of integrated human rationality to experience produce a basic level of agreement regarding the concrete conditions of human flourishing. This emphasis on the experience of diverse peoples as analogous if not similar waves fewer red flags than traditional language of shared "human nature" but remains firmly within the Catholic natural-law tradition. C. joins the persuasive swell of recent voices pointing out that this element of postmodernism she refutes makes better social criticism than social theory, in that it seems to negate any possibility for maintaining recognizable community.

At the same time, C. jumps very quickly from the possibility, and ultimate necessity, for inclusive rational discourse about the conditions for human flourishing to the proposal of the Aristotelian-Thomist model for such discourse. While there are rich insights into human experience to be found in this tradition, it is deeply flawed by assumptions of female inferiority and inherent hierarchy within creation. Though C. recognizes these flaws, there is little recognition of the deep reservations of many feminists *within* the Catholic tradition at embracing a model of discourse which legitimated their social inferiority and political and economic marginality (and that of other groups) for a millennium or two. Non-Catholic and non-Christian feminists and historically marginalized groups respond to the suggestion of this model with amazed incredulity. It may be that the political assumptions and history of the proposed model can be overcome, but the process of its redemption must be discussed. C. tends to focus on what Aristotle and Thomas had to say about human experience but brackets questions of

whose experience they examined. But if their model of human experience is to be accepted as the model for truly free social communications, the internal connections between human exclusion and human experience must be examined.

At the same time that C. takes on some postmodernist thinkers and trends, she also takes on the dominant modernist tradition of liberalism, criticizing liberal assumptions of individualism and autonomy, most forcibly in relation to AIDS and in vitro surrogacy and their adoption of contractual models of kinship. The chapter on new birth technologies offers a masterful application of the ethical method C. advocates to a specific issue. Her treatment of the arguments in the public debate around these technologies is broad and compelling. Her chapter on sexual orientation focuses largely on appropriate use of Scripture, suggesting that "a Christian ethics of sex and gender today should replicate the radical social challenge of early Christianity, if not necessarily its concrete moral practices" (124). C. uses Peter Brown's framework, suggesting that Jesus' announcement of the reign of God was an attack on oppressive social institutions of the day, among which the family was central. Christian espousal of virginity as an ideal state, rejection of divorce, and minimization of procreative emphasis all worked to undermine the oppressive domination of the family in the ancient world. C. argues that just as the early Church recognized that "particular circumstances can call for justified compromises in practice" regarding divorce, so today circumstances regarding homosexuality have changed since the first century, so that "status-marking, boundary-erecting, other-dominating and self-promoting actions and practices" (157) that the gospel condemned are located today in the stigmatization of homosexuals, rather than in all homosexual acts and relationships.

C. also makes a strong argument in favor of the legitimacy—and relative advantages—of marriage based on procreation, extension of kinship, and economic activity, accurately depicting the modern basis of marriage in interpersonal intimacy as both its strength and its weakness. While this argument opens possibilities for cross-cultural discourse regarding marriage, C., like most who attempt such cross-cultural discourse on marriage, goes on to narrow that opening by insisting on the moral necessity of spousal equality. She seems to argue in more than one section that the concept of the equality of all humans has gradually developed not only secularly in the modern period, but also in Christian theology beginning with the opposition to domination that characterized Jesus Christ's announcement of the reign of God. Though C. has moved inside the boundaries of Christian feminism, many Christian feminists reject her depiction of Christianity as a gradually unfolding liberation movement for (of?) women and other marginalized groups, instead grounding their commitment to Christian faith in the liberative potential of the gospel which has periodically broken through in institutional history. I suspect that one

basis for such difference in attitude is whether one approaches the history of Christianity in terms of its theological tradition or its institutional interaction with specific marginalized groups.

Florida International University, Miami CHRISTINE E. GUDORF

SHORTER NOTICES

JESUS IN THE GOSPELS: A BIBLICAL CHRISTOLOGY. By Rudolf Schnackenburg. Louisville: Westminster/Knox, 1995. Pp. xv + 383. \$35.

Schnackenburg here presents a synthesis of mostly German redaction-critical reflection on the Gospels. Though arguing that the Gospels rest on solid historical tradition, he forsakes any attempt to isolate the earliest, historical traditions in favor of a study of the faith image (*Glaubensbild*) of Jesus.

After a brief Introduction on faith and history, which argues that the Gospels present "a kerygmatic view of history" (11), S. depicts the distinctive picture of Jesus in each Gospel. The final and most original chapter discusses the gospel-in-four-forms as manifold yet unified testimony to Christ. As a synthesis of research, much of what S. says about the individual Gospels would be familiar to readers who have followed gospel criticism over the last decades. The focus is decidedly on German research with only occasional attention to works in English. S. pays no attention to more recent trends in narrative criticism or to the social context and setting of the Gospels.

Not surprisingly, given S.'s life's work, his discussion of John is the most interesting. While highlighting the differences between John and the Synoptics, he argues that "in Johannine Christology many concepts in the synoptists were adopted and further developed" (243). He also notes that John's high Christology does not compromise the Johannine stress on the humanity of Jesus. The unity among the four Gospels comprises four emphases: the conviction that Jesus is the Messiah, and faith in Jesus

as Son of God, as bringer of salvation, and as the "wholly other" who witnesses among human beings to God and his majesty. As a metaphor of the unity of the Gospels S. prefers not the "four pillars" image of Irenaeus but the "flowing and dynamic" image of the four rivers of paradise for the "four Gospels which flow from the one river of revelation and life" (324).

It is difficult to envision the best audience for this work. Much of its content is familiar to biblically literate readers. It is poorly edited, since works long available in English translation are cited in the German editions. Yet, as an elegant summary of the picture of Jesus in the Gospels that not only captures the faith of the evangelists but reflects S.'s own deep convictions, it is both rewarding and inspiring.

JOHN R. DONAHUE, S.J.

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THE VIRGIN AND THE BRIDE: IDEALIZED WOMANHOOD IN LATE ANTIQUITY. By Kate Cooper. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1996. Pp. xii + 180. \$37.50.

