

## BOOK REVIEWS

THE BIBLE AND THE CRISIS OF MEANING: DEBATES ON THE THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE. By D. Christopher Spinks. New York: T. & T. Clark, 2007. Pp. xi + 201. \$132.

Spinks seeks to advance conversations in the field of the theological interpretation of Scripture (TIS) by offering a holistic notion of meaning and, in that light, by reconceiving the task of TIS. He begins by offering a helpful and accessible overview of the field, particularly its rise as fruit of increased attention given to the nature of Scripture and to the primary home of its interpretation, the church. These positive developments, he explains, are also the deepest sources of tension among advocates of TIS as they debate the locus of Scripture's authority and the role of the reading community in interpretation. S. also explores various concepts of meaning and their difficulties, and suggests that his proposal will help move beyond these models, resulting in a more unified and clear practice of TIS.

To set up his argument, S. examines the projects of two proponents of TIS he deems representative of two poles within the "movement"—Stephen Fowl and Kevin Vanhoozer. They hold different views on the nature of TIS, but, more importantly, on the concept of meaning. Fowl rejects determinate concepts of meaning and even the concept of meaning altogether, focusing instead on the interpretative interests of a virtuous Christian reading community. S. insightfully questions whether the supposed rejection of "meaning" is helpful, especially when Fowl himself operates with an implicit concept of meaning as varied and community governed. This observation most helpfully demonstrates that the concept of "meaning" is not so easily dispensed with.

Next, S. draws attention to Vanhoozer's use of speech-act theory to provide an account of meaning as authorial intention understood in terms of the action of an author—what he has done in, with, and through the text—not as it exists in his mind. In speech-act terms, the meaning of authorial discourse centers around the illocutionary force of a communicative act. S.'s primary concern with Vanhoozer is that he thereby identifies authorial intention as the meaning of texts. S. agrees that emphasis on authorial action is important for interpretation, but views authorial action only as a "necessary *component* of the larger complex that is meaning" (111).

Alternatively, S. proposes a "triadic" approach to meaning that appropriates the best of Fowl and Vanhoozer, but goes beyond them. Meaning is triadic in that it incorporates the entire triad of speech act theory, involving author, text, and readers. Moreover, by an appeal to the verbal character of "meaning" over against its typically nominal construal, S. seeks to restrain the reification of meaning as a "thing" to be attained and idolized.

Finally, S. defines the meaning of Scripture as the mediation of truth—“a complex reality of the entire dialogue Christians understand is taking place within their community, through their texts, and with their God” (153). Scripture *means* (intransitive verb), and the church participates in that meaning. I found it difficult to grasp this concept of meaning. At times it appears to be what the church believes over time. At other times it is described as “*something* that manifests itself in the interplay between author, text and reader” (155, emphasis added). Is the conversational interaction among author, text, and reader meant to lead to meaning or is the interplay itself the meaning? If the former, then we have not advanced beyond Fowl or Vanhoozer. If the latter, then the attempt to retain and rehabilitate the concept of meaning (contra Fowl) seems to render it more ambiguous. This problem is exacerbated by the absence of any application of this theory of meaning to the actual interpretation of a biblical text. It would help to see an example of what the meaning of Psalm 23 or John 1, for instance, looks like in this model and how this meaning differs from the “results” of previous models.

The notion that meaning as a noun is necessarily an impersonal “thing” merely because one seeks to attain it, is also questionable. If a communicative act renders a person, then in seeking the meaning of Scripture one in fact may be seeking not a thing but a form of engagement with a person, that is, a relationship. Interpretation in this mode need not be construed as cold, scientific, or idolatrous if communion with God is the aim. The use of “thing” is misleading and may perpetuate the caricatures and dualisms S.’s program seeks to avoid.

Criticisms aside, the volume’s strengths include S.’s firm grasp of the various proponents of TIS and his lucid exposition of their positions. His explanations of concepts like TIS, meaning, and speech acts will prove helpful to those unfamiliar with this conversation. Furthermore, his effort to clarify the aims of and approaches to TIS, as well as to move beyond perceived stalemates, is commendable.

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THE SOTERIOLOGY OF LEO THE GREAT. By Bernard Green, O.S.B. Oxford Theological Monographs. New York: Oxford University, 2008. Pp. xii + 272. \$130.

As a child, I watched *The Wizard of Oz* year after year on a black and white television, never suspecting that I was missing anything when Dorothy opened the door to see the Land of Oz. Then, when I watched the movie on our newly purchased color set, it was as if I had seen the film for the first time. When Dorothy opened the door, I faced new and unexpected beauty. Bernard Green’s monograph struck me that way. It is the finest study on Pope Leo I have ever read.

G. structures the main body of his monograph on Antoine Chavassee's masterful work on the chronological sequence of Pope Leo's sermons. Chavassee's chronology permits G. to follow the development of Leo's thought, something I had done to a lesser degree a decade ago with a much smaller sampling (*Church History* 66 [1997] 221–39), but which G. has done much more systematically with the entire corpus. I had focused primarily on Leo's Christmas sermons and a sampling of his letters to show how he had drifted away from a bias in his early works (reflecting the influence of Cyril of Alexandria) toward the centrist christological position he would hold later in his pontificate. G. now has opened that new door by applying the same method to the entire corpus. The vibrant colors show through as G. demonstrates the methodological importance of treating Leo's sermons as liturgical cycles rather than grouping them together by liturgical season.

G. shows that Leo integrated his sermons throughout the yearlong liturgical cycle in order to develop and to reinforce key insights; he did not merely preach on certain topics on given feast days. There is a flow and consistency to Leo's liturgical cycle we had missed. By bringing that flow and consistency to light, G. also demonstrates that Leo was a significantly better and more independent theologian than we had thought. He was much less dependent on John Cassian and, more importantly, on Prosper of Aquitaine for his christological insights than we knew. Indeed, G.'s monograph reveals in Leo a mature theologian who thought for himself and stood independently on his own ground. We see this independence even the more clearly with G.'s chronology of Leo's letters. He establishes that Leo developed into a theologian superior to his "theological advisor," Prosper of Aquitaine, and that Leo had attained the theological sophistication to nuance his language for different groups in order to meet his delicate diplomatic ends.

G. also demonstrates the difficulties of Leo's theological and diplomatic tasks, due to insufficient information on Nestorius' and Cyril's actual positions (owing in part to Marius Mercator's poor translations of what little Rome had of Cyril's works) and to willful misinformation from various camps involved in the christological debates. G.'s ability to contextualize these matters makes this monograph such a marvel. We all know that it is the historical theologian's job to place the theologians' words in their various social, historical, and theological contexts; however, I have never before seen it done with as much skill. G. seems to show the very moments when certain thoughts must have dawned on Leo, and how a simple reappraisal of Nestorius's heresy influenced Leo's ultimate christological insights.

Every library should have this book, and every professor of historical theology should own it. The text is more appropriate for graduate students than for undergraduates, since G. does not normally translate Latin citations. However, upper-division undergraduate students in Christology, soteriology, or historical theology as a whole would still benefit from it.

The monograph is well written with a style that easily accessible to upper-division students, especially if they have had some Latin. Indeed, G.'s chapters on "The Historical Background of Leo's Theology," "The Nestorian Controversy," and "Salvation and Civic Christianity" should be required reading in any of these courses at any level. To set the context for Leo's thought, G. offers a masterful, nuanced survey of the controversies and of the political power plays in Eastern *and* Western Christendom, including Leo's own misplays that created the crises that would dominate his pontificate. These chapters can help students and professors contextualize the entire era better. The monograph is a superb achievement.

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GREGORY OF NYSSA: ANCIENT AND (POST)MODERN. By Morwenna Ludlow. New York: Oxford University, 2007. Pp. x + 314. \$99.

Although she has ordered her study into four parts that suggest the major themes in Nyssa's thought (Trinity, Christology and soteriology, sexuality and gender, and apophatic theological language), Ludlow's is not simply a Nyssan commentary in her own voice. Rather, she has laden her texts with insights from other contemporary Anglophone commentaries on Nyssa, including the writings of T. F. Torrence, Robert W. Jenson, John Zizioulas, David Brown, Sarah Coakley, Nonna Verna Harrison, Rowan Greer, Brian Daley, Peter Brown, Virginia Burrus, Scot Douglass, and John Milbank. The result, however, is not purely a review of the literature. L. orchestrates a conversation about Nyssa and, in so doing, performs a polyphonic interpretation that conveys a sense of him as one who intended his texts to escape definitive readings. For L., Nyssa is an apophatic theologian for whom the limits of religious language require not silence but open-ended speaking, carried by his interpreters.

L.'s introduction, "The Elusive Gregory," communicates perfectly her scholarly agenda. She steers between extremes: one view that modern readings of Nyssa have nothing to contribute to patristic scholarship, and another that recent hermeneutical theory has invalidated the very possibility of patristic scholarship (8). Her middle way allows patristic scholarship to set some boundaries for Nyssa interpretation, but then she examines the "huge variety of new interpretations" that occur within these boundaries. Her stated goals are (1) to illuminate the many different agendas (theological or otherwise) coloring recent interpretations of Nyssa, and (2) to explore whether Nyssa's texts are in fact inherently ambiguous and, if so, whether this ambiguity tells us something about Nyssa's theological mind (9).

On illuminating agendas, L.'s most interesting contribution is her analysis of how different views of Christian history, tradition, and authority color different readers' approaches to Nyssa's texts. Some read Nyssa to buttress traditionally orthodox claims whereas others read him to challenge these claims (chapters 12 and 13 on different feminist readings of Nyssa are

particularly thought-provoking). Some read Nyssa to disconnect him from Augustinian theology whereas others read him to bridge differences between the Greek East and the Augustinian West. Some authors read Nyssa on the assumption that the patristic era was theologically superior to the modern whereas others attempt to illustrate the opposite. Throughout, L.'s point is not the truism that different readers bring different biases to texts; her point is the more complex assertion that finding the one definitive meaning of Nyssa's texts amidst the welter of different readings is neither possible nor desirable (290). Assuredly this assertion does not prevent L. from critically faulting some readings of Nyssa as "contentious," "crude," "weak," and "not . . . interested in a profound understanding of Nyssa" (265, 157, 265, 241, 278). Still, while she refuses to dismiss any of the wide variety of authors, she clearly favors those who consider Nyssa authoritative because his writings can be brought into constructive dialogue with all the streams of Christianity, rather than because he defined once and for all the one true meaning of *the* Christian tradition (which is something L. believes both "conservative" and "reformist" readers wrongly assume).

L.'s approach to the question of Nyssa's theological intentions is most fascinating. The interpretation she performs takes "Gregory's own concept of the nonfinality of theological pronouncements" (276) as its guiding principle, upon which she contends that Nyssa's texts—both internally and in relation to one another—are purposefully ambiguous and "multivalent" (287). Nyssa opens questions, wrestles profoundly with them, and in the end leaves them open for future wrestling (288). Therefore those who take a "conversational" approach to the "fruitful ambiguity" of his texts read them best. In reading religious texts, L. explains, Nyssa avoided definitive interpretations and yet engaged them seriously enough to allow them to speak with compelling force to his contemporary theological concerns. Nyssa wrote his own texts in the same open way he read texts. He took this approach because he thought it most suitable for readers on a spiritual journey to God. Nyssa was confident that reading his open-ended works from within the context of the journey toward God would arrest any tendency to hermeneutic anarchy and allow God to work in and through them. This is why L. concludes by boldly implying that Nyssa's texts are like Sacred Scripture: they must be read in the same Spirit in which they were written (291).

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WHAT IS "THEOLOGY" IN THE MIDDLE AGES?: RELIGIOUS CULTURES OF EUROPE (12TH TO 15TH CENTURIES) AS REFLECTED IN THEIR SELF-UNDERSTANDING. Edited by Mikolaj Olszewski. *Archa Verba Subsidia* 1. Münster: Aschendorff, 2007. Pp. xii + 734. €120.

This hefty book presents papers delivered at a Warsaw conference, June 23–26, 2004, organized by the Internationale Gesellschaft für Theologische

Mediävistik (IGTM) and several supporting agencies. It is the first volume of a series established “to promote new, relevant insights into the history of medieval theology, especially papers read at the meetings of the IGTM” (1). The proceedings successfully follow up a 1997 Erfurt conference devoted to “What is philosophy in the Middle Ages?” But the resulting book brings to mind a church potluck supper, the gathering in of a feast with some pleasant surprises but with little consistency in theme or quality. The potluck effect is enhanced by linguistic diversity: of the 37 introductions and articles, 26 are in German, 7 in English, and 4 in French.

