

de Lubac winds his way between two opponents. The early Protestants, on the one hand, weakened the doctrine on the Eucharist, diminishing Christ's presence in the sacrament, leaving us with a "virtual presence." The traditional idea of the church as the Body of Christ was weakened as well. The neo-Scholastics, on the other hand, focused on the eucharistic body and forgot its sacramental purpose, namely, to create the ecclesial body. This shift led to an increasing focus on the real presence in the Eucharist and a loss of the connection between the Body of Christ and the body of the church. It is de Lubac's understanding of sacrament and symbol, according to B., that will help reweave the frayed tapestry of the Eucharist. De Lubac shows us how Augustine and many medieval thinkers believed that the world was full of symbols, and these symbols functioned as sacraments, in that they participate in the reality to which they point, a reality much greater than themselves.

This part of the discussion can be confusing, leaving the reader to wonder whether B. confuses sign and symbol. Early in the book, he refers to "mere symbols," which differ from sacraments because the former do not participate in the reality to which they point. He gives an example of a road sign with a silhouette of a deer, which "symbolizes the presence of deer in the area." He is correct in saying that a reasonable driver would not veer away from the sign. Yet the silhouette acts more like a visual word, alerting the driver, pointing to something beyond itself. Later, in his discussion of de Lubac's work B. develops the theology of symbol is developed. But this category of "mere symbols," in a discussion of sacramental theology clouds the issue, especially after the work of Louis Marie Chauvet's *Sacrament and Symbol*.

Nevertheless, B. achieves his purpose of promoting dialogue between Catholics and Evangelicals. The book would be useful for graduate courses on sacramental theology and the history of theology. Throughout the book, the reader will learn much about the development of eucharistic theology as well as the movement of *nouvelle théologie*.

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THE POLITICAL ETHICS OF JEAN-FRANÇOIS LYOTARD AND JACQUES DERRIDA.
By Georges de Schrijver. Leuven: Peeters, 2010. Pp. xxix + 421. \$116.

Schrijver has written widely on political and liberation theology (e.g., his 1998 book, *Liberation Theologies on Shifting Grounds: A Clash of Socio-Economic and Cultural Paradigms*). Far from looking toward a ghettoized theology not in touch with wider secular concerns, S. argues that the most deeply secular concerns are also the most deeply religious concerns. He has taught for many years in Nigeria, the Philippines, and India, so he shares the postmodernists' distrust of a European-based totalizing universal. Not

by chance, perhaps, Lyotard had taught in Algeria before the Algerian war and came to see the justice of the Algerian claim of their voice being stifled. Derrida grew up an Algerian Jew.

S. wondered how a genuine ethics could possibly come out of what seems the negativity of the deconstruction project. Through a deft and careful probing of the thought of Lyotard and Derrida, S. reveals that both philosophers place a heavy accent on things that can and must be thought but whose full realization could never present itself in empirical reality. In a sense, both thinkers (who have rejected the kind of universals that are totalizing and gobble up the many in the illusionary universal one) conceive of a new type of universality, one that can hardly be imagined but whose lure takes one to an open, cosmopolitan space beyond the Eurocentricism of the grand stories of modernity (Lyotard), or to the other side of the self-referential definitions obtained by a phenomenological analysis of presence to oneself (Derrida). For both figures, a new, worldwide universality encompasses a universality without exclusion (Lyotard). Derrida's themes of hospitality without reserve and the excessive gift are cognates. Lyotard's fascination with the un-presentable (the mysterious cradle of pluralization) also has some affinities with Derrida's break with phenomenology and his espousal of an aphanology with its evocation of the excess of "the impossible thing to come" (democracy, justice, true gift, hospitality to strangers).

This closely argued book, with its deep and careful reading of texts, not only from Lyotard and Derrida but also from those they appeal to, shows that we can persuasively answer the question whether a political ethics is still possible in a postmodern setting with the undeniable answer of yes. S. engages in a careful analysis of Lyotard's recourse to two key philosophical sources: Kant's notion of the sublime and Wittgenstein's language pragmatics.

I was intrigued by the way S. shows how Lyotard and Derrida have been deeply influenced by Jewish ideas (some of them transmitted through the work of Emmanuel Levinas). Lyotard notes how the Jews (like postmodernists in this) eschew metaphysics or focus on the particular. Ethics derives from listening to a voice they are forbidden to name but that holds them hostage. The injunctions to Jews were twofold: know before whom you stand and be just. To be sure, without true universality no genuine ethics can truly prosper. But S. distinguishes between a "monopolistic," totalizing universality and a justice of multiplicity. Lyotard insists that the just resolution of the particular case is the yardstick against which to measure true universality. He wants a universality without exclusion. Perhaps the notion is utopian, but it does beget an ethic of resistance to silencing voices. In his evocation of the Kantian notion of the sublime, Lyotard notes that at times our witnessing may take the form of a speechless sadness that cries to heaven but that continues to hope that a better

idiom may be found to convince the stronger party in the difference about the truthfulness of the weaker party.

Derrida, a close student of Husserl, opposes Husserl's notion of presence. For Derrida, presence can only appear against the background of nonpresence. S. painstakingly parses for us Derrida's notions of *trace*, *différance*, and *khora* (borrowed from the *Timaeus*). *Khora* is a kind of atemporal anteriority, a womb that receives but also serves as a source for admonition. Again, like Lyotard, Derrida evokes Jewish notions of the unnamable yet honors the claim that we must act and speak. He also evokes a kind of messianism.

In these two dense philosophers, what is a theologian to find? S. treats the debates between Derrida and Jean-Luc Marion on negative theology. He also shows how both thinkers transpose what were originally quasitheological notions in the apophatic mystical tradition or Jewish concepts to ground their ethics. Theirs is an atheological use of their Jewish heritage. In the end, any theologian would surely want to dialogue with philosophers who speak of absolute gift, justice, and forgiveness and honor the particular.

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THE CROSS AND THE LYNCHING TREE. James H. Cone. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 2011. Pp. xix + 202. \$28.

"Salvation through the cross," says Cone, "is a mystery and can only be apprehended through faith, repentance, and humility" (158). But to apprehend the cross rightly in America, he argues, we must see it as a lynching, a public spectacle of death inflicted by horrible tortures. Without lynching, the crucifixion easily becomes an abstract, unthreatening event of the distant past. But in the lynchings that scar this nation's history, there is only anguished despair unless we see them in light of the crucifixion. How can we learn to see each in light of the other?

C. points out that the founders of the black Christian tradition, the enslaved blacks, came to faith not through argument or learned preaching, but through their imaginative appropriation of the gospel in the depths of suffering. So "one has to have a powerful religious imagination to see redemption in the cross, to discover life in death and hope in tragedy" (157–58).

Readers of *Theological Studies* will recall Christopher Pramuk's stunning appeal to the white Catholic imagination in his "'Strange Fruit': Black Suffering/White Revelation" (*TS* 67 [2006] 345–78). Now C. offers this carefully plotted set of insights and images also to awaken his readers' moral imaginations. At its end, one may share in the faith of the victims,