Cooper traces how the idealized form of womanhood was transformed from the chaste but hopefully fertile young bride of traditional Greco-Roman culture to the virgin of Christian antiquity. "Private" life (including sexual conduct) was very much the concern of the entire society in antiquity, and the harnessing of the tension between desire and social order was already a desideratum in traditional society. C. shows how ascetic Christianity "invoked the conservative values of the hearth while in fact legitimating social change" (146). The transformation provoked outcry from

both non-Christians and traditional Christians.

Deliberately rejecting the interpretations of Virginia Burrus (*Chastity as Autonomy*, 1987) and Anne Hickey (*Women of the Roman Aristocracy as Christian Monastics*, 1992), C. contends that stories of chaste Christian heroines did not function as liberating fantasies for women. Building on the work of Averil Cameron (*Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire*, 1991) and using contemporary speech-act theory, especially Austin and Searle, she demonstrates that Christians transformed the ideal as a social (not individual) construct. The results were a new and intensified role for sexual restraint and different restraints on women's conduct.

C. maintains a deft balance between summaries of familiar classical material and the narration of less well known stories. She shows the utility and limits of theories of rhetoric and community building (e.g., those of Veyne and Foucault) and coincidentally provides ample material for a reevaluation of Augustine's controversies with the Manicheans, Pelagius, and Jovinian. The volume would be a useful adjunct to graduate church-history classes and a "must read" for courses on the social construction of gender. One hopes C.'s project will inspire research into the role of idealized manhood which might shed new light on the adoption of celibacy for lay and clerical men.

MAUREEN A. TILLEY

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ORIGÈNE: THÉOLOGIE SACRIFICIELLE DU SACERDOCE DES CHRÉTIENS. By Theo Hermans. *Théologie historique*. Paris: Beauchesne, 1996. Pp. xxxv + 252. Fr. 180.

Hermans begins with an exhaustive survey of the more than one-thousand texts in which Origen uses sacrificial or sacrifice-related terminology. Part 1 introduces the theme of Christian sacrifice and highlights the centrality of 1 Peter 2:5 and 9a. The lengthy Part 2 deals with spiritual

cult. Not surprisingly, the chapter on spiritual sacrifices here is the longest, containing almost half the documentation of the entire book. H. organizes this mass of material according to Origen's own division, in Homily 9 on Leviticus, into sacrifices of prayer, of mercy, of purity, of justice, and of holiness. Part 3 deals with Christian life.

The book has the typical characteristics of a good dissertation: methodological clarity, thoroughness of detail (which sometimes obscures the big picture), and conscientious documentation of previous scholarship. The terminological analyses document the background in the LXX, the New Testament, Philo, and the earlier Christian writers, helpfully pointing out the continuities and discontinuities. Although H. does not seem to have uncovered significant new findings that were not at least suggested by earlier scholarship, he has helpfully documented the correctness of those previous indications and made them more precise. This seeming lack of newness is, however, deceptive; it is more a characteristic of the material than a limitation of the book. It is not only because H. builds so carefully on previous scholarship; it is also because his major findings and their theological implications are already familiar to many. Although first articulated by Origen, they have subsequently become staples of the Christian sacrificial theology of the Christian East and West.

Two examples: First, Augustine's familiar teaching about Christ being both the priest and victim of his sacrifice, and about the participation of the Christian in that sacrifice of Christ, is first articulated in Origen. Second, Origen's trinitarian understanding of the Christian sacrificial dynamic (theologically quite prophetic in its early-third-century context) set the theological foundation for the eventual trinitarian substance and structure of the classical patristic eucharistic prayers formulated in the following centuries.

ROBERT J. DALY, S.J.
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AUGUSTINE AND THE LIMITS OF POLITICS. By Jean Bethke Elshtain. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1996. Pp. xiv + 143. \$21.95.

Elshtain here seeks to reestablish in political theory Augustine's own contemplative priorities and to indicate their relevance to politics. She reconsiders the notion that Augustine is primarily a political realist or pessimist, indicating how in fact Augustine's understanding of the revelational order contributes to a positive influence in politics precisely by limiting politics to more immediate but more effective concerns.

One of E.'s central themes is reflection on the banality of evil, a theme associated with Hannah Arendt, who was long a student of Augustine. E. was fascinated by Arendt's dramatic change of attitude with regard to the cause of modern totalitarian tyranny from her initial view that tyranny represented a unique dramatic tragedy with philosophic origins to the view that tyranny is a rather pedestrian, almost ordinary moral event caused by almost any one. In one riveting chapter, E. traces the profound similarities that exist between her own considerations on evil and those of Arendt.

The purpose of the book is to reexamine the supposed autonomy given by modern man to himself in the light of the political failures of this same philosophic man. E. argues that Augustine in particular knew both in himself and in his theoretical examinations many of these same temptations. His *City of God* provides the proper context for distinguishing what we can expect from a limited politics and what we can expect from the transcendent sources of faith and philosophy that often have been confused in modern philosophy.

This very engaging, very philosophical, and yet very personal book reintroduces Augustine to the heart of modern political philosophy. One sentence may illustrate E.'s memorable style: "To be unmoved by *The Confessions*, to see them as only feed for the clinical grinder, only evidence of a solidification of the triumph of Western

logocentricism, is to have a heart of stone and a head of brick" (15). All readers seriously interested in Augustine and responsive to him will welcome E.'s book as a refreshing breeze.

JAMES V. SCHALL, S.J.
Georgetown University, D.C.

THE MAKING OF A HERETIC: GENDER, AUTHORITY, AND THE PRISCILLIANIST CONTROVERSY. By Virginia Burrus. Transformation of the Classical Heritage. Berkeley: University of California, 1995. Pp. xi + 252. \$45.

Priscillian, the fourth-century Spanish ascetic and bishop, is a figure at once notorious and obscure. His notoriety is due to his having been the first person executed by civil authority for heresy, his obscurity to the paucity of coherent accounts of his person and teaching. Burrus's penetrating study has substantially revised the categories employed to understand this enigmatic figure, and in doing so has convincingly redrawn his visage, giving us along the way a fascinating account of the construction of a heretic and a heresy.