The first half of the book offers a historical treatment of medieval theology, discussing the development of the discipline and its methodology. Brief introductions include a thought-provoking note by Stanislaw Wielgus who sees medieval theology as a prerequisite for modern science and society insofar as theologians were describing a world that was good, rational, and therefore potentially comprehensible and controllable (9–15). Subsequent sections divide material chronologically: articles on the 11th and 12th centuries concern the earliest disciplinary development of formal theology; those on the 13th century see theology as an increasingly self-conscious and preeminent “science” (its general acclamation as “queen of the sciences” comes later, although here its coronation is foreshadowed); articles on the 14th and 15th centuries describe increased tensions. Recurring themes include the effects of Aristotle’s advent, strained connections between theology and pastoral and spiritual experience, and continuous efforts to maintain the link between Scripture and doctrine. Although most of these articles interpret and reinterpret familiar masterworks, unpublished texts underlie Olszewski’s examination of William of Ware’s view of the nature of theology (225–43), Jean-François Genest’s investigation of the role of spiritual experience in Thomas Bradwardine (277–300), and Chris Schabel’s work on early Franciscan attacks against John Duns Scotus’s doctrine of divine foreknowledge (301–28). One of the best analyses is Thomas Prügl’s on the definitions of theology found in the prologues of formal lectures delivered at graduation “defenses,” a paper that reveals not only how theology was defined (occasionally in overwrought rhetoric), but also how complex were medieval matriculation procedures (253–75).

The volume’s second half deals with the relating of theology to other disciplines. Here the disparate character of the contributions is even more pronounced. For example, the section on the “History of Liturgy” includes Charles Caspers’s analysis of the eucharistic spirituality of the *Imitation of Christ*, where he tries to identify what was traditionally medieval and what was 15th century (381–95); Jürgen Barsch’s theoretical observations on collaboration between liturgical science and theological medieval studies (397–436); and Hanns Peter Neuheuser’s reflections on the application of theological and nontheological disciplines to the study of medieval liturgy in the light of Vatican II (437–68). Additional sections concern theology’s connections with canon law, spirituality, art history, and “methods” (miscellaneous papers concerning philosophical and pros-

opographical issues). Certain articles are quite strong: Bruno Boerner writes on late medieval Christic sculpture and its meaning for the spirituality of German convents, anchoring particular statues into a world of spiritual practices by using references to art found in biographies of nuns (641–65). And Ursula Vones-Liebenstein, while asking what role prosopography can play in medieval theological studies, provides one of the best existing summaries of the development of the prosopographical method (695–723).

Altogether this volume boasts many strengths. Each essay is followed by a bibliography of works cited that can be quite extensive—that for Barsch’s liturgical article fills 18 pages. The collection highlights the diversity of research on medieval theology that ranges from focused examinations of how a particular thinker treats a particular doctrine to broad interdisciplinary methodological surveys. But the diversity can be too much, which leads me to suggest that many readers may prefer less expensive collections of selected articles focused on the theologies of particular centuries and regions or on theology’s development as a discipline.

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PAPST UND TEUFEL: DIE ARCHIVE DES VATIKAN UND DAS DRITTE REICH.  
By Hubert Wolf. Munich: C. H. Beck, 2008. Pp. 360. €24.90.

Fifty years after the death of Pope Pius XII (Eugenio Pacelli), the controversies surrounding his and his predecessor’s stances toward Nazism are still very much alive. Hubert Wolf is most qualified and competent to present new findings from the Vatican Archives (opened in 2006 through the pontificate of Pope Pius XI). W. reconstructs the view from Rome regarding the political situation in Germany between 1917 and 1939, especially through the use of Pacelli’s reports (some 5000 as nuncio in Germany) and his “diary” about his private meetings with Pius XI after Pacelli became cardinal secretary of state.

The book details noteworthy personal characteristics of the diplomat Pacelli, for example, his great loves for technical achievements and for orderly German worship, and his misgivings about “modernist” German university theology. It appears that Pacelli’s assessment of Germany’s political situation was better than that of most European politicians. Unlike the British ambassador to the Vatican who believed Hitler’s policies would change for the better, Pacelli was convinced from the beginning of Hitler’s chancellorship that he would become more dangerous (201). It was because of this expected danger that Pacelli welcomed the offer of a concordat between the Holy See and the Reich in 1933. W. presents new evidence that the concordat was not initiated by the Vatican. Until April 8, 1933, a concordat was not even on Rome’s diplomatic horizon. Unexpectedly, Hitler’s vice-chancellor Franz von Papen sought an audience with Pius XI at which von Papen apparently suggested a treaty.

W. also gives evidence that Pacelli did not have any influence on the Center Party's decision to dissolve itself in July 1933. Yes, the Catholic Center Party was about to be sacrificed by the Curia—especially because the independence of German political Catholicism irritated Pius XI who fought vehemently for Catholic Action, a lay organization under the leadership of the clergy. However, the party dissolved before the concordat was signed—to the great annoyance of Pacelli, who had hoped to play the party's sacrifice as a trump card. "He had to choose between a treaty under Hitler's conditions and the 'practical elimination of the Catholic Church in the Third Reich.' Furthermore, 'the regime gave him only a week's time to make a decision'" (202). The evidence also suggests that Pacelli had nothing to do with the revocation of the German bishops' warning against Nazism, and that he was not involved in the Center Party's vote for Hitler's dictatorial power (both in March 1933).

Another chapter takes up the controversy surrounding the Good Friday intercession "for the perfidious Jews." As early as 1928, the Amici Israel, a sizable group of Catholic theologians (about 3000 members), had asked the Holy See to change the Good Friday liturgy to show that the Church did not subscribe to anti-Semitism. Cardinal Rafael Merry del Val, however, vigorously intervened with Pius XI, attacking the Amici Israel for its alleged "indifferentism" and calling and working for the group's suppression. Merry del Val, moreover, insisted on the "unconditional" retraction of the liturgical consultant of the Holy Office, Abbot Ildefons Schuster, for the latter's support of the change. Pius XI, as W. accurately describes, thus forfeited a great chance to prove his respect for Judaism.

On some issues, W.'s descriptions are overstretched. For example, he deduces from Pacelli's description of 1918 revolutionaries as "Jewish" that he had an anti-Semitic side. Also, his reading of *Humani generis unitas* (1938/39), the so-called forbidden encyclical of Pius XI that was never promulgated, could have been fairer. He does not note that the encyclical had several passages that sound considerably anti-Semitic; it was probably wise of Pacelli/Pius XII not to publish it. W. also fails to mention that Pius XII used the most appropriate arguments of his predecessor's letter against racism in his first encyclical, *Summi Pontificatus* (1939).

These five extremely readable chapters, based firmly on primary sources, solidly contribute to our understanding of Rome's view of Germany between 1917 and 1939. The book raises the expectation that W. or one of his students will, in eight or ten years, deliver magisterial biographies of Pius XI and Pius XII—projects that will become possible only when files from between 1939 and 1945 become accessible. The Vatican Archives estimates that we will have to wait at least six more years for this to happen.



CHESTERTON AND TOLKIEN AS THEOLOGIANS: THE FANTASY OF THE REAL. By Alison Milbank. London: T. & T. Clark, 2007. Pp. xvi + 184. \$89.24; \$39.95.

Milbank emphasizes the influence of Chesterton's natural theology on Tolkien, especially on the latter's symbolist and modernist use of mythology, self-referentiality, and a mixture of styles for religious purposes. According to M., both authors understood literature as mediating creation and the Creator, earthly contingency, and the wonder of the real, all within a post-Darwinian world of disenchantment and determinism. For Chesterton, fairy tales and fantastic novels embody a narrative ontology in which life itself is enchanted and purposeful, revealing God's activity in every human experience. Beneath Chesterton's notions of literature is a solid philosophical realism that he discovered in Aquinas, from whom he also derived an incarnational theology and a social philosophy. Tolkien's narratives, letters, and his essay "On Fairy Tales" show the influence of Chesterton's notion of fantasy, as well as his theological ideas about God as free creator, about creation as real and diverse, and about human beings as mortal but transcendent. Both Chesterton and Tolkien, according to M., also exhibit an understanding of art and ethics derived from Aquinas through Maritain, particularly from their notion of the integrity of form within the artwork and their ethics of trust.

The central chapters show Chesterton and Tolkien's theology emerging from the literary genre and devices of their fiction: the Fantastic, the Grotesque, and the Paradoxical. M. sees Chesterton's use of fantasy as a method of defamiliarization—the characters in his novels create strange ways of transforming ordinary human action into a "mini-drama of creation, fall and restoration" (33). The reader moves from a fallen view of the world as merely uninteresting and functional to a spiritual grasp of the world as created and purposeful. M. sees Tolkien's use of fantasy as moving beyond Chesterton's emphasis on the marvel of the real to an emphasis on the supernatural potential of the ordinary. Similarly, Chesterton and Tolkien make various uses of the Grotesque, a genre that employs monstrosity and excess in its narratives and style, particularly in the mixture of diabolic and divine in human beings. Tolkien's fantasy expresses "the wonder and ecstasy of pure otherness" (64), for example, in the evil behavior of the orcs, Gollum, and the spider Shelob in *The Lord of the Rings*. The duality of the human also becomes central in these authors' use of paradoxes and riddles, the former present throughout Chesterton and the latter at the heart of the games in *The Hobbit* and of most characters in Tolkien's epic. M. finds redemptive paradoxes embodied in the violent battles of *The Rings* and its ambiguous finale, for the ending does not dramatize but only points toward a final "ecstatic reunion of soul and body at the Resurrection" (111).

In his last two chapters, M. explores the role of gift-exchange and make-believe in Chesterton's and Tolkien's narrative theologies. For Chesterton, all creation is a gift that demands reciprocity from human beings; for

Tolkien, all creation as dramatized in *The Rings* has become a failure of gift-exchange. M.'s brief exploration of imagination or "make-believe" is the least developed part of the book, but does provide some intriguing applications of child psychology to the world of imagination. The study includes a helpful bibliography but omits recent works by Chuck Crum, *Tolkien's Mighty Pen* (2005), Trevor Hart, *Tree of Tales* (2007), Peter Kreeft, *The Philosophy of Tolkien* (2005), Fleming Rutledge, *The Battle for Middle Earth* (2004), and Donald Williams, *Mere Humanity* (2006).

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HOPE & SOLIDARITY: JON SOBRINO'S CHALLENGE TO CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY. Edited by Stephen J. Pope. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 2008. Pp. xiii + 282. \$26.

While Jon Sobrino's contribution to Latin American liberation theology has long been recognized, the world's attention to his work has been further intensified by two events: the massacre of six Jesuit companions and their two coworkers in November 1989 and the notification by the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in November 2006 on two of Sobrino's christological studies. Both events provide the context for this collection by theologians from North and South America; they seek to explain and defend Sobrino. The contributions have been grouped into four parts: theology; Jesus Christ and Christology; the church and ecclesiology; and moral theology and Christian life. The Vatican's notification is given in the appendix. Apart from William Loewe's critical interpretation of the notification itself, the papers focus rather on the basic themes contested by the Vatican. These are four: a theological methodology that is contextual, starting with a preferential option for the poor; a process of theologizing that includes a commitment to struggle with the poor for their liberation; an inspiring vision of the human Jesus who energizes us in the struggle; and the Kingdom of God as a not merely otherworldly but also historical goal. These points are crucial today, not only for liberation theology but also for any theology that seeks to be relevant. The notification, in contrast, defends a traditional, abstract, a priori, Scholastic theology that may no longer be significant or helpful anywhere in the world.

The poor do not provide the "sources" of theology, but its methodological starting point. Without such a starting point, theology becomes simply an exposition and defense of traditional dogmas, relevant only for those times past. Sobrino's theology rereads the Bible from the point of view of the contemporary poor. The "poor" are principally the economically poor, although all socially marginalized peoples are included. Together they show us what is wrong with the world. Sobrino also addresses the nonpoor, calling them to conversion. In actually struggling with the poor for their liberation, theologians and theological reflection become prophetic and socially transformative. Archbishop Oscar Romero and the six UCA

Jesuits were involved with the poor, and this involvement gave them new Christian insight into the reality of their actual human living. Thus, throughout the book we see the shadows of Romero and the six Jesuits. Professional theologians like Ignacio Ellacuría and Sobrino only spell out the implications of that involvement.

The contributions of Dean Brackley and Stephen Pope are particularly enlightening. The commitment to the poor leads to a new way of being church, “taking the crucified peoples down from their cross.” This new way is characterized by mercy—another important theme explored by Sobrino. Jesus’ parable of the “Good Samaritan” provides a narrative that triggers reflection on the image of Jesus himself as the Samaritan and his action as savior inspired by mercy for the poor and the suffering. Thomas Kelly, James Keenan, and Joseph Curran explain well the principle of mercy that runs through Sobrino’s writings.

Among others, three Latin American theologians, Rafael Luciani, Jorge Costadoat, and Felix Palazzi, discuss Sobrino’s Christology—the principal focus of the notification. The basic tension is between the Vatican’s narrow focus on the divinity of Jesus (on the oneness of his person that does not take into account his “two natures”) and Sobrino’s close study of Jesus’ kenotic humanity and liberative praxis (without denying the divine dimensions of Jesus and without separating or confusing Jesus’ two natures). The choice between these perspectives affects the way we read the Gospels. Sobrino’s concentration is not on the “historical Jesus” but on the “human Jesus,” and on his teaching and actions as reported in the Gospels, including his crucifixion and resurrection. This approach aligns him with much of contemporary Christology, which the Vatican notification ignores.

This book is a good introduction to Sobrino’s theology. Only two criticisms of his work emerged, both from Costadoat, who judges that Sobrino’s distinction between the oppressed and oppressors is too simplified and that he ignores popular religiosity. I myself missed appeals to other contemporary Christologies. Contextual theological methodology and the stress on the human Jesus are also shared by African and Asian theologians in their own “dialogue” with the Vatican. Two or so contributions from those regions could have widened the book’s perspectives and manifested a much-needed Third World solidarity.

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MICHAEL AMALADOSS, S.J.

FRIENDS OF GOD: ISLAMIC IMAGES OF PIETY, COMMITMENT, AND SERVANTHOOD. By John Renard. Berkeley: University of California, 2008. Pp. xx + 346. \$24.95.

Privileged to visit the mosques of Isfahan a few years ago, only to be stunned with their majesty and beauty, I said to myself: Whatever it may have been, something must have happened in the Arabian peninsula in the seventh century of our era! In the face of their simple splendor, I felt as I

suspect a Western atheist might feel encountering Chartres. These stirring stories, deftly collected and translated by John Renard, give rise to a similar experience. Exhibiting his characteristic thoroughness, their limpid quality shows the immense task of garnering these stories, with their attendant illustrations, to have been a labor of love. The efflorescence of studies into Islamic traditions can only cumulate in a better appreciation of this Abrahamic faith, which has been subject to widespread attention only within the last 20 years. Yet today anyone seeking a faculty position in religious studies in the West has to signal at least a “teaching competence” in Islam. Something monumental has happened, presaged for Catholics in Karl Rahner’s celebrated “worldchurch” essay appearing in *Theological Studies* in 1979. As a result, a study of Muslim hagiography can open up entire worlds to Christians relatively unaware of the intimacy with God evoked by Qur’anic recitation and deepened by the form of meditation on the holy book characteristic of Sufi practice. For hagiography is a literary form with which Catholic Christians, at least, are familiar, so, when a similar literary genre from a cognate faith tradition is presented with clarity and sophistication, we find ourselves “passing over” into another tradition, as John Dunne, C.S.C., characterized it decades ago.

“Friends of God” is the Muslim denomination of those Christians call “saints.” Yet this collective name carries deep New Testament resonances as well (Jn 15:15: “I call you not servants, but friends”), where the distinction between “servant and friend” is roughly parallel in both traditions: To be one of the faithful is ipso facto to be a servant, and human beings can claim no higher dignity. To be made a friend, however, can never be achieved; that is pure gift of divine grace.

Renard organizes the narratives into two groups: “stages in the lives of God’s friends” and “friends of God in context,” and concludes with two hermeneutical chapters on understanding the stories: “friends in theory.” It is hardly surprising that edification trumps historical accuracy in the given narrations; yet to deny any room for wonder or for marvels in human life would be stingy in the extreme. The excesses exhibited by God’s friends are but a dim reflection of the superabundant gift the Qur’an represents: a God-given “straight path” to intimacy with God. Moreover, anyone who has lived in a Muslim society can attest to the presence of holy men and women whose comportment fairly exudes such proximity to God, so one can truly say that the world is replete with friends of God, though their number is dwarfed by the omnipresent “believers” who are content to pay lip service to the God who reveals God’s Word in the Qur’an, and God’s inestimable face in these friends.

Renard concludes his survey of Sufi life and practice with a bow to Ibn Taymiya (280–81), whose disdain for intercession and for pilgrimage to burial places of renowned “friends of God” is legendary. Yet his person has been overtaken by the adulation he has received in Wahhabi circles, for his judgments were often far more balanced than that rigorist form of Islam—too often taken as paradigmatic for Muslim life in the West.

(Most Muslims find it to be an odd and curiously rigid distortion of Islamic life and practice; a “puritan” excess.) Sufis are far more central to Islamic life than such rigorist groups would allow. If Christians were to think of Sufis in Islam as a cross between charismatics and contemplatives, set apart yet fully engaged in ordinary pursuits in the world, they would gain a better perspective on that dimension of Islam. These narratives will carry inquirers closer to “friends of God” in spirit and so (I would contend with Renard) closer to the very heart of Islam.

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DAVID BURRELL, C.S.C.

L'ÊTRE ET LA MISSION DU LAÏC DANS UNE ÉGLISE PLURI-MINISTÉRIELLE: D'UNE THÉOLOGIE DU LAÏCAT À UNE ECCLÉSIOLOGIE DE SOLIDARITÉ (1953–2003). By Humbert José Sánchez Zariñana, S.J. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2008. Pp. 460. €35.

In his study of the theology of the laity, the Mexican Jesuit Humberto José Sánchez Zariñana defends a liberationist approach to the ministries as currently under development by lay people in solidarity with the poor. Inspired by the French ecclesiohistorian Yves Congar, S. prefaces his argument with a history of the changing theology of the laity before and after Vatican II. Preconciliar lay initiatives, notably Catholic Action and secular institutes, remained strictly subordinated to the clerical hierarchy. Post-conciliar lay movements, especially the many Christian communities devoted to liberation of the poor, featured more spontaneous initiatives rooted in the common mission of all the baptized.

One strength of S.'s chronicle is his attention to how the triple mission of Christ (king, priest, prophet) has been reinterpreted at each juncture in this stormy history. One weakness is the dualism by which he opposes the “hierarchical Church” to the more egalitarian “People of God.” The hierarchical approach allegedly represents an outmoded model of lay apostolate while the populist ecclesiology represents the present and future of mature lay ministries. For S., recent magisterial documents limiting the mission of the laity (272–91) express the resistance of a clerical hierarchy still bound to the outmoded model. In fact, however, magisterial declarations on the laity before, during, and after the council have appealed to numerous models of the Church: perfect society, Body of Christ, people of God, servant of the poor. An enduring complementarity of ecclesiastical metaphors exists where S. perceives only a sharp opposition in linear succession.

An egalitarian-servant model of the Church raises problems concerning the identity of the ordained priest. S. argues that a relational view of the ordained priesthood must replace the older “ontological” view. The doctrine of the indelible character imprinted by the sacrament of Holy Orders is minimized as a late medieval creation by a questionable Scholasticism (306–8). Canonical concern over the exercise of jurisdiction is dismissed as a holdover from the late medieval contests over power (309–11). Unsur-

prisingly, when the analysis treats contemporary controversies concerning the priesthood, S.'s chapters become tentative interrogations: "Ministry for Life or Temporary Ministry?" (314–16), "Ordain Priests without Requiring Celibacy?" (316–18).

For S., the ministries of both clergy and laity must focus on the poor. He insists that an option for the poor results not simply out of a humanitarian calculation that the materially poor have the greatest claim to assistance. Rather, at the center of the Church is the belief that the poor can reveal the visage of the crucified Lord. "The activity of the Church has not been a simple social activity. Her solidarity with the poor has changed the way of looking at herself. From being in the condition of someone who is 'assisted' by others, the poor person has become the one identified with the suffering Christ. Out of this witness, the Church has urged others to commit themselves to the struggle against misery in the name of her own theological experience and of the dignity of the life of those who suffer" (371). Solidarity with the poor is not simply the external effect of the Church's teaching on justice; it transforms the internal life of the Church by focusing her on the poor, crucified Christ. To reduce this imperative of solidarity to a series of external works of mercy is to confirm the Church, especially in the affluent West, in the bourgeois complacency of self-worship and self-service.

S.'s vision of a renewed Church marked by lay ministries focused on the poor does not entirely escape the social reductionism common in liberationist ecclesologies. Salvation is reinterpreted as "the humanization of the degraded creature" (351). The priest's role in this egalitarian Church is only loosely tied to the sacraments. "The mission of the priest is constituted by relationships. As minister, he is appointed to watch over the full development of the Christian vocation of each baptized person. He reads the signs of the times with them and leads their struggle for a better world to the Eucharist as he tries to keep the delicate balance between attentive listening to the Christian community and a commitment that permits him to discern events and the beating heart of humanity" (404). Yet, although there is certainly continuity between salvation and human development, there is also decisive discontinuity. The questions of sin, grace, eternal life, and divine transcendence appear as disturbingly minor notes in this ardent plea for expansive lay ministries edifying the Church of the poor.

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JOHN J. CONLEY, S.J.

CATHOLICS IN AMERICA: A HISTORY. By Patrick W. Carey. Updated Edition. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008. Pp. xi + 320. \$27.95.

THE FAITHFUL: A HISTORY OF CATHOLICS IN AMERICA. By James M. O'Toole. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap of Harvard University, 2008. Pp. 376. \$27.95.

The two books considered here are the latest additions to a rich harvest of general histories of American Catholicism published over the past three

decades. *American Catholics* (1981) by James Hennesey, S.J., the first such work to appear after Vatican II, was followed by Jay Dolan's *The American Catholic Experience* (1985) and David O'Brien's *Public Catholicism* (1989). Patrick Carey's *The Roman Catholics* (1993) was a volume in the Greenwood Press series, "Denominations in America," while Charles Morris's *American Catholic* (1997) told the story of "the saints and sinners who built America's most powerful church." More recently, Dolan's *In Search of an American Catholicism* (2002) and John McGreevy's *Catholicism and American Freedom* (2003) are thematic interpretations rather than comprehensive surveys, but they illuminate the whole of American Catholic history. There have been, in addition, many valuable works of a more specialized nature, along with the publication of reprint series, documentary sources, and a substantial encyclopedia of American Catholic history.

The shifts in outlook associated with Vatican II had much to do with this efflorescence of historical scholarship. Rapidly evolving postconciliar developments themselves demanded historical treatment. But by opening new perspectives on the past, the council also set off a broader reexamination of American Catholic history. The council's People-of-God ecclesiology furnishes the clearest example. Its effect on historians was reinforced by their preexisting dissatisfaction with the overly institutional focus of conventional church history and by the contemporary vogue of social history and studies of popular religion. All the works mentioned above reflect this influence to some degree, but Dolan's *American Catholic Experience* was the most ambitious, and he explicitly offered it as a new kind of history, written "from the bottom up."

That book served for a generation as the exemplar of People-of-God history. James M. O'Toole's *The Faithful* now provides a shorter, more readable, and more radically "lay" reading of the American Catholic past. Dolan's method was to combine an institutional narrative with a series of topical chapters on the ethnic background of the Catholic people, their family life, group ethos, mobility patterns, and so on. O., by contrast, focuses directly on what Catholic life was like for "the faithful" in six chronological eras (with a chapter on each) showing how an era's distinctive form of Catholicity impinged on ordinary believers. Narrative is merely implied by the succession of eras, the historical boundaries of which are rather blurry. O. does, however, tie the story together by treating four main topics in each chapter: the size and character of the Catholic population and the institutions that structure it; spirituality and devotional practices; American Catholics' relation to the papacy; and their interaction with other Americans.

The book represents a major methodological breakthrough and succeeds brilliantly in what it sets out to do. Part of the reason for its success is that O.'s approach works so well in the first chapter, "The Priestless Church." For though earlier writers noted the scarcity of clergymen and other features of Catholic life in the colonial and revolutionary periods, none

demonstrated so effectively how their interlocking character shaped the religious experience of the small and scattered Catholic population. This dazzling start carries the reader along through the next two historical eras—"The Church in a Democratic Republic" and "The Immigrant Church"—whose syntheses, though rewarding, lack the revelatory impact of the opening chapter.

Chapter 4, "The Church of Catholic Action," is the most original part of the book. Again, others have discussed various aspects of "the lay apostolate," particularly the Catholic Worker movement, but O. is the first to offer persuasive evidence for the central role of Catholic Action in the religious life of the preconiliar generation. He argues in addition that, by encouraging lay people to take personal responsibility for their faith, Catholic Action prepared the ground for the changes that came in the aftermath of Vatican II.

Both *The Faithful* and Patrick W. Carey's *Catholics in America* provide excellent coverage of the postconciliar period. Each account is balanced, but they differ in scope and tone. O., viewing the scene from the lay angle, comes across as an informal reporter, not unaware of problems, but on the whole positive about the story he tells. C., striving for comprehensive coverage, writes more analytically and conveys a sharper sense of the ambiguities inherent in an epoch marked by "continuities in the midst of change, strength in the midst of decline, gains in the midst of losses" (115). Both authors treat the pedophilia crisis frankly and in considerable detail.

The most distinctive features of C.'s book derive from the format established for the "Denominations in America" series, since *Catholics in America* is the second revision of the 1993 volume mentioned above as part of that series. As such, it includes a 60-page section of biographical sketches (60 individuals covered—a reduction from 144 in the original) and a six-page chronology of events. These handbook-like elements would better have been eliminated, allowing C. more space for his historical exposition, which is first-rate in quality, but densely packed.

C.'s narrative, divided into eleven chapters, is more clearly articulated than O.'s six overlapping eras, and is tied more closely to historical shifts in the national culture. C. also discusses intellectual developments that seem not to fall within the parameters of O.'s interpretive scheme. The most surprising omission here is that O. makes no mention of Orestes Brownson, surely the most important lay figure in 19th-century American Catholicism (who rates eleven index references, in addition to a biographical sketch, in C.'s book). Along the same lines, O. passes in silence over the episode of "Americanism," to which C. devotes a chapter that is a marvel of concise exposition and evaluation. By way of balancing omissions, I should note that C.'s quite detailed index includes no entry for "Catholic Action."