B. first reconstructs the series of events from the initial episode of controversy in 380 at the episcopal council at Saragossa to the dénouement around 386, when Priscillian and some followers were executed at Trier by order of the usurper Magnus Maximus. Departing from a suspect heresiological tradition, B. skillfully weaves Priscillianist primary sources into this account, making sense of the curious welter of charges against Priscillian. Her study deploys the tools of rhetorical and gender analysis in a manner refreshingly appropriate to the subject matter, showing that transgressions of boundaries between public and private spheres, and between the roles of men and women, helped motivate hostile reactions to Priscillian. The last two chapters treat the rhetorical construction of Priscillian and "Priscillianism" in later theological literature. "Priscillianism" served as a convenient label for marking the boundary between orthodoxy and heterodoxy in early fifth-century Spain. Elsewhere, Sulpicius

Severus and Jerome styled Priscillian a "gnostic," partly at least to provide a kind of foil against which to set their own ascetic lives, and to create a device for defending separate spheres of male and female authority.

This is a rich and learned book, useful both to theologians and to historians. It is a model of the kind of sensitive listening that can tease out subtle echoes of the distant past.

THOMAS A. SMITH

Loyola University, New Orleans

ISLAM: ITS PROPHETS, PEOPLES, POLITICS AND POWER. By George W. Braswell, Jr. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1996. Pp. xii + 338. \$25.

Books on Islam enjoy the advantage of abundant material to deal with, but they face the challenge of adequate representation, fairness, and objectivity. Braswell encompasses Islam by writing its history and introducing its adherents. The history is brief (40 pages for 14 centuries), and the account of so many different regions and countries is necessarily uneven (countries like Persia receive less than three pages, Albania only four lines). Nonetheless, B. will help readers walk with the prophet Muhammad and his followers over the centuries; in the process they can become familiar with the personalities and the religious motivation of Islam and shed some of the grosser distortions that appear in the popular press.

The bulk of B.'s book is devoted to themes such as Islamic theology, devotion, religious authority and secularism, institutions, morals, and sectarianism. There are chapters on Islam's encounter with Christianity and on Islam in the U.S. The treatment is evenhanded, citing both Islamic and non-Islamic sources. Quotes from the Qur'an are coupled with quotes from the Hadiths, the prophetic and Islamic traditions, which give the book not only a historical basis but also a folksy tone.

B. includes strategically placed charts that summarize events. There is a glossary of Arabic terms and an index, though neither is comprehen-

sive. Yet the spelling of Arabic words is unsatisfactory: no transcription that leaves six or seven letters of an alphabet unrepresented can be a faithful rendition of the original. Throughout there are questionable Arabic transcriptions and occasional slips of the pen.

For readers in a rush, B. concludes the first chapter with 20 questions about Islam, which he answers in the final chapter. Those questions and answers involve dessicated caricatures. I believe it is a disservice for B. to have included them, and it would be a mistake for readers to focus on them. The value of B.'s book lies in the chapters in between, which offer details and explanations. Those chapters are readable and informative, and readers will find much of substance in them.

SOLOMON I. SARA, S.J.

Georgetown University, D.C.

AQUINAS AND ANALOGY. By Ralph McInerny. Washington: Catholic University of America, 1996. Pp. 169. \$39.95.

This thorough rewriting of McInerny's *The Logic of Analogy* (1961) focuses more explicitly on Thomas's own doctrine and the serious but influential misinterpretation of it by the great Dominican commentator, Cajetan. This slim book makes a precise and valuable contribution to the understanding of Thomas's own texts on analogy, which have always proved such a challenge to harmonize consistently, and to the tradition of interpretation within the Thomistic school, especially as dominated by Cajetan.

M.'s text work is very carefully done, and makes his point decisively, I think, on both counts. Analogy in Aquinas has to do not with the order of being directly in itself, but with the imposition of *names*, in which the proper meaning is found by priority in one primary exemplification and then extended to other subjects of predication because of some relation to the primary analogate. But the only examples given by Aristotle, and consistently repeated by Aquinas, are those

of (1) *health*, as properly applied to an animal and by extension to food as cause and to urine as effect or manifestation of this health in the animal, and (2) *being* as applied to substance by priority and to accident by the relation of inherence *in* a substance. The explicit structure here is what was later called "the analogy of attribution," which prescind from whether the extension of the analogous term expresses intrinsic similarity in all the analogates or not.

This analysis is textually correct, but *philosophically* incomplete and unsatisfactory, too narrowly Aristotelian to do justice to the richness of Thomas's own metaphysical use of analogy to express the intrinsic similarity of all beings among themselves and with God by participation. That is why Thomas himself seems to have quietly shifted to a deeper, more metaphysically grounded structure of analogy based on participation in later texts, such as the *Summa contra gentiles* 1, chap. 29, no. 2; chap. 32, nos. 2 and 7. It is disappointing that M. takes into account neither these texts nor the important study of this development by George Klubertanz, *St. Thomas Aquinas on Analogy* (Chicago, 1960). This would have meant not a change in his textual explication but an amplification of it to explain how analogy could become such an apt tool for Thomas's own *practice* of metaphysics.

W. NORRIS CLARKE, S.J.

Fordham University, New York

CATHERINE OF SIENA: VISION THROUGH A DISTANT EYE. By Suzanne Noffke, O.P. Collegeville: Glazier/Liturgical, 1996. Pp. iv + 267. \$19.95.

Noffke offers a refreshing, cogent perspective on Catherine as a significant interpreter of the events, culture, and spirituality of her era. The eight essays of Part 1 utilize primary sources generously, and cumulatively they articulate the quality and character of Catherine's living witness. One noteworthy chapter examines Catherine's conception of God as Truth and Love—demonstrated for her above all in Jesus crucified—and

the importance of self-knowledge "that God's gentle truth alone may live in you" (17). Another offers a corrective for readers who may have had the impression that Catherine's integration was easily reached. N. demonstrates that Catherine's maturation toward an integrated, ministerial, ecclesial vision was concomitant with her growth from an earlier, narrow preoccupation with God to an outgoing, ministerial love which nonetheless remained deeply grounded in contemplation. Happily for her readers, N. observes that in the integrating process the strong-willed Catherine often wrestled with God while "knowing that God would win" (66).