Conscious of the relatively unfashionable nature of institutional history, C. slips in a brief defense of his approach. After devoting a dozen pages to



the multiple statements on current affairs issued by the American bishops in recent years, he observes that some might dismiss these hierarchical pronouncements as completely unrelated to “the everyday concerns of Catholics in the pew.” C., however, maintains that they deserve attention as “an attempt to apply the gospel to the social, economic, and political conditions in ways that reflect the Catholic Church’s mission in a troubled modern world” (169).

However one may feel about this particular example, the overall excellence of C.’s book amply demonstrates that history written in the traditional way still has the power to deepen our collective self-understanding. At the same time, O.’s sparkling synthesis makes us see things in new way, doing justice as no earlier work has done to the place of lay men and women in the fabric of American Catholic history. These two fine books complement each other beautifully.

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PHILIP GLEASON

GOD AS POET OF THE WORLD: EXPLORING PROCESS THEOLOGIES. By Roland Faber. Translated from the German by Douglas W. Scott. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008. Pp. x + 365. \$49.95.

Austrian-born Claremont professor Roland Faber introduces his study by defining process theology as “theopoetics”: “a theology of *perichoresis* (the mutual coinherence of all things) in which the universe represents God’s creative adventure and God the event of creative transformation of the world. It is within the net of interwovenness—the process itself—that God appears as the ‘poet of the world’” (15). Chapter 1 reviews various 20th-century forms of process theology that emerged before and after the groundbreaking work of Alfred North Whitehead. Then F. explains and reinterprets Whitehead’s metaphysical scheme in the light of postmodern thought. Especially Jacques Derrida and Gilles Deleuze inform F.’s conviction that the classically Western priority of the conceptually grounded One over the empirically based Many, in both philosophy and theology, must be overcome by more focused attention on *différance*, the never-ending deferral of full meaning and fixed value subtly operative within human discourse. “Things” in their enduring self-presence or self-identity, accordingly, must be deconstructed so as to make clear that they are in fact “event-nexuses,” ordered sequences of microscopic self-creative “events.” F. is heavily dependent here on Whitehead’s notion of actual entities/occasions as “the final real things of which this world is made up” (*Process and Reality* [1978] 18). But he clearly moves beyond Whitehead in rethinking the three “natures” of God as specified by Whitehead in *Process and Reality*. The “superjective nature” of God is not only the dynamic synthesis but also the ontological source of the creative tension between the “primordial nature” and the “consequent nature” of God, and between the mental and physical “poles” of finite actual entities. Thus at every moment and at every stage of

the cosmic process, the initial “in/difference” originating within the superjective nature of God is followed by ontological differentiation both in God and the world and between God and the world. The dialectic always ends in synthesis or reconciliation of differences, so as to begin all over again the cosmic process as an ongoing event (167–68, 254–61).

Unquestionably, F.’s book is a speculative tour de force, a comprehensive overview and synthesis first of Whitehead’s own cosmology, then of Whitehead’s principal commentators—even of philosophers and theologians ancient and modern whose thought shows some affinity with Whitehead’s scheme. But, as with many speculative schemes, we may ask whether the thought-system has been purchased at the price of a certain reductionism and oversimplification. For example, if God too is an “event” rather than an enduring self-presence or self-identity within the cosmic process, can we adequately distinguish between God and creativity? For, with the virtual elimination of the distinction between person and nature in God (108, 175–78), God, like every finite actual occasion, is merely a “creature” of the creative process (143, 206). Or, we might wonder: Does the world as an all-encompassing network of interrelated event-nexuses have any unitary objective reality beyond its present moment within the cosmic process? Is the world somehow grounded in the “consequent nature” of God as in *Process and Reality* or in Plato’s “Receptacle” as in Whitehead’s later book *Adventures of Ideas*? F. mentions both but favors the latter concept under the new image of the “divine matrix” in which both God and the world equally participate (170–79). With this image, F. depicts God and the world as constantly engaged in dialectical movement vis-à-vis one another (157–70). But is this dialectical process itself a new and different understanding of the One, grounded now in an immanent self-differentiating activity rather than a totally transcendent entity (e.g., God)? For that matter, can we even intelligibly deal with the reality of the empirical Many in any given context apart from some implicit understanding of a transempirical One as their inevitable counterpart?

Notwithstanding the reservations suggested by these questions, F.’s book is a significant achievement. His multiple insights into the details of Whitehead’s metaphysical scheme and his broad coverage of process-oriented thinkers, both old and new, make the book well worth reading despite its sometimes heavily Germanic style.

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JOSEPH BRACKEN, S.J.

THE RESURRECTION EFFECT: TRANSFORMING CHRISTIAN LIFE AND THOUGHT. By Anthony J. Kelly. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 2008. Pp. xv + 205. \$30.

Just as the resurrection of the crucified Jesus is the focal event for Christian faith, so also it should be the source and focus for all Christian theology. Sadly so much systematic and moral theology takes place almost

as if the Resurrection can be quietly taken for granted and then ignored. Anthony Kelly argues vigorously that theology should be much more “resurrectional” in its method, content, and mood. Where Kevin Hart has written of “the God-effect” in religious experience, K. speaks of the “resurrection-effect” in Christian experience. In the light of the foundational Christian experience of Easter, the Resurrection should be a pervasive source of meaning and value in all theology. K. aims at nothing less than persuading his readers to acknowledge the inexhaustible significance of the Resurrection and let the resurrection-effect resonate in all aspects of their lives.

K. recognizes how the doctrine of the Incarnation was more adaptable to theological presentation than the Resurrection. Nevertheless, it was only in the light of Christ’s Resurrection that the doctrine and theology of the Incarnation emerged. If Jesus had not risen from the dead, there would have been no christological controversies and no definitions about his “one person in two natures.” Add too the fact that the tripersonal God’s self-giving disclosure in the Resurrection called the church and her sacraments into existence.

In making his case, K. draws not only on the NT and biblical scholars like N. T. Wright but also on a wide range of authors: Bernard Lonergan, Jean Luc Marion, Thomas Aquinas, Eric Voegelin, Hans Urs von Balthasar, and others. He retrieves Wittgenstein’s wonderful reflection that “only love can believe in the resurrection” (*Culture and Value* [1980]). When dealing with the interpersonal phenomenon of witnessing to the Resurrection, K. might have brought into play Tony Coady’s landmark work *Testimony* (1992).

One might quibble over a few exegetical details. The verb *ōphthē*, used four times in 1 Corinthians 15:5–8 is correctly translated by every contemporary translation as “appeared” (that is to say, “he showed himself”) and is not better translated as “was seen by” (89). Joseph of Arimathea appears in all four Gospels; any “process of enrichment” that took place between the writing of the first and last Gospels does not concern his “presence” but merely his status as a disciple of Jesus (51). Or is K. thinking of Nicodemus, who becomes present in the story of Jesus’ burial only in John’s Gospel? But such incidental matters take nothing away from K.’s case.

As much as I applaud K.’s spirited attempt to reinstate the Resurrection at the heart of theology, I must ask: Will he have any more success than others who issued such a plea toward the end of the last century? He cites with approval Brian Johnstone’s observations about the strange absence of the doctrine of the Resurrection in moral theology and Christian ethics. A decade ago Johnstone’s powerful and persuasive statement appeared in *The Resurrection: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Resurrection of Jesus* (1997), but since then I have not seen that moral theology and Christian ethics have become notably more oriented toward the Resurrection.

I fear that too many colleagues in fundamental, systematic, and moral theology may never read K.’s volume and, if they do, may nod approval

but will remain unchanged in their methods and approaches. It is not that such methods and approaches are already well grounded—if they bypass the Resurrection, how could they be? But for many teachers and writers, current theologies that are one-sidedly focused on the Incarnation or absorbed by the challenges of postmodernism have become too familiar. Like old friends, their methods have become part of them, and they are reluctant to abandon or change them. To adapt some brilliant remarks from John Rist in *Real Ethics* (2002), following certain methods and approaches in theology is “not merely a matter of our rationality; it is also a matter of our emotions, our character, our loves” (103) and our experience of what colleagues in our discipline normally do.

My gloomy remarks do not, however, aim at taking anything away from K.’s cogent, urbane, and learned argument for the rehabilitating Christ’s resurrection as the source and focus of all theology and the focal event for Christian faith.

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CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY IN ASIA. Edited by Sebastian C. H. Kim. New York: Cambridge University, 2008. Pp. xiii + 296. \$35.99.

As Christianity sinks deeper roots in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, local communities have elaborated theologies appropriate to their socio-political, cultural, and religious contexts, creating theologies that are becoming less Western. Yet, while Latin America has developed its own theology, known worldwide as liberation theology, the theological voices of Africa and Asia remain relatively unknown to the West. The situation has ameliorated recently, as Asian and African theologians are increasingly published in the West, mostly in English, by such publishing houses as Orbis. This volume introduces newer Asian theological voices and trends.

The book gathers 13 essays, divided into two parts. Part 1, primarily historical, describes the emergence of Christian theology in five Asian countries: India, Indonesia, China, Japan, and South Korea. Part 2, systematic, deals with themes such as religious pluralism, hermeneutics, feminism, ecumenism, mission, and subaltern theologizing. The historical part is introduced in an overview essay by David M. Thompson, who calls attention to the little-noticed fact that “Asian Christianity is either as old as or older than European Christianity” (1). He also rightly points out that in Asia theology is an “ecclesiastical” enterprise, situated more in faith communities than in universities, as in the West. As a result, Asian theologies tend to emerge as contextual theologies, that is, as the church’s responses to Asia’s challenges to its mission. Of these challenges Thompson highlights four: war, poverty, the presence of other world faiths, and women’s inferior status. Jacob Kavunkal traces the development of Indian Roman Catholic theology in dialogue with Hinduism, whereas Israel Selvanayagam does the same for Protestant theology, recalling Sadhu Sundar Singh’s

evocative metaphor of “the water of life in an Indian cup.” John Titaley provides an account of Christianity in Indonesia from colonial times through independence to the year 2000, ending with a plea for a postcolonial theology. Choong Chee Pang reports with “guarded optimism” (105) on the fascinating phenomenon of the rapid growth of Christian studies in several distinguished Chinese universities and institutes, and the publication of numerous theological books and journals. The development of Japanese theology is recounted by Nozomu Miyahira who notes that, even though Japanese Christians form only one percent of the population, Japanese theologians have succeeded in drawing attention to uncomfortable issues such as the church’s “wartime collaboration with the government, the Emperor system and the structure of discrimination” (127). In a tour de force, Sebastian Kim gives the most informative, comprehensive, and enlightening essay on the history of Korean theology under five rubrics: Bible, Revival, Folk, Liberation, and Reconciling Christianities.

The systematic part matches the historical part in rich and varied insights. Thomas Thangaraj presents a helpful typology of the ways Christianity regards other Asian religions, namely, as an enemy of God, a potential convert, a primitive superstition, an unfulfilled seeker, a storehouse of culture, a companion in struggle, and a partner in dialogue. In the context of Asian religious pluralism, Thangaraj then discusses how the four themes of God, the Bible, Christ, and church can be inculturated into Asia. The issue of reading the Bible within the multiscriptural Asian context is broached by Archie Lee who urges a crosstextual hermeneutics that embraces the “potential divine inspirational nature of other scriptures” and “the acknowledgement of a plurality of embodiments of truth and meaning” (200). Namsoon Kang critically examines the task of feminist theology in the Asian postcolonial context, deconstructs the myth of “Asian-women-ness” of the *as*-discourse (the politics of identity), and proposes the *with*-discourse of resistance and liberation (the politics of solidarity). Wesley Ariarajah discusses the ecumenical movement in Asia, showing how it has to be shaped by globalization, the extreme gap between the poor and the rich, the rise of China and India as global powers, strained interfaith relations, ongoing social revolutions, decreasing interest in church unity, and the minority status of Christianity in Asia. Hwa Yung presents one of the most challenging phenomena not only in Asia but also in world Christianity, namely, the rise of the Pentecostal and Evangelical Churches (e.g., David Yong-Gi Cho’s Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul) and their theologies, especially of mission. Finally, Sathianathan Clarke reprises the theme of identity politics and theology in the context of Indian caste system, proposes a post-Dalit and post-Adivasi subaltern theology, and offers a fascinating interpretation of Jesus’ baptism as the beginning of “God’s relational polity of just wholeness” (286).

*Christian Theology in Asia* is an excellent introduction to Asian theology. Of course, other countries could have been considered (the Philippines is conspicuously absent) and other themes of great interest to East Asian

Christians could have been treated such as ancestor veneration. Also a more extensive treatment of fundamental *loci theologici* in dialogue with other religions is a necessary but absent building block for an Asian theology. These are but desiderata for future works on Asian theology and subtract nothing from the usefulness of this volume, which I most strongly recommend for any course on Asian theology.

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PETER PHAN

COPTIC CHRISTOLOGY IN PRACTICE: INCARNATION AND DIVINE PARTICIPATION IN LATE ANTIQUE AND MEDIEVAL EGYPT. By Stephen J. Davis. New York: Oxford University, 2008. Pp. xvii + 371. \$130.