When dealing with several related issues of 14th-century economic realities, N. posits some remarkable insights relative to Catherine's teaching on voluntary poverty. One of these in particular, while respecting Catherine as a woman of her time, notes the affinity of her thought with contemporary understandings of solidarity with the poor. The first chapter of Part 2 offers a detailed examination of three interrelated levels of concern for an exploration of her theology and spirituality as a whole; written in extended outline format, it would prove belabored reading for persons unversed in Catherinian studies. A second chapter, containing a wealth of practical material for a visit to sites related to Catherine's world, gives even inveterate armchair travelers a good read. Finally N. provides an outstanding and lengthy bibliography of Catherinian studies in English; some of these entries are annotated. The bibliography alone is worth the price of the book.

A master of detail and of clear expression, N. brings to the present study the same careful scholarship that has been so evident in her earlier analyses and translations of Catherine's *Dialogue*, *Letters*, and *Prayers*.

BRIGID O'SHEA MERRIMAN, O.S.F.
Mount Angel Seminary, Oregon

THEATINE SPIRITUALITY: SELECTED WRITINGS. Translated, edited, and with an Introduction by William V.

Hudon. *Classics of Western Spirituality*. New York: Paulist, 1996. Pp. xix + 287. \$22.95.

This volume introduces us to the male religious orders of clerks regular, a 16th-century development in Roman Catholicism. Neither monks nor friars, the Theatines first, then the Barnabites, Somaschi, Jesuits, and others responded to ecclesial needs in a time of turbulent reformation. Founded in 1524 by four members of the Roman Oratory of Divine Love, Theatines sought church renewal through their individual penance and sanctification and by giving themselves to others through charitable activity. They worked closely with the papacy promoting reformation of the clergy, especially by the example of their lives. Unlike Ignatius Loyola, Theatines did not shy away from the episcopacy; Ludwig von Pastor called the order a "seminary" for bishops. Other Theatines filled various curial offices. Again unlike Loyola, the Theatines were slow to write constitutions.

The present work illustrates the spirituality of the first two Theatine generations. The two principal founders, Gian Pietro Carafa and St. Gaetano da Thiene, differed markedly in approach, Gaetano being more mystical and open in his spirituality, while Carafa was firm and inflexible, favoring a vertical and hierarchical organization emphasizing obedience and total submission to a superior. Liturgical services and communal chanting of the office were important to him, as was avoidance of contact with women. This contrasted with Gaetano's veneration for his "spiritual mother," the nun Laura Mignani and his extensive correspondence with her and other women, including Carafa's sister.

The text proper begins with a fairly dense, but comprehensive, introduction which traces the religious history of the 16th century and the role in it of the clerks regular. Documentation includes the brief "Rule" composed by Carafa and highlighting his chief concerns; 40 of Gaetano's letters, many of them giving spiritual advice to

women and revealing that this was reciprocal with his correspondents; and 38 chapters of *The Spiritual Combat* by a second-generation Theatine, Lorenzo Scupoli, who joined the Theatines in 1568 and came under the influence of St. Andrew Avellino. From 1585 until shortly before his death, Scupoli lived under an unexplained cloud within the order. It was during this period that he wrote *The Spiritual Combat*, first published anonymously in 1589, a manual of practical, christocentric, and marian piety originally intended for an audience of nuns, which has, in various forms gone through over 600 editions.

JAMES HENNESEY, S.J.
Syracuse, New York

PRAYER, DESPAIR, AND DRAMA: ELIZABETHAN INTROSPECTION. By Peter Iver Kaufman. *Studies in Anglican History*. Urbana: University of Illinois, 1996. Pp. xii + 166. \$24.95.

While scholarship is busily rehabilitating pre-Reformation English Catholicism, it is salutary to be reminded of the importance of Calvinism in the English Reformation. Kaufman is aware that Calvinism is as popular in early modern studies "as public spending in an age of mounting deficits" (160), but unappealing as the topic may be (after reading K., my sympathy for the Elizabethan episcopacy saddled with puritan radicals is greatly heightened), one must come to terms with those Reformed minds K. terms "pietists." They are essential to our understanding of Elizabethan England.

Drawing on sermons, handbooks, pamphlets, and a host of primary sources from pietists such as Richard Greenham, William Perkins, and Arthur Dent, K. attempts to reconstruct the mentality of Reformed pietism as it seeks assurance of unconditional election to salvation. For these men, despair was more likely a sign of regeneration than apostasy, and it was part of a pattern that expected "grief and anguish" (55). K. avoids "smuggled in" postmodern notions of self-destruction (23) while gracefully appropriating aspects of postmodern

literary theory. With a nod towards Stephen Greenblatt, K. talks about this introspective despair as Reformed self-fashioning, almost a dramatic performance (Puritans in the playhouse?) that consciously attempted to mold the Reformed Christian towards his predestined end in a repeated pattern of "indignation, sorrow, and submission" (158).

In a fascinating interdisciplinary analogy, K. cautiously argues for similar patterns in *Dr. Faustus*, Donne's *Holy Sonnets*, Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, and even *Hamlet*. He makes neither "Hamlet nor Shakespeare a pietist" (107), though the protean playwright has been argued to be virtually everything imaginable; instead, he merely points out similarities in self-fashioning in his Calvinists and in early modern literature. In both his literary and historical endeavors, K. makes a provocative and interesting case.

J. F. R. DAY

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THE LOYAL OPPOSITION: TUDOR TRADITIONALIST POLEMICS, 1535-1558. By Ellen A. Macek. Studies in Church History. New York.: Peter Lang, 1996. Pp. xv + 299. \$53.95.

The Fathers of the *Ecclesia Anglicana* before and after Queen Mary have been the object of a good deal of scholarly research, as have their literary opponents such as John Fisher, Thomas More, and Thomas Harding. But the religious controversialists who shunned martyrdom and stuck with King Henry VIII until late in his reign and then returned to the Catholic faith and in most cases to their episcopal palaces under Queen Mary have suffered neglect. These are men such as Stephen Gardiner, Cuthbert Tunstal, and Edmund Bonner. All these men were born in the 15th century. These are the traditionalists of the title. It has long been known that the early Tudor bishops who had degrees in divinity were more likely to welcome Protestant doctrine than those who studied law. It should be noted that Gardiner and Edmund Bonner were lawyers.