By choosing Christology as his topic, Davis focuses on the central preoccupation of the Fathers of the Egyptian (Coptic) Church. For them, everything about God the Father and the Holy Spirit, about the Church, and about us and our place in the economy of salvation flows from the attempt to penetrate and interpret the mystery of the Incarnation. This book is not merely the recovery of a theological tradition that flourished and then died out in the Middle Ages. The Coptic Church today is a flourishing, growing community both in Egypt and in the diaspora. While a good deal has been written about the Church of Egypt in its Greek manifestations centered at Alexandria, less well known is the contribution of the indigenous Coptic-speaking majority, and even less known is that of the medieval Coptic theologians who thought and wrote in Arabic. D.'s book divides into three main parts: part 1 deals with late antique Coptic Christology, principally that of the fifth-century abbot Shenoute of Atripe, and with the liturgy; part 2 discusses the embodiment of Coptic Christology through pilgrimages and the visual arts; and part 3 introduces the Arabic-speaking Coptic theologians of the Middle Ages.

One notable characteristic of all Egyptian Christology is its concreteness, its sensate approach, and its preference for metaphor over metaphysical abstraction. By first tracing the general development of Alexandrian Christology (from its beginnings with Clement and Origen down to Athanasius and especially to Cyril), D. lays a foundation for his first chapter on the development of Coptic Christology proper, where he takes up the writings of Shenoute and the eucharistic liturgies of the Egyptian Church. He shows how Shenoute was able to take Greek Alexandrian Christology, especially Cyril's, and express it in Coptic, the language of the majority of Egyptians in late antiquity. Section 2 of part 1 discusses the sources of Egyptian liturgies, the anaphoras, and how they express the Christology in the context of worship.

In part 2, "Bodies, Practices, and Sacred Space," D. discusses what one might call the physical manifestations of Christology: pilgrimage and religious art. Pilgrimage in Egypt meant retracing the steps of the Holy Family during their exile in Egypt and making pilgrimages to the dwelling places

of holy men who were preeminently Christ-bearers. This is what D. calls "localizations of the Incarnation," the chance for Egyptians to visit places where the Holy Family actually stopped, to see the very footprints that Jesus left on a rock. Then there is the manifestation of the incarnate Word in pictorial form. Here D. breaks new ground by pointing out the function of pictorial art embroidered on liturgical vestments, "bodies visualized and ritualized," covering the bodies of the living in liturgical settings when the very body of Christ is ingested. One notable image from Egypt is Mary enthroned while suckling the child Jesus, a theme that D. analyzes again in terms of Christology.

Part 3 is D.'s most original, and in many ways most exciting, part of the book. Here he introduces the great Egyptian theologians of the Middle Ages who wrote in Arabic. The transition to Arabic in Egypt and consequent loss of the knowledge of Coptic and Greek actually enhanced the theology of the Coptic Church in several areas. The adoption of Arabic helped to systematize theological discourse by introducing a philosophical dimension already developed among Muslims that had been lacking in earlier Egyptian theology. It allowed the textual and historical construction of a Copto-Arabic christological canon, which in turn enabled the Church to defend its teachings about Christ against the Islamic Christology of the Qur'an. It further allowed for ecumenical dialogue with other anti-Chalcedonian churches, and even with Chalcedonians and Nestorians, all of whom had come to share a common language and were unencumbered by political interference from the Roman government. Unlike earlier Greek and Coptic theological writings, apart from ones translated into Arabic, these medieval works are useful to this very day among Arabic readers. In a short postscript, D. links Copto-Arabic medieval theology with two modern Copts who have carried on and enriched Coptic Christology through their extensive writings, namely Pope Shenouda III and the late abbot of St. Macarius Monastery, Mattâ al-Meskîn.

In two appendixes, D. provides translations of key Coptic and Arabic texts referred to in the book. D. is an accomplished linguist with a commanding knowledge of Coptic and Arabic and a trained theologian who has lived and taught in Egypt and is thoroughly at home with the Bible and the Church Fathers. This book is a welcome addition to the field of Eastern Christian studies.

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DAVID JOHNSON, S.J.

ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS CONFLICT IN AFRICA: AN ANALYSIS OF BIAS, DECLINE, AND CONVERSION BASED ON THE WORKS OF BERNARD LONERGAN. By Cyril Orji. Milwaukee: Marquette University, 2008. Pp. 269. \$30.

According to Orji, most ethnic and religious conflicts in Africa originate from biases that involve Africa's religions, since "in most parts of Africa, ethnic and religious issues are inseparably intertwined" (9). His opening

pages lay out historic and social facts about African social conditions that reinforce African biases and inflame ethnic and religious conflicts.

O. relies on Lonergan's four notions of bias (dramatic, individual, group, and the general bias of common sense), spelling out how each is at play in African ethnic and religious conflicts, exponentially contributing to declining social interaction within and among many African societies. As a remedy to this disintegration, he presents Lonergan's theology of conversion, a notion with universal and pluralistic application. As O. rightly argues, the needed conversions are not to any particular faith tradition but essentially a conversion to God. In the face of multiple active biases and needed conversions stands a general notion of religious conversion that Pope Paul VI firmly recommended in his 1965 *Ecclesiam suam*. There Paul called for the Catholic Church to engage in interreligious dialogue with peoples of all religious faiths. A common understanding that the most meaningful and enduring conversion is a conversion to God will, O. insists, significantly promote the long-desired social cohesion and collaboration that extends beyond the boundaries of ethnic and religious identity and will invariably enhance the growth and development of nations and regions.

O.'s scholarly analysis of Lonergan's philosophical and theological framework is crucial not only in his interpretation of Lonergan but also in his extensive application of that framework to African conflicts. For example, O. nicely juxtaposes Lonergan's dialectics with principles of dialogue, the latter so necessary and indispensable to Africa. Paraphrasing Lonergan, O. writes: "Dialogue and dialect serve as curative to bias, ensuring that in intellectual conversion one renounces the myriads of false philosophies, in moral conversion one keeps oneself free of individual, group, and general bias, and in religious conversion one loves one's neighbor as one loves God. It is no wonder that Lonergan speaks of dialectics as a 'generalized apologetic conducted in an ecumenical spirit'" (152). O.'s work itself displays some of the pedagogy needed to resolve the ethnic and religious conflicts.

While I commend O.'s use of Lonergan's notions of bias, decline, and conversion, I have some reservations about his recommendation that the 1994 statement of the African bishops' synod on ethnic and interreligious conflict be revised to reflect Lonergan's language (205–16). Needed, rather, is a new African synod that truly reflects the mindset and worldview of the Church in Africa today, including pragmatic approaches to ethnic and interreligious conflict. In fact the revisions O. proposes are not sufficiently far-reaching; his own applications of Lonergan's language to the synod text leaves a document not very different from the original.

Another problem concerns the breadth of O.'s study. It is difficult for a research work of this size to capture comprehensively the entire continent. Therefore, O. focuses primarily on social conditions in sub-Saharan Africa (18). In fact, most of his contextual references are drawn yet more narrowly from West Africa and even more particularly Nigeria.



Overall, however, O.'s book will contribute significantly to our understanding of Africa, especially in the West where available literature on Africa is remarkably inadequate. His book will also contribute to theological scholarship both in the West and in Africa itself, and also to growing theological work on interreligious dialogue and conflict resolution. Moreover, his analyses help broaden the theological applicability of Lonergan's theology and philosophy. For these many reasons, this book will remain for some time an original, excellent, and needed work of scholarship. I recommend it to scholars in African studies, in interreligious dialogue, and in conflict resolution anywhere in the Third World.

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MARINUS C. IWUCHUKWU

FOR LIFE ABUNDANT: PRACTICAL THEOLOGY, THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION, AND CHRISTIAN MINISTRY. Edited by Dorothy C. Bass and Craig Dykstra. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2008. Pp. vii + 372. \$26.

The meaning and significance of "practical theology" has considerably shifted over the last 30 years. Beginning as an umbrella tag for the skills and courses needed for direct ministry (preaching, worship, pastoral care, evangelism), the term has taken on tones of the stimulating, ongoing hermeneutics involved in the actual, dynamic practices of Christian communities. Bass and Dykstra have been major contributors to this development, and they continue their valuable work with these 15 articles, grouped into four parts: the vision of practical theology; its role in the classroom; its role in the wider academy; and its role in ministry. The contributors offer copious notes and extensive bibliography, excellent resources for further reading and reflection. The general introduction helpfully offers an orientation to practical theology, even while the section and article introductions less helpfully restate the arguments of the selections.

The volume takes up the traditional focus of practical theology, that is, the education of ministers, but it also importantly situates that education in the context of the faith practices of the church as a whole, discussing the way common practices of faith inform the faculty's own teaching and how their students can guide and enrich the common faith practices of the communities they serve.

As with any collection, writing styles and perspectives vary, but each article is well-documented, readable, and engaging, for example, Dykstra's advocacy of pastoral and ecclesial imagination, John Witvliet's fusion experiments with other disciplines, James Nieman's call for critical connoisseurship, Bonnie Miller-McLemore's defense of hints, tips, and rules of thumb, and Ted Smith's use of the genetic history of any practice. Each essay could easily stand alone, but the authors have correlated their work, cross-referencing their articles, giving the book more coherence than one might expect—speaking well for the editors who must have vigorously encouraged this approach.

Although the individual topics cover a wide range, the cumulative effect is an accurate and appealing description of the current state of practical theology. The authors concur that the “old” practical theology is still valid, but not as the exclusive meaning of practical theology; rather, ministerial education is properly positioned within the larger sense of practical theology. Practical theologians focus on Christian practices as “a life-giving way of life” (27) rather than on isolated activities, and the sociocultural or public context of these practices is always part of their concern. Practical theologians value the quotidian experience of ordinary Christians and accept the provisional, necessarily open-ended theology that results from reflection on practice because of the “glorious untidiness of the world” (215) and the general messiness of daily life. In fact, they welcome this condition as a stimulus for discovery and surprise and constant development while working hard to achieve the most reliable and trustworthy theological positions that experience and practice allow.

In this same vein the authors who discuss their courses demonstrate how thoroughly, carefully, and professionally they go about their work. They exhibit a creative, self-critical approach that expresses the spirit motivating practical theology today, and they show how a practical orientation to their specialties (preaching, worship, introduction to ministry, community leadership) opens the way to many other factors and related areas of inquiry. In short, there is a consistent recognition of the interdisciplinary character of practical theology and, with it, an invitation to scholars in other fields to work cooperatively with practical theologians for the enrichment of all theology.

The authors frequently draw on their own experience, from Kathleen Cahalan’s design of her ministry seminars, to Gordon Mikoski’s leading a youth pilgrimage to the Holy Land, to Christian Scharen’s theological autobiography, to Dorothy Bass’s interaction with her teenage daughter. This appeal to experience gives the articles a personal, conversational quality that is typical of current practical theology.

While the volume is aimed at teachers of practical disciplines in seminaries and schools of theology, it warrants reading and discussion by teachers in other theological fields, something the authors repeatedly encourage. For practical theology is not so much a separate discipline with its own defined body of knowledge to preserve as it is a stimulus for practicing the Christian faith intelligently and intentionally, leading to a life more abundant for everyone.

*Center for Theological Reflection, Kansas City, Mo.*      ROBERT L. KINAST

THE JEWISH IDEA OF ETHICS AND MORALITY: A COVENANTAL PERSPECTIVE. By Sol Roth. New York: Yeshiva University, 2007. Pp. xvi + 207. \$25.

I write this as a compliment: Sol Roth is a throwback to an age when rabbis were scholars and scholars were rabbis. In the first two-thirds of the

20th century, university posts for Jewish scholars of Judaism were rare, and Jews with a scholarly inclination were drawn into rabbinic life, a profession where study was valued and intellectual engagement cherished. The opening of the university to scholars has cost the practicing rabbinate some of its ablest intellectual leaders. Furthermore, within the Orthodox world where R. has made his distinctive mark, rabbis are increasingly not well trained in secular subjects nor well-schooled in general philosophy. They dwell in the world of Torah and, if they study philosophy at all, they confine themselves to Jewish philosophy, untouched—dare I say uninformed—by the general philosophical thought that surely influenced the philosophers whom they do study and who shaped their thought, and provided the intellectual context in which they worked. Historically Jewish philosophers, most especially the very best, were denizens of two worlds, engaging not only Jewish texts but the philosophic and scientific thought of their day.

So R.'s work is welcome. An adjunct professor of philosophy at Yeshiva University for four decades, he also served as rabbi of New York's prestigious Fifth Avenue Synagogue, combining a life of learning with the demands of pulpit life. In this volume, R. shows his acumen as a philosopher and his learning as a rabbi. The combination does not quite come together, perhaps because he remains unclear as to his audience. Is he writing for those who share his religious perspective yet do not often confront the philosophical issues that engage him, issues such as the root of authority for the ethics, the motivation, the *summum bonum* of ethical life? Or is he writing for the philosophically trained who will be impressed by his erudition but unable to follow with him the contours by which he establishes the norms of Judaism. It is a shame that he offers no assistance to these readers, no genuine bridge to the world he depicts.