To see the history of the changes in English religious polity from the point of view of these late converts to Christian unity is to see it in a totally different light. One of the results of the controversies they engaged in was some subtle shifts in their theological views. In the first third of the 16th century English Protestants had to import their theology from the continent, and later on the traditionalists had to elaborate their own ecclesiology with a new emphasis on church unity. One result is that English-speaking Catholics have always shown a peculiar fascination for and loyalty to the Roman pontiff.

Macek contrasts the theology of the traditionalists and the Protestants as regards three points: justification, the Eucharist, and theological method. The Marian interlude in England lasted only five years, but even when England once more became officially Protestant, it retained a strong current of traditionalism for another generation, and what came to be known as the Catholic Church has maintained some presence in England down to the present day.

THOMAS CLANCY, S.J.

Jesuit Archives, New Orleans

TERESA OF AVILA AND THE POLITICS OF SANCTITY. By Gillian T. W. Ahlgren. Ithaca: Cornell University, 1996. Pp. ix + 188. \$29.95.

This examination of the forces that shaped Tridentine Catholicism and Teresa's response to the strictures of that context is indispensable to understanding the saint's motivations and accomplishments. Beginning with a carefully documented analysis of the religious climate before the Valdes Index of 1559, Ahlgren focuses on the *alumbrados* and holy women who claimed spiritual authority on the basis of visions and mental prayer. When tolerance for spiritual innovation submitted to increasing church control over individual spiritual practices after 1559, bringing into severe question the validity of women's experiences, Teresa sought to rehabilitate women's spiritual autonomy, their right to mental prayer, and vi-

sions as a legitimate aspect of mystical life. To enact her agenda she developed in her spiritual writings what A. defines and ably exemplifies as strategies of subordination and instrumental authority.

The explanation of the typology and history of visions within Christianity is especially useful in focusing Teresa's efforts to substantiate the legitimacy of "her mystical experience and the esoteric authority it gave her within the sacramental life of the Roman Catholic tradition" (169), as is the analysis of modifications to the second and third versions of *The Way of Perfection* by which she tempered her advocacy of mental prayer with an eye to inquisitorial criticism while at the same time keeping a tight grip on the authority of individual experience.

Impeccably researched and distinguished by a thorough grasp of the theological and political issues of 16th-century Spain, the volume is a brilliant argument for how and why Teresa of Avila authorized in writing and action her belief that "the discovery of God's presence in the soul is a spiritual imperative for all people" (112).

MARY E. GILES

California State Univ., Sacramento

EXPERIENCE AND GOD. By John E. Smith. American Philosophy Series. New York: Fordham University, 1995. Pp. xx + 209. \$29.95; \$17.50.

With a substantial new preface, this is a re-issuance of the otherwise unchanged 1968 book by a dean of American philosophy of religion. It keeps questions of philosophy, religion, and metaphysics before intellectual communities generally even less attentive and sympathetic than when its original publication was not sufficiently noticed. The new preface reaffirms contesting philosophy as mere analysis and criticism complemented by a fideistic or positivist approach to religion. It does not engage recent analytical treatment of theological doctrines. It highlights the book's earlier unrealized accord with Tillich's

outstanding essay on two types of philosophy of religion, and renews the book's argument that it is possible to unite the ontological and cosmological approaches through the notion of divine presence.

The book outlines an experiential approach to religion, challenging the regnant sense-data meaning of experience and drawing on experience as encounter with what there is, as what we undergo and live through. In contrast with so-called religious experience, the religious dimension of experience is "a context defined by a person's concern for and allegiance to an object of unconditional devotion" (xiv). Since inferring occurs within experiencing, the ontological and cosmological journeys to God can be rethought as bringing to light the presence of God in the self and in the world.

The book is more useful for those already generally familiar with the arguments, and their challenges from modern philosophy. While it has no discussion of postmodernism or deconstruction, its sections on world religions and quasi-religions and on secularization offer some talking points. It includes reflections on revelation, doubt and reason, Christ, world religions, and secularization. Not at the margins but in the marrow where metaphysical questions still live, S.'s book continues to be an illuminating diagnosis and promising prescription.

JOSEPH J. GODFREY, S.J.

St. Joseph's Univ., Philadelphia

IS JESUS UNIQUE?: A STUDY OF RECENT CHRISTOLOGY. By Scott Cowdell. Theological Inquiries. New York: Paulist, 1996. Pp. viii + 456. \$24.95.

A priest in the Anglican Church of Australia, Cowdell has produced a monumental study of contemporary Christological positions on the crucial question of Jesus' uniqueness and finality. Using a "grid typology" which measures reliance on revelation and metaphysics on one axis, and the historical Jesus and the human condition on the other, C. provides a creative categorization of theological

opinion on the decisive role of Jesus in revealing God and saving humanity. Four overall approaches (conservative, idealist, liberal, radical) to the singular definitiveness of Jesus are analyzed with admirable scholarly rigor. In his evaluation of each approach on the incomparability of Jesus, C. especially employs the criterion of effective engagement with postmodern challenges such as historical skepticism and cultural relativism.

C. makes a convincing case for the inadequacy of all four approaches. He aptly criticizes the conservatives (Moltmann, Frei, among others) for a false hermeneutical certainty that regards Jesus' uniqueness as a "*fait accompli* of revelation" (81). He rightly criticizes the idealists (Rahner, Panenberg, Kasper) for insufficient attention both to the historical Jesus and to the deconstructive insights of postmodernity on the human condition. Liberal thinkers such as Schillebeeckx and Küng are fairly judged to offer weak cumulative cases for Jesus' uniqueness because of a diffuseness of argument. The radical approaches taken by authors such as Hick, Knitter, and Lindbeck are shrewdly regarded as faulty because of questionable hermeneutical assumptions which lead to a denial of Jesus' peerlessness.

In his intriguing conclusion, C. offers a tantalizingly brief endorsement of the approach taken in the inclusive Logos Christology of Frans Jozef van Beeck. With copious endnotes and a lengthy bibliography, C.'s research is vast and attentive to nuance. There are a few minor glitches, like incorrect dates for *Humani generis* and *Munificentissimus Deus* (191), but this book is a blockbuster for scholars of contemporary Christology.

PAUL E. RITT

St. John's Seminary, Brighton

DIVINE REVOLUTION: SALVATION AND LIBERATION IN CATHOLIC THOUGHT. By Dean Brackley. Foreword by Jon Sobrino. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1996. Pp. xix + 197. \$19.

Brackley assesses Catholic think-

ing about salvation in relation to poverty, oppression, and social justice. He critically analyzes the paradigms of Jacques Maritain, Karl Rahner, Gustavo Gutiérrez to determine how well each theologian related God's reign to social realities. Maritain's paradigm is the least satisfactory because of his sharp distinction between the spiritual and temporal orders and because salvation works through the interior life of individuals. Rahner's *aggiornamento* paradigm eliminates Maritain's extrinsic relation between grace and social action and effectively shows how God's grace operates in all dimensions of existence.

B. regards Gutiérrez's approach as the most satisfactory because it relates God's reign concretely to social sin and conflict, constructs a creative three-dimensional liberation process, and consistently considers symbols in social terms. But Rahner's model has a philosophical anthropology that gives a depth sometimes absent in Gutiérrez's model, most especially in the latter's human liberation dimension that plays a key role in linking social transformation and salvation. B. seeks to correct this deficiency by constructing a social theory, in which he persuasively shows that individuals are essentially social beings who are shaped by, and in turn shape, social relations. B. then develops his thesis that persons constitute and fulfill themselves through social interaction, expressed by mutual freedom and engagement. He subsequently argues that if grace perfects human reality and social relations, then grace is indeed engaged in transforming the social conditions whenever it is received.

The book has many strengths. It is comprehensive. B. marshals evidence from diverse sources to build his thesis: traditional, feminist, and liberationist theologies, philosophy, and the social sciences. Further, B. demonstrates a vast knowledge of biblical literature, which he uses to support his thesis that God's reign addresses social relations. When B. moves from social scientific evidence to philosophical and theological evidence, it is

not always clear whether the claims are based on empirical evidence or normative statements. B. here makes an important contribution to Christian social ethics.

THOMAS L. SCHUBECK, S.J.
John Carroll Univ., Cleveland

MUJERISTA THEOLOGY: A THEOLOGY FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY. Ada María Isasi-Díaz. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1996. Pp. xi + 210. \$16.

This collection of previously published articles is divided into two parts. Part 1 grounds readers in the lived experience or self-location of the theologian. Isasi-Díaz speaks out of her own life journey in a process of theological reflection such as is frequently talked about but rarely put into the chapters of a book. This first section provides readers with insight into how persons are theologically formed by experiences inside and outside their formal education and training as scholars and/or as journeyers in the Christian tradition. The limitation of this section is the attempt to universalize one person's journey as resonant with that of many other Hispanic women.

In Part 2, I. projects a theological method rooted in lived experience. She takes theologizing out of the academy and places it in the heart of the community. Theologizing becomes more than a reflective intellectual endeavor; it becomes reflective liberating action. I. roots mujerista theology in the experience of Latina women, providing a process of enablement for them that "insists on the development of a strong sense of moral agency and clarifies the importance of who we are, what we think, and what we do" (62). Thus mujerista theology contributes to the struggle for liberation whereby Christians become a significant and positive force in the unfolding of the "kin_dom" of God.

Perhaps because this work is a collection of previously published articles, the chapters, especially in Part 2, seem only loosely connected to one another. This is particularly problematic when I. outlines elements and points of theology, justice, and liturgy

without making clear transitions and distinctions. I. places mujerista theology in the context of feminism, but does not distinguish clearly between what she refers to as "Euro-American" feminism and feminist theology. Since she does not draw on the works of other feminist theologians, either Latina or non-Latina Americans, she fails to give mujerista theology the strong position in emerging feminist thought that it deserves. This and the book's readable style make it easy for the reader to miss the core of her message: To get serious about integrative theology, it is imperative that we continue to use theological methods that bring theory (academic scholarship) and reality (lived experience) together. For any pastoral theologian, this work presents a beginning methodology for theological reflection that is holistic in its approach and action-oriented in its outcome.

JUDITH VALLIMONT, S.SP.S.
Loyola Marymount Univ., L.A.

LIVING IN THE MARGINS: INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES AND THE ART OF INTERPRETATION. By Terry A. Veling. New York: Crossroad, 1996. Pp. xix + 244. \$19.95.

Book-ended with a foreword by Thomas Groome and an afterword by Bernard Lee, Veling's publication employs the metaphor of "the book" to discuss hermeneutical theory and its application to intentional communities. If you are "in the book," dialogical hermeneutics is called for; if you are "outside the book," exilic hermeneutics; if you are "in the margins," marginal hermeneutics. Inspired by Edmond Jabès, an "Egyptian born, French-speaking, Jewish poet" (17) who became aware of *belonging* to the Jewish people through the experience of *nonbelonging* as an *exiled Jew*, V. seeks to show that "marginal hermeneutics" reveals the tension within religious traditions "generated by two interplaying needs: the need for identity, continuity, guiding norms, and the need for new understanding, relevance, and responsiveness to changing situations" (187). While a guiding

metaphor in framing this book is "living in the margins," the concern is to embrace the valid insights of a hermeneutics that emphasizes trust (belonging) and one that emphasizes suspicion (nonbelonging) insofar as the tension between them opens up "marginal space" as "the gap in which hermeneutics begins and ends—forms and re-forms" (18).

To accomplish this, V. offers a very useful and readable review of hermeneutical theory with extensive quotations from various authors: "dialogical" (Gadamer), "exilic" (Habermas, Derrida), and "marginal" (the Jewish interpretive tradition, Jabès). To each corresponds a chapter on the implications for intentional communities: to engage the book, to risk the book, and most importantly to rewrite the book from the marginal space "in-between," for it is in the margins that intentional communities live and interpret the book "in such ways that the book continuously becomes itself in ways both similar and different to itself" (202).

V. writes for both the academy and the communities, but this book is more easily accessible to the first. A stimulating and enlightening approach to hermeneutics that is comprehensive and well-balanced.

MICHAEL L. COOK, S.J.
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INTERSECTIONS: SCIENCE, THEOLOGY, AND ETHICS. By James M. Gustafson. Cleveland, Ohio: Pilgrim, 1996. Pp. xxi + 174. \$16.95.