R. disconcertingly presumes a familiarity with the major, and even some minor, figures of the rabbinic world, the centuries in which they lived, and the contexts in which they offered commentary. He presumes that the ordinary reader can join him as he moves from the Bible to the Talmud, to rabbinic commentators from the 4th to the 20th century and back again, as if they are part of one seamless conversation. As a young student in Yeshiva, it took me a long time to realize that the portrayal of an uninterrupted conversation was not historical but methodological—and in fact antihistorical.

R.'s approach to covenant is based not only on the account in Exodus, but on a Midrash that depicted a prior interpersonal covenant among the enslaved people. And yet, however powerful the notion of that covenant, it cuts against the biblical narrative that describes tension among the slaves and the betrayal of Moses by the Hebrews. Those of us in the academy who read this Midrash historically rather than as a depiction of actual events would consider the notion of an earlier covenant as an admonition toward solidarity amidst oppression directed toward the future rather than a description of an actual covenant made by our ancestral slaves in Egypt.

Covenant, R. rightfully argues, is central to the Jewish vision of ethics and morality, central to Jews ritually and interpersonally, and it makes behavioral demands on the part of their relationship with God. R. captures some of the basic tensions within Jewish ethics and its various perspectives on the ethical life. He skillfully harmonizes the struggle between justice and mercy, and his discussion of the difference between happiness and joy, pleasure and value, and the centrality of the relational quality of both joy and value is riveting. His argument for truth is compelling and compassionate. So, too, his consideration of humility as an essential component of both the ethical and the religious life is a necessary critique of the self-importance of many men and women, secular and religious, with the last seeing their religious piety as both a source of pride and an achievement that can be held over the heads of those less devout.

There is much wisdom in this work, much thinking that reflects not only the scholarship of a learned man, but what such a knowledgeable man learned in the school of life within the congregation and the community and not just in the academy.

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MICHAEL BERENBAUM

CHRISTIANITY, DEMOCRACY, AND THE RADICAL ORDINARY: CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN A RADICAL DEMOCRAT AND A CHRISTIAN. By Stanley Hauerwas and Romand Coles. *Theopolitical Visions 1*. Eugene, Oreg.: Cascade, 2008. Pp. xi + 366. \$39.

Most moral theologians are familiar with the “high-church Mennonite” ethics of Stanley Hauerwas: a Christian community formed by distinctive virtues witnesses to an alternative politics, resisting the violence that liberal democracy uses to sustain order in the absence of a shared narrative. Romand Coles is a community activist and professor in Durham, North Carolina. His “radical democracy” is communitarian, local, and nonviolent, but it is emphatically non-Christian. Though C. appreciates the Christian inspiration of the civil rights movement, from which he draws many of his models and strategies, what he sees in the grassroots leaders of the 1960s is a vision of “syncretic, radical-democratic community that significantly exceeds what either Christianity or non-Christian modes of democracy embodied before them” (37).

H.’s familiar Christian politics appears in a different light in this conversation with a radical democrat. C., in effect, occupies the Mennonite position first, leaving H. to explain his Christianity in very different terms from those he uses to criticize Niebuhrian realism or Thomistic natural law. C.’s democratic community is local, sharing values, virtues, and stories in a way that questions the relevance of more universal norms and narratives, including authoritative versions of the Christian tradition. In consequence, H. becomes the defender of hierarchy, episcopacy, and even the bishop of Rome as sources of unity that ensure that “one liturgical assembly does not

isolate itself from other liturgical assemblies in such a manner that the complexity of the gospel is lost" (325). Rome, H. explains, "exists to encourage many readings of scripture" (325). If H.'s view of Catholicism is more pluralistic than Rome's view sometimes suggests, it also is more universal than the communities of grassroots democracy, and its moral language is more broadly shared. In response to C.'s appreciation of Mennonite theologian John Howard Yoder's emphasis on local community, H. paradoxically invokes Yoder's version of natural theology (343) from *For the Nations* (1997). What Yoder spelled out as an alternative to the anti-politics of H.'s *Against the Nations* (1985) now becomes H.'s apology for the expectation that we will find the theology of the cross among ordinary people everywhere, providing a unity that transcends local struggles and elicits in its own way the order of a catholic church. Those who have understood H. on politics primarily through his arguments against other versions of Christian ethics will be surprised by this "high-church Mennonite" idea of natural law that emerges on the edges of his conversations with a radical democrat.

The book is more than a dialogue between H. and C., however. There are numerous essays and lectures by each individually, and they engage many other figures, from Will Campbell to Gregory of Nazianzus. By far the larger part of the book is the work of C., and the largest chapter is his essay, "Democracy and the Radical Ordinary" (113–73), which develops an account of radical democracy based on the work of Sheldon Wolin. H.'s contributions are more occasional, sometimes taking the form of brief letters addressed to C., sometimes reproducing lectures and essays that expound the themes of radical democracy from a Christian perspective.

The most interesting parts of the dialogue come when H. and C. take on the same interlocutors, especially Yoder and Rowan Williams. Both H. and C. are original thinkers and perceptive critics, and only writers of considerable insight and depth will stand up to scrutiny from both of them. This book is thus a grand tour of postliberal thinking about politics and democracy, and readers will learn about many other works, ideas, and authors they will want to explore on their own. An extensive bibliography (347–58) is a reminder of the territory that has been covered and a useful compendium of sources for further exploration.

Nevertheless, the survey is incomplete and unsystematic. Notably missing is H.'s engagement with the radical democracy of Jeffrey Stout, which appears here in just a few footnotes. The weakness of the book is this somewhat arbitrary selection of topics, arguments, and dialogue partners. It moves from theme to theme with little apparent structure to the whole. Conceptual unity is suggested, rather than articulated, and the copyediting leaves much to be desired. (H., the pacifist, will be alarmed to discover himself deploying the "cannon of scripture" [324].) The reader is invited to sit in on a conversation that has not been fully subjected to either editorial or intellectual order, but it provides a memorable meeting of minds.

A PROMISED LAND, A PERILOUS JOURNEY: THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON MIGRATION. Edited by Daniel G. Groody and Gioacchino Campese. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame, 2008. Pp. xxxvii + 332. \$32.

Joining a growing number of theological reflections on migration, Groody and Campese's book is structured around four central themes: part 1, the foundations of a theology of migration; part 2, migration in relationship to mission and ministry; part 3, the politics of sovereign rights, cultural rights, and human rights associated with migration; and part 4, a constructive theological exploration focused on migration across the Mexican-U.S. border. While acknowledging the contribution that various interdisciplinary approaches have made to the study of migration, the editors claim that it is "precisely the theological dimension of the phenomenon of migration—beginning with the humanity of the immigrant—that we consider the foremost contribution of this volume" (xxii).

The chapters of part 1 explore the phenomenon of migration from religious, biblical, patristic, metaphorical, and socioeconomic perspectives. The popular faith of migrants is taken up as an indispensable resource that sustains them on their perilous journey. Then, reflections on the NT underscore how "just as the history of Israel is rooted in migration, a similar case can be made for Jesus and the early Christian community" (22). Third, the reality of being an alien in exile becomes a central lens for understanding early Christian perspectives on migration. Special attention is given to the Letter to Diognetus (second or third century)—a letter that describes the ethical postures early Christians adopted with respect to their surrounding cultures, a letter that in turn offers an excellent resource for relating our Christian identity and our own surrounding world. Part 1 concludes with theological reflections on the metaphorical connection between God and desert, and discusses the significance of the option for the poor in terms of the presence of migrants.

In exploring issues related to mission, ministry, and the rights of migrants, the chapters of parts 2 and 3 pursue the ecclesial, sacramental, sociopolitical, and gender implications of migration, addressing central questions associated with the Christian church whose very nature is to exist "always on the move" (90), and, therefore, as a church called to identify and respond pastorally by caring for migrants in holistic, sociocultural, and communal ways. These chapters highlight church teachings concerning the dignity of every person (discussed in terms of legal and natural rights), the common good of society, the universal nature of all goods, and the responsibility of nations to practice solidarity with the most vulnerable in our midst. Consideration of rights and dignity leads to a discussion of women migrants and the sexual violence they encounter in border crossings.

Part 4 highlights migration across the U.S.-Mexican border, taking up issues related to theological method (in an intercultural light), historical experience (suffering), and sacramentality (Eucharist), focusing on migrants' suffering and their eucharistic brokenness and self-sharing. "In the narrative of the immigrants, we see how they take up the difficult

decision to migrate, bless God in the midst adversity, break themselves open so they can feed those they love, and give themselves away for the nourishment of others, even at the cost of their lives" (112).

While the impact of distinct geographical, political, and religious experiences on constructing theologies of migration is not absent, experiential differences and resulting theological differences require more attention. For instance, even though most migrants experience a sense of displacement, not all have crossed borders through perilous land journeys. How might we construct a theology of migration meaningful to the displaced who themselves did not experience perilous journeys (e.g., longstanding Cuban exiles or Haitian refugees in South Florida or the Hmong in Minnesota)? Other particular geographical, political, and religious factors similarly should impact our theology of migration. Consequently, we will then have to ask: To what specific biblical and theological sources might and must we turn in light of different but interrelated experiences of migration?

This book offers fresh and much-needed approaches to migration, providing convincing support for the notion that any serious study of migration, especially with respect to Latinos/as in the United States, must include religious and theological considerations. Beyond social, political, and economic factors, the God-factor is at play; indeed, it is trust in the God who comes to us through life-giving migrations (Christ and the Spirit) that often propels and sustains a migrant's journey. Similarly, trust in this same God who has been revealed in the one who had nowhere to lay his head (Lk 9:58) will continue to prompt theological conversations and gospel-like responses to address the dramatic displacement of peoples who engage in border-crossings throughout our nation and world.

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MIGUEL H. DIAZ

A MORAL CLIMATE: THE ETHICS OF GLOBAL WARMING. By Michael S. Northcott. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 2007. Pp xiv + 336. \$20.

Bluntly, Michael Northcott claims that global warming is the earth's passing of judgment on the way we humans have pursued economic globalization, and he calls for Christians to join ranks with others against indifference to environmental degradation. To support his call he draws on environmental evidence from around the world and constructs, from scriptural and philosophical-theological sources, extensive, supportive allegories. Although he does not mention Lyn White, his work in effect is a Christian reply to White's criticism that Christianity has been largely antithetical to ecology ("The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," *Science*, [March 1967]).

The evidence for global warming is overwhelming. Much of what N. describes will be familiar. Thanks to environment activists like Al Gore

we are aware that the snows of Mt. Kilimanjaro are melting, as we are also only too aware of the increasing savagery of recent tsunamis and hurricanes in Indonesia, Texas, and New Orleans. Further, N. personalizes the crisis by giving accounts of ancestral lands that have been devastated by agribusiness and mining, by introducing us to people who are displaced and impoverished. He even introduces us to the minority who argue that there is no problem, and to the majority who “get on with their lives,” comfortable in the rampant consumerism that is the root cause of the growing crisis. Consumerism, N. argues, is the root problem behind, say, the neoliberal urge to strip-mine large portions of the planet (though preferably away from northern centers of consumption). We are creating environmental imbalances that are proving lethal.

N. looks to the Bible for critical resources. His basically allegorical reading of Scripture offers paradigms of social criticism and moral outrage. The Bible, he argues, does not give us a warrant to exploit the planet; we are intended to be stewards who tend God’s creation, not to be its exploiters. Here one hears echoes of the White critique of Western religion: Christians and others have largely failed to read this message, or have read it selectively in their own interests.

N. finds more in Scripture, however, than condemnation of greed. He shows how many texts that involve prophetic denunciation of sin actually point to an environmental warning: sin, human greed, and cruelty are “punished” through the devastation of the land. Tracing a line from the prophets to Jesus of Nazareth, N. lines up biblical witnesses against our current global neoliberal capitalist society.

N. also draws on contemporary political philosophers and theologians to support his call. He rightly criticizes many theorists’ ethical lacunae: quite simply they are too anthropocentric. Further, N. draws heavily on Eastern Orthodox theology, notably that of Sergei Bulgakov and the highly impressive “green” spokesperson, Patriarch Bartholomew.

N.’s appeals to systematic and moral theology, however, remain relatively thin. For those of us for whom ethics, even Christian ethics, is also substantially rooted in more secular modes of analysis, his appeal to Scripture is refreshing, even challenging, in his calling us back to the primary sources of Christian revelation and moral witness, and in his showing us how to read those sources in a new light. On the other hand, his argument poses the perennial question of how Christian ethics can be part of a wider public moral debate outside the Christian community, a collaboration that is needed, but for which a common ground must be found.

While we have few good “eco-logians” and even fewer environmentally informed Christian ethicists (especially given the enormity of the problem), there remain numerous other areas of systematic theology that could be helpful. The theology of creation is one such area, as is a sacramental theology in the tradition of Bulgakov. In the Western Catholic and Protestant traditions there is also a potentially strong treatment of the sacramentality of matter, a theme that could provide a thought-provoking thesis or



two on the earth as God's sacrament of creation, which in turn could give rise to new notions of judgment, confession, repentance, and conversion. Similarly Catholic understandings of human dignity could be transposed and extended to a theology of the dignity of creation itself.

While N. has fired a powerful warning salvo across the bows of human and Christian complacency, his subject urgently requires much more engagement. I hope that his book will be read well beyond the usual circles of scholarship and ecological activism, yet I also hope that he has opened a door for a genuine theological, yet public, reflection on our living together in this creation.

*The Jesuit Institute – South Africa, Johannesburg*      ANTHONY EGAN, S.J.

CATHOLIC MORAL THEOLOGY IN THE UNITED STATES: A HISTORY. By Charles E. Curran. Moral Traditions Series. Washington: Georgetown University, 2008. Pp. xiii + 353. \$59.95; \$26.95.

“The United States,” writes Charles Curran, “has more moral theologians than any other country, and even more than any other continent in the world” (283). This is the first monograph to chart the development in this country of a discipline that, as C. points out, has no standard history. C., whose career and writings have exercised considerable influence on the development of moral theology for nearly five decades, is uniquely positioned to make this important contribution to the discipline.

In addition to its short preface and conclusions, the text includes ten major chapters. The first three consider Catholic moral theology in the United States prior to Vatican II, while an equal number concern developments from the council until the present, addressing the contributions of three generations of American moral theologians: those responding to, those trained in light of, and those born after Vatican II and *Humanae vitae*. The book's last four chapters proceed thematically, describing developments in fundamental moral theology, the theology of sexuality and marriage, bioethics, and social ethics. The text is clearly written and should prove readily accessible to graduate students in both ministerial and academic programs. Advanced undergraduates can profit from the early chapters, especially the first.

The thematic chapters provide a literature review that is striking both for its compendious range and for its commitment to fairness. In his discussion of fundamental moral theology, for example, C. briefly outlines the works of more than 30 Catholic moral theologians representing various approaches, and even considers seminal contributions made by those from other faith traditions or disciplines. The longest single discussion concerns Grisez's *The Way of the Lord Jesus* (1983), which C. describes as “original, creative, and very logical and complex” (179). In explaining debates that have often proven less than irenic, C. is judicious and generous in his

assessments, and takes care to emphasize areas of agreement as well as disagreement among the different schools of moral thought.

In earlier works, C. has often emphasized the methodological questions that gave rise to revisionist moral theology and reactions to it, such as the importance of historical consciousness, the significance of physicalism in moral analysis, and the legitimacy of public dissent. Such topics naturally receive consideration here. Yet C. also tells the story of many practical developments that shaped the history of American Catholic moral theology, such as the impossibility of sending students to Europe during World War II, or the growth in doctoral programs and theological societies that marked an increasing professionalism. He outlines American moral theology's failures, such as its "abysmal" record on racism (268), and its accomplishments. Both general readers and theologians familiar with the literature will benefit from this thorough and erudite analysis.

C. is constrained by the convention that assigns roughly the same number of pages to each chapter. Yet his later chapters could easily be longer, since there he is describing subdisciplines that have grown increasingly diverse in terms of methods, foci, and practitioners. Today, as C. points out, "more Catholic theological articles and books are published in one year than were published in twenty years" before Vatican II (93). As a result, his later descriptions are necessarily more selective and less detailed than are his earlier ones. This is particularly noteworthy in his discussion of social ethics, where he can address only "some of the more significant issues" under contemporary discussion (262). Yet, as C. observes, the number of moral theologians who have written in this area has "increased dramatically" (277), and social concerns have come to exercise an increasingly influential role in other sectors of the discipline, as, for example, in the emphasis upon access to healthcare within bioethics. We may reasonably wonder whether the growth in social ethics will eventually encourage a reconfiguration of the categories of special moral theology itself.

When done well, the study of history reminds us that something has not always been, nor need always be, as we know it today. C.'s text provides a much-needed framework for analyzing the past and tracing the trajectories of U.S. Catholic ethical reflection. This account of the discipline's development will serve as a standard resource for both theological education and historical research.

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JULIA FLEMING

GOOD PUNISHMENT?: CHRISTIAN MORAL PRACTICE AND U.S. IMPRISONMENT. By James Samuel Logan. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2008. Pp. x + 261. \$20.

Logan significantly advances the Christian moral analysis of America's burgeoning prison system by delineating the devastating social costs of this massive "race to incarcerate" and by sketching a possible Christian social

ethic of “good punishment” informed by Stanley Hauerwas’s “politics of healing memories.” Instead of rendering individuals, communities, and society more safe and peaceful, the incarceration of over 2.3 million people at a cost of over \$50 billion a year has promoted criminality, undermined the well-being of communities, and deepened societal divisions. To correct these problems, L. suggests an approach to punishment that has forgiveness and reconciliation as its telos and is committed to what he calls “the politics of ontological intimacy.”

Prisons fail at reform because they are schools of vice, officials have abandoned reform, or the nation’s “industrial prison complex” has no incentive to reduce the supply of convicts recycled through America’s prisons. Further, and at least as importantly, L. argues, prisons fail at reform primarily because they inflict “retributive degradation” on prisoners, teaching convicts to see and treat themselves and others as less than human. As L. insightfully and persuasively argues, degradation—though condemned and forbidden in numerous human rights and international conventions—is essential to punishment in U.S. prisons, building on the degradation most convicts experience long before being incarcerated, and bringing out the worst in prison officials, while fostering “a sense of systemic sadism within the prison” (30). It is this “retributive degradation” that teaches prisoners to abuse and violate others in and out of prison and schools them for a life of crime.

Turning to the families, communities, and society from which these millions of prisoners come and to which they return (if only briefly), L. notes the failure of America’s large-scale imprisonment to create or sustain safety, harmony, or human flourishing, producing instead increased levels of human alienation and suffering. A retributive and degrading approach to punishment employed on a massive scale has, L. shows, stigmatized, alienated, and disenfranchised whole communities of color, cutting off millions of black males and (increasingly) females from the larger society, orphaning countless children, undermining the cohesion and depleting the social capital of impoverished communities, and exporting a “locked down” prison consciousness into neighborhoods where youth are constantly recycled through the prison system, and civil liberties and regard for others are constantly eroded or ignored.

L. makes a persuasive case that black prisoners and communities experience the brunt of human alienation and suffering created by America’s prison system, that U.S. prisons have a long history of anti-black racism, that the rise of retributive degradation is connected with numerical and percentage increases of black prisoners, and that prisons have long been used to help white society control and profit from blacks and their labor. As L. sees it, racism has played an essential role in story, growth, and purpose of U.S. prisons; it would be hard to argue against him on this point.

Turning to Hauerwas’s work on punishment and the role of “healing memories,” L. suggests a Christian social ethic of punishment focused on

penance, forgiveness, and reconciliation instead of on retribution, degradation, and alienation. Without forgetting the crimes of offenders, a Christian approach to punishment would embrace a peaceful recognition of our communal ties to victims and perpetrators, and seek to heal the injuries inflicted by these crimes without introducing new and massive systems of human and social alienation.

For L. this approach means embracing a politics of “ontological intimacy,” a politics grounded in the realization that our primordial and universal communion with God generates a profound human interrelatedness connecting us to all persons and communities. In light of this “ontological intimacy,” L. calls for practices of “good punishment” that reject the degradation of prisoners and the stigmatization and alienation of communities. Punishment that produces whole classes of degraded persons and divided communities cannot be good in any real sense of the term.

For his own part, L. is sympathetic to proposals for restorative justice where the needs of victims are addressed, offenders are encouraged to take responsibility, and all those affected by the offense have a voice in the process (232). He also supports proposals by Christian Parenti and Angela Davis (233–37) calling for massive reductions in imprisonment, particularly for nonviolent crimes. These are valuable, if not politically viable, suggestions.

L.’s central contributions to a much-needed Christian social ethic of imprisonment are his discussions of “retributive degradation” in U.S. prisons, the human alienation created and sustained by large-scale imprisonment, and a politics of “ontological intimacy.” These make this book an important read.

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PATRICK T. McCORMICK

CHRISTIAN POLITICAL ETHICS. Edited by John A. Coleman, S.J. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University, 2008. Pp 289. \$60. \$21.95

The cover illustration for these 13 essays features a reproduction of Fra Angelico’s *Sermon on the Mount*. It is an interesting choice, especially in the context of the avowed aim of the book to take “Christian political ethics outside of the churches or ecclesial academies” in order “to engage the issues and forge more reasonable and humane solutions to world problems” (xv).

The contributors are distinguished Christian scholars from diverse theological and ethical perspectives—Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist, and Anabaptist, though not Orthodox—and they deal with issues around state and civil society, boundaries and justice, pluralism, international society, and war and peace. They share a conviction that, however one understands the rightful autonomy of the secular, still God is utterly sovereign, and so the Christian revelation of God must address issues of family, politics, culture, and the economy in a context that will involve learning as well as teaching.

This shared conviction is strikingly evident throughout, not despite but maybe even because of the diversity of views. For example, in dealing with state and civil society, after a competent introductory overview by Michael Banner, Coleman's presentation of Catholic social teaching is understood by Max Stackhouse as presenting a hierarchical-subsidiarity model in contrast to his own federal-covenantal model, but without detriment to the "deeper unities and common resources of our faith" (54). It is characteristic of this collection, then, that we are drawn into an intramural Christian conversation that yet seeks to speak about and to the wider world. This works best when the essays—almost all of which were already published in earlier volumes—are paired in a way that allows for direct interaction.

This kind of interaction occurs, for example, in the discussion between Richard Miller and Nigel Biggar on boundaries and justice. Biggar is courteously vigorous in confronting Miller's more universalist approach, insisting on the value of the local, the limited, the particular. This allows him, *inter alia*, to be understanding of the established status of the Church of England in England but, ironically, to be less than sympathetic to the aspirations of Irish nationalists.

The "conscientious individualism" of David Little and the more socially inclusive approach of James Skillen make interesting points about the issue of pluralism. I wondered, however, in this section—and indeed throughout the collection—if a more targeted engagement with cultural and social commentators might not have yielded a richer harvest for this group of Christian political ethicists. I say this because there is in this collection a marked lack of reference to issues of modernity and postmodernity, to the notion of the postsecular found in Habermas, to the kind of reading of modernity in Charles Taylor that would dispute its intrinsic connection to secularism.

But without naming Habermas and Taylor, Stackhouse, in his second contribution on a new global order, presents a masterly treatment of our need for "a kind of cosmic moral constitution" (158) that can only find its foundation in the universal framework that religion provides. He expresses the need in language that any Liberal of good will would find accessible, conscious of the negative as well as positive force of religion—"Religion is high voltage, it can electrocute as well as energize" (165). The book is worth buying for this essay alone. Of course this whole topic of international society and globalization has added importance in these days of global recession, and Coleman here presents an interesting critique of the more sanguine Catholic teaching on global governance.

The final section, on war and peace, provides an interesting contrast between two paired pieces (by John Finnis and Joseph Boyle) from the just war, "realist" school of Catholic natural law that substantially agree with each other, and two pieces (by Theodore Koontz and Michael Cartwright) from a pacifist stance. Whatever the merits of the argument as such, it is noticeable that the natural law position, however learnedly presented, comes across as somewhat abstract and arid. Perhaps the instinct of

Pope Benedict XVI about the need to renew this tradition is correct. Koontz, by contrast, is lively and accessible.

The Fra Angelico frontpiece conjures up a somewhat pious image. This collection certainly succeeds for the Christian reader in indicating that true piety transcends the realms of the personal and spiritual as understood narrowly, and must extend to the sociopolitical. It does so in a way that is stimulating and intellectually rigorous. Perhaps there is still a way to go however, with respect to many of the presentations here, in finding a language capable of engaging concerned “outsiders,” for whom the pious image may still be a barrier.

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GERRY O'HANLON, S.J.

HEALING AND CREATIVITY IN ECONOMIC ETHICS: THE CONTRIBUTION OF BERNARD LONERGAN'S ECONOMIC THOUGHT TO CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING. By Stephen L. Martin. *Studies in Religion and the Social Order*. Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 2008. Pp. xviii + 201. \$29.95.

This is a welcome contribution to a growing collection of books and articles on Lonergan's economics. His theology and philosophy have been studied for over five decades, but his economic manuscripts were published posthumously in 1998–1999, so are known less widely. Moreover, the manuscripts are extremely difficult. Martin provides readers in the field of Catholic social teaching (CST) with a good port of entry, introducing basic ideas and situating them in relation to recognized works on CST.

The book has an introduction, four chapters, and a conclusion. Chapters 1 and 2 present an overview of recent work (mainly 1980s and 1990s) on CST and economics. M.'s focus is “economic anthropology” and the effort to find a “third way” between liberalism and Marxist/liberationist approaches. He concludes that CST does indeed point toward such a third way, but an economic theory embracing an appropriate anthropology has not been developed fully. Chapter 3 presents Lonergan's cognitional and ethical theory as grounding an economic anthropology appropriate for CST. Chapter 4 introduces the basics of Lonergan's economics as a candidate for advancing CST. Finally, in a very short conclusion, M. returns to the discussions of chapters 1 and 2 with a case-study illustration and a summary of contributions that Lonergan's economics can make to CST.