Having announced that theological ethics must be engaged in a dialogue with multiple other fields, Gustafson is now issuing a report from the front lines. He gives no normative conclusions regarding particular issues in this book. Instead, he reports about the search for a common ground upon which to base the dialogue.

This is a collection of seven loosely related essays. The first compares and contrasts the moral anthropologies of bioanthropologist Melvin Konner and theologian Reinhold Niebuhr. The next four essays are about medicine and ethics. These include pro-

posed classifications of four types of moral discourse in medicine, and three types of relationships between moral theology and medicine. Another essay describes how a geneticist, concerned about the moral implications of his work, appears to have gone about doing an ethical analysis of modern genetics. Another contrasts Ramsey and Rahner on genetics, concentrating on how they (and others) have viewed the relationship between data, theology, human progress, and the image of God.

The final essay is the most interesting. G. describes at least eight ways that science and theology might relate: theology might be totally *autonomous*; data might affect the *substance* of theology; data might modify the *descriptions* used by theology; data might serve as the *subject* of theology; theology might be *translated* into scientific language; science might provide *authority* for theological arguments; theologians might seek to *refute* scientific challenges to their theories on scientific grounds; or theology might be autonomous, but need to be *coherent* with scientific knowledge.

This book describes various avenues for dialogue between scientists and moral theologians, but doesn't say which route is better. It is a reconnaissance report. As such, it can be a useful starting point for those who wish to engage more deeply in this dialogue.

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

THE CHRISTIAN CASE FOR VIRTUE ETHICS. By Joseph J. Kotva, Jr. Washington: Georgetown University, 1996. Pp. x + 184. \$55. \$22.95.

Kotva's work is the most sustained positive treatment of the relation between neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics and Christian moral life yet to appear. Virtue ethics has a three part structure: who we happen to be, who we could be, and the inclinations, skill, and injunctions which will help us move from who we are to who we could be. Instead of decrying the inadequacies of standard ethics based

on rules or results like most theological advocates of virtue ethics, K. argues that it is remarkably well suited to express Christian convictions on theological and biblical grounds. Current philosophical retrievals of virtue should be developed and refined by faith convictions about forgiveness and reconciliation, dependence on God's grace in human transformation, and the centrality of Jesus.

A careful, straightforward account of recent philosophical literature on virtue ethics addresses doubts that it may be self-centered or aristocratic. K. describes the aptness of this approach to address the process of sanctification and the normative status of Jesus Christ. Particularly insightful treatments of Matthew and Paul display the advantages of a virtue interpretation and the points where they correct and advance the framework. Some questions remain over whether the developmental model of character can fully account for the phenomena of religious conversion.

This fine work's ample documentation should gladden the scholarly reader while its accessible prose and well-organized presentation will make it useful for undergraduate and graduate courses.

WILLIAM C. SPOHN
Santa Clara University

ETHICS IN PASTORAL MINISTRY. By Richard Gula, S.S. New York: Paulist, 1996. Pp. 166. \$14.95.

Gula here blends good scholarship with pastoral experience, offering a solid, readable introduction to the nature of pastoral ministry and the ethical expectations of the minister as person and professional. He first delineates a theological-ethical framework, then outlines salient issues, and finally describes an ethical code consistent with good moral theology. His behavioral guidelines of an ethical code are situated within a larger theological, communal, and personal context. He roots pastoral ministry as vocation within the theological themes of covenant (paradigmatic for pastoral-ministry relationships), image of God (speaking to the sacred-

ness and social character of the human person), and discipleship (Jesus as normative for ministers). Then he draws out the implications of these themes for three areas considered repeatedly: the pastoral minister's character/virtues, professional duties, and use of power. He is particularly helpful in providing a framework within which ministers may reflect on their identity and hold themselves and each other accountable.

Among many issues which merit attention, G. focuses wisely on two: sexuality and confidentiality. Underscoring their critical importance he returns to character, duty, and power with practical implications for both confidentiality and sexuality. Both issues are treated well, though one might have hoped for the general description of sexuality (93-94) to precede any comments about the rightness or wrongness of behavior (91-92). Finally, his ethical code is a succinct and clear summary of the work.

G.'s work arose out of a concern for accountability in pastoral ministry. He provides a credible tool for this process in his code of ethics. What is still missing is a structure to foster personal responsibility within individuals and specific methods for accountability within institutions. Yet this work ought to be an important instrument in this process.

KEVIN J. O'NEIL, C.Ss.R.
Washington Theological Union

THE TRUTH ABOUT HOMOSEXUALITY: THE CRY OF THE FAITHFUL. By John F. Harvey, O.S.F.S. San Francisco: Ignatius, 1996. Pp. xxvii + 377. \$17.95.

Harvey's primary aim is to "give pastoral guidance to persons with [a] homosexual orientation." This work builds on the assumption that homosexual people can "move toward heterosexuality." H. repeats this belief often, but never clarifies two critical points: Is he making this assertion only for the person who is homosexually active because of compulsive or symptomatic reasons? And if there is no moral obligation toward this "con-

version," as H. maintains, what is the overwhelming pastoral implication in his claim that "all are meant to be heterosexual?"

At one point H. maintains that the change-to-heterosexuality is only an "opinion," while in another place he asserts that the "empirical evidence" in this regard is substantial. The book needs a clearer focus regarding this crucial psychological, moral, and pastoral point.

H. presents a balanced review of numerous writers on this question (e.g. Money, LeVay, Allen and Gorski), while clearly favoring the psychological and moral analyses of such authors as Socarides and Barnhouse. The book serves a purpose in presenting H.'s overall posture toward homosexuality, even though he tends to be self-authoritative, supporting views that agree with his own, rather than necessarily basing his views on authoritative sources. Yet it demonstrates weakness in several important areas: e.g., a tendency to identify homosexuality with the disease of alcoholism; condemning the fallacy of a "gay spirituality" while simultaneously supporting "a positive spiritual program" for homosexual persons; confusing celibacy and chastity; giving poor pastoral advice to homosexual people thinking about marriage ("he need not reveal this to his future spouse"); and presenting a highly negative view of lesbians (all of his examples are rooted in severe psychological and family problems).

H. has accomplished admirable work for numerous homosexual people, and strives admirably to uphold the magisterium's teachings on this question. He could strengthen his moral and pastoral focus by giving better attention to apparent contradictions and faulty reasoning in his overall methodology.

GERALD D. COLEMAN, S.S.
St. Patrick's Seminary, Menlo Park

ABORTION AND UNBORN HUMAN LIFE.
By Patrick Lee. Washington: Catholic University of America, 1996. Pp. 167.
\$14.95.

This philosophical treatise provides a comprehensive defense of the strict antiabortion position. The central argument is syllogistic: "Intentionally killing an innocent person always is morally wrong. Abortion is the intentional killing of an innocent person. Therefore, abortion is always wrong" (1). The work is primarily a careful critique of popular defenses of abortion: the refusal of all personhood to the prenatal human (Tooley); the gradualist account of fetal personhood (Summer); the account of abortion as nonintentional homicide (Thomson); the social-consequentialist apology (Lowell). Of special interest is the refutation of the delayed-animation argument (Donceel, Wolter, Shannon), which has enjoyed currency within the Catholic community.

In his polemic against philosophical justifications of abortion, Lee successfully retrieves certain Aristotelian categories. He locates moral agency, rather than murky consciousness, as the proper criterion for the recognition of personhood. He employs the category of substance to designate the unique human organism, rather than fluctuating attributes of the organism, as the proper subject of rights. His use of "active potentiality" (60) to describe the capacities of the human person from conception imports a sophisticated version of act/potency into the confused debate over "potential persons."

The book's brilliant refutation of the dominant proabortion apologies is stronger than its own defense of the prolife position. To demonstrate the truth of the antiabortion case, it is not sufficient to prove the contradictions and inadequacies of the proabortion position. Certain moves, such as the quick transition from establishing the humanity of the embryo to establishing its personhood, require more detailed analysis. Certain key terms also demand more careful articulation. In the opening premise of the central syllogism ("Intentionally killing an innocent human person always is morally wrong"), the substitution of "intentional" for the more traditional

"direct" yields to a subjectivism which the author otherwise shuns.

JOHN J. CONLEY, S.J.
Fordham University, New York

A FUTURE FOR SOCIALISM? POLITICAL THEOLOGY AND THE "TRIUMPH OF CAPITALISM." By Harold Wells. Valley Forge, Penn.: Trinity International, 1996. Pp. xvii + 220. \$19.

Wells sketches a case for "Christian socialism" in response to the complex issues surrounding the relationship of Christian faith to the world's political-economic order. He proposes that socialism without Christianity loses its moral basis, while Christianity without socialism is stripped of social influence. A theologian and minister in the United Church of Canada, W. calls his book an exercise in political theology, invoking such names as Metz, Moltmann, Sölle, Gutiérrez and Ruether. However, he does not address issues of fundamental theology in any depth. Instead, he analyzes the history and consequences of capitalism and socialism in a broadly conceived "light of Christian faith."

The book has four parts. The first introduces political theology. W. breaks no new ground and makes no attempt to respond to the serious exegetical or methodological debates presently surrounding political/liberation theologies. The last part, "Concluding Theological Reflections," proves more an exhortation to Christian socialism than a theological argument for it. The middle two parts comprise the body and most valuable contributions of the book. Part 2 questions the naïve tendency to identify the moral-political failure of Soviet communism with a moral-economic "triumph of capitalism." W. delivers a nuanced critique of both systems. He concludes that, from a Christian perspective, capitalism cannot be regarded as a "triumph." Part 3 provides an interesting, fast-paced historical overview of the broad movement called socialism. W. distinguishes it from communism, traces the Christian and atheistic antagonisms that have shaped it from its ori-

gins, and scans its wide variety of incarnations.

On the whole, the book is evenhanded, provocative and readable. Although limited in scope and depth, it could serve well as a text in a college or seminary course on the relationship of Christianity to political-economic realities.

KEVIN F. BURKE, S.J.
Weston Jesuit School of Theology

ESPERIENZA MORALE E PERSONA: PER UNA REINTERPRETAZIONE DELL'ETICA FENOMENOLOGICA DI DIETRICH VON HILDEBRAND. By Roberto Dell'Oro. Tesi Gregoriana, Serie Teologia, Rome: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1996. Pp. 238. L. 26,000; \$19.

Dell'Oro's work contributes to moral theology in a fundamental and historical way; it reflects an impressive and solid command of authors, disciplines, and languages. His purpose is to retrieve a notion of experience in moral reflection; he accomplishes this through a critical reading of the phenomenology of Dietrich von Hildebrand in light of transcendental philosophy.

There are, of course, a variety of meanings to "experience." At one level, since moral norms need to be concretized, experience refers to that inductive search which gives rise to and is embodied in a moral norm (Schüller, Schmitz, and Gründel). On a second level, there are the epistemological issues involved with dealing with the results of the empirical sciences in a morally relevant way (Korff and Mieth). On a third level, moral theologians engage in a transcendental or metaphysical analysis of experience in order to safeguard the uniqueness of moral truth as a truth of meaning (Rahner, Fuchs and Demmer).

The phenomenological description of von Hildebrand stands in the effective history of Husserl. This means that von Hildebrand resisted abstract constructions and intuitive insights into essential truths. In his opinion, what makes us uniquely human is our ability to perceive and to respond to values. In his realism there is a

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The phenomenological description of von Hildebrand stands in the effective history of Husserl. This means that von Hildebrand resisted abstract constructions and intuitive insights into essential truths. In his opinion, what makes us uniquely human is our ability to perceive and to respond to values. In his realism there is a

sovereignty of the object and a receptivity on the part of the subject. Von Hildebrand's phenomenological realism may be a safeguard against any sort of nominalism, but as D. points out, it also suffers from a latent objectivism that tends to an ahistorical understanding of moral norms. This is seen in von Hildebrand's disciples like Laun, Seifert, and Finnis.

For D., however, the dialogue with von Hildebrand merely reveals the

need to complete phenomenological description with a transcendental reflection that accounts for the subject's intentional activities. Moral theologians must not only bring experience to articulate awareness, but they must attend to the transcendental conditions that make experience possible and thereby allow subjects a more active role in the knowing process.

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