M.'s overview of CST begins with a whirlwind tour through eleven documents (1–30), then examines two critical interpretations of CST (Novak's liberalism and Hobgoode's liberationism) and finds them inadequate (41–70). He turns to Gregory Baum and John Coleman for indications of a coherent economic anthropology within CST (70–75). The notion of “economic anthropology” throughout is complex and somewhat rambling. It includes ideas about personhood, ethical agency, individuality-sociality, dignity, consumption and work, self-expression, self-interest, materiality-spirituality, sinfulness, belonging—the list goes on (26–30). As

the chapters unfold, however, the focus narrows and economic anthropology comes to refer to citizens' ethical agency in shaping the economy toward human dignity, the role of liberty and self-transcendence in this agency, and the role of economic theory in providing direction for exercising this agency (100–108).

M. argues that Lonergan's ethics-economics explains the economy as the democratic moral decision-making of citizens. Guiding this decision-making is the explanation of an economy as a dynamic wave-like interaction between two economic "circuits" and a redistributive function. At different moments in the cycles, citizens are called to act differently with respect to different circuits of the economy, to move the interaction among these circuits in the direction of the common good (136–40).

M.'s presentation is readable and helpful. The basic circuit both produces the fruits of an economy and distributes it to citizens via wages. But, as M. continues, this is only half the story. The second involves another circuit of surplus (producer) activity and crossovers between the two circuits. Contrary to traditional theories, Lonergan argues that there is not simply a withdrawal from the basic circuit to investment. Rather there is an entirely separate surplus circuit with its own dynamics. This must be managed responsibly through citizens' coordinated efforts (119–36).

The surplus circuit expands before it can impart its accelerations into the basic circuit. But it will contract and level off once current producer demand is met. This contraction must not be misinterpreted as a slowdown. On the contrary, slowing producer growth occurs at the very time that basic circuit expansion gathers momentum, and this must be interpreted as growth and a signal for vigorous involvement in the basic circuit. Misinterpreting signals caused by the expansions and contractions in the basic and surplus circuits causes the dysfunctional booms and slumps familiar throughout economic history. Conversely, correctly interpreting and democratically managing the two circuit expansions and contractions can result in a "pure cycle" that avoids damaging booms and slumps. Also, diverse redistributive operations must be distinguished from basic and surplus circuit operations. Misclassifying and conflating functionally distinct economic activities results in mistaken signals for policy and decision-making (141–47). I suggest this analysis is relevant for understanding recent economic calamities.

I recommend the book, but it is not without problems. It desperately needs another round of editing; errors in grammar, spelling, and typography are everywhere. The diagram (131) contains errors; the arrows between supply and demand in the two circuits are reversed. The list of terms and symbols (130) contains terms and symbols not found in the diagram. And the explanation of "crossovers" (133) contains an error: outlay (c"O") does not move to surplus demand; rather it moves to basic demand. That being said, the basics are there, and M.'s readable analysis makes an important contribution to conversations on CST.

## SHORTER NOTICES

COSMOLOGY AND ESCHATOLOGY IN HEBREWS: THE SETTINGS OF THE SACRIFICE. BY Kenneth L. Schenck. Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 143. New York: Cambridge University, 2007. Pp. xi + 220. \$95.

Schenck frames the narrative plot of Hebrews as one that centers on the divine intention to bring humanity to its destined glory through the atoning death of Christ. Integral to S.'s study is his delineation of the settings of Hebrews' soteriological narrative. Viewed temporally, Christ's sacrificial death and exaltation inaugurate the definitive, eschatological turn of the ages. Viewed spatially, Christ's sacrifice in the richly metaphorical sacred space of a heavenly sanctuary initiates the beginning of the denouement of the divine intention, which, according to S., entails the removal of the corporeal creation itself, not its transformation.

This proposal concerning Hebrews' purported negative evaluation of the created order is the most provocative aspect of S.'s study. While he can and does marshal supporting exegetical evidence, his claim can be sharply challenged by other passages in Hebrews that evince a far more positive appraisal of the created realm, in particular Hebrews' frequent avowals of Christ's solidarity with the created human condition (Heb 2:14, 18; 4:14–15).

Given Hebrews' repeated affirmations concerning the superiority and sufficiency of Christ's atoning work in relation to an inferior Levitical system of atonement, S. proposes that the larger rhetorical situation or "exigence" (24) that engendered Hebrews was likely apologetic in motivation rather than polemical. Echoing the often repeated claim that Hebrews addresses some form of wavering commitment among its first hearers, S. sees the goal of Hebrews' complex christological reflection as ultimately pastoral: to cultivate the resolve of an early Jewish Christian community struggling to affirm its confessional commitments in light of the theologi-

cally troubling event of the fall of the Temple.

Admittedly, much speculation is involved in reconstructing what we might call the rhetorical occasion or exigence of Hebrews. Still, S.'s plausible reconstruction coheres with the celebratory tone of Hebrews' high priestly portrait of Christ. Overall, S.'s study affords a thoughtful, often theologically elegant, exegetical study that takes seriously the frequently neglected narrative dimension of this masterful early Christian sermon.

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THE PSALMS OF LAMENT IN MARK'S PASSION: JESUS' DAVIDIC SUFFERING. BY Stephen P. Ahearne-Kroll. Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 142. New York: Cambridge University, 2007. Pp. xiv + 239. \$95.

In this narrative-rhetorical approach to Mark 10–15, Ahearne-Kroll argues that Mark seeks to legitimate the implicit tension between Jesus' messianic healing power and his suffering by appealing not to the Isaianic Servant but the Septuagint's Davidic psalms of lament. The critical move is A.-K.'s argument, contra the form critics, that the "thanksgivings" in these psalms are not confident responses to an assured if future salvation but are instead conditions: David will declare God's praises but only if God delivers. From this perspective, far from meekly accepting his death in adherence to some preordained divine path to vindication and glory, Mark's Jesus imitates a confused and despairing David questioning God's role in, and the necessity of, his suffering in effecting the apocalyptic victory.

A.-K.'s theological wrestling with why victory must be effected through suffering will resonate with many. Unfortunately, Mark seems satisfied only to argue that the effective suffering was Jesus'. In what Mark does address, A.-K.'s foregrounding of the laments,



to the exclusion of other Markan texts, sits uncomfortably with his emphasis on holistic readings. If, as he maintains, Mark's audience would have recognized a given allusion and gone on to invoke the rhetorical context of the entire psalm, it is not clear why they would fail to do likewise with other equally prominent psalms (e.g., LXX 117, 110 in Mk 11:9–10; 12:10–11, 36; 14:62) and preceding sections of the Gospel (e.g., 8:31; 9:31; 10:34) all of which confidently affirm vindication. Regardless of the laments' original contexts—and absent explicit grammatical markers, the conditional reading of the thanksgivings is at best hypothetical—their Markan setting explicitly reiterates assured salvation. Moreover, that Mark readily incorporates Isaiah's Servant and the Davidic Messiah (e.g., 1:11) suggests he takes a similar approach to their respective sufferings. While deeply grateful for the warning against marginalizing Jesus' suffering, a more integrative approach would have been more faithful to Mark and perhaps more revealing.

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HYMNES PASCALES. By Éphrem de Nisibe. Introduction, translation from the Syriac, and notes by François Cassingena-Trévedy, O.S.B. Sources Chrétiennes 502. Paris: Cerf, 2006. Pp. 334. \$28.

Cassingena-Trévedy provides excellent French translations of Paschal hymns (*madrashé*) by Ephrem the Syrian (d. 373): 21 hymns on the Unleavened Bread [= *de Azymis*], nine on the Crucifixion, and five on the Resurrection, based for the most part on Edmund Beck's critical texts (*Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* 248–49, *Scriptores Syri* 108–9). The hymns are important and edifying for their imaginative typological exegesis especially of the Paschal Lamb. Unfortunately, however, for current liturgical and spiritual enrichment, they are deeply embedded in trenchant anti-Judaic polemics, thus giving rise to an ambivalence similar to that evoked by

Melito of Sardis's *On the Pasch* (both emerged from a fading Quartodeciman liturgical environment). Besides his surveying anti-Judaistic and other essential matters, C.-T. also situates the hymns in relation both to Ephrem's oeuvre and to the collecting of his hymns following his death—the latter process yielding two extant manuscripts, dated to the sixth and seventh centuries, upon which Beck's edition and this translation are based. There are also short introductory paragraphs for each hymn and helpful indexes; the bibliography and notes will lead to fuller scholarly discussions (e.g., Sebastian Brock's review in *Journal of Theological Studies* 58 [2007] 283–84).

A significant innovation is C.-T.'s invocation of the broader Near Eastern context for the Paschal celebration as a "rite of spring" (26–28). He notes, for example, the pairing of Passover with fertility themes in *de Azymis* 9. Here Miriam's song is elaborated through the emerging flowers of spring paired with infants emerging both from their mothers' wombs and from the fear that had led to the infant Moses' being hidden in the reeds. C.-T.'s translations well display Ephrem's artistry (e.g., *de Az* 9:9–10; C.-T. 96–97). The hymns have appeared previously in French and Italian translations, but only a few are in English (28, 31–32); the beauty of this translation coupled with its critical approach make it a valuable acquisition for scholars and students.

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TRANSFORMATION OF THE SELF IN THE THOUGHT OF FRIEDRICH SCHLEIERMACHER. By Jacqueline Mariña. New York: Oxford University, 2008. Pp. x + 270. \$39.95.

Mariña contributes to the growing body of high quality English interpretations of Schleiermacher by tracing the genetic development of his early ethics in relation to Spinoza, Leibnitz, Jacobi, and, most of all, to Kant. Her interpretation moves along several lines. She contends that Schleiermacher's metaphysical commitments, his conception

of religion, and his philosophical ethics were deeply intertwined. His analysis of human subjectivity and of the transcendental conditions of religious experience provided a view of religion that is neither reductionistic nor dogmatic. Moreover, since Schleiermacher grounds the human self in the absolute, he asserts that the self's understanding of its relation to the divine directly affects its relation to the other. M. shows that this dual relation underlies Schleiermacher's understanding of religion and his interpretation of philosophical ethics. In explicating this dual relation, she draws out the centrality of individuation in Schleiermacher's thought through an analysis of various themes: the principle of individuation (chap. 2), personal identity (chap. 3), the world as a mirror of the self (chap. 4), the highest good (chap. 5), and the individual and community (chap. 6). Chapter 7, dealing with the transformation of the self through Christ, goes a step further in that it relates Schleiermacher's ethics to present-day discussions of religious pluralism. M. defends Schleiermacher against George Lindbeck's criticism of religious expressivism and argues for his superiority over John Hicks's more relativistic view.

The strength of M.'s essays, some of which have already been published, is her detailed knowledge of the primary authors (Schleiermacher and Kant) and also of contemporary Anglo-Saxon and German secondary literature on Schleiermacher and Kant. Acknowledging Kant's strong influence upon the early Schleiermacher, M. argues that it is precisely Schleiermacher's religious commitments that push him beyond Kant. Though she correctly refutes claims that reduce Schleiermacher to Feuerbach, one could argue that she underestimates the degree to which Kant's strictures on the human knowledge of God lead Schleiermacher to a position that is less realist and metaphysical than what she attributes to him.

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RELIGION AND THE RISE OF MODERN CULTURE. By Louis Dupré. Erasmus Institute Books. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame, 2008. Pp. vii + 122. \$25.

"Men have left GOD not for other gods, they say, but for no god; and this has never happened before." So T. S. Eliot writes of modernity and its religious discontents. How have we come to this impasse? Dupré's splendid new book traces the unraveling of the ontotheological synthesis of medieval Christendom through the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and German Romanticism. More tapestry than template, modernity, for D., is not the inexorable unfolding of an Idea, but the weaving and reweaving of disparate strands into discernible patterns.

With magisterial lucidity D. explores the fragmentation of the medieval symbolic world culminating in the apotheosis of the self-constituting subject. In successive chapters, he shows how the nominalist *via moderna* sundered the connatural relation of being to Being; nature becomes a separate province, no longer instinct with grace. Indeed, the supernatural is now defined over against the very nature that seeks to understand it. With the rise of empirical science, formal and final causality cease to determine natural teleology. Creator and creation are linked, not by "transcendent dependence," but solely by efficient causality, a notion increasingly at odds "with the modern idea of history as the outcome of free actions" (52–53).

Not surprisingly, God becomes ever more a supernumerary in creation as Deism succumbs to modern atheism—the belief, said Nietzsche, that "belief in the Christian God has ceased to be believable." And yet the traces of belief reappear in mythology, art, and poetry. In a world rife with tragedy, we can no longer simply say with Nietzsche that beauty justifies the world (56). But the *givenness* of beauty, even under the sign of its negation, leads again to wonder. Finally, D. reminds us, we realize modernity's ideals only if we aspire to more: "a conversion to an attitude in which existing is more than taking, act-

ing more than making, meaning more than function—an attitude in which there is enough leisure for wonder and enough detachment for transcendence” (117). What the poet Hopkins said of Duns Scotus holds no less for D.: “of reality the rarest-veined unraveller; a not Rivalled insight.”

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SACRAMENTAL POETICS AT THE DAWN OF SECULARISM: WHEN GOD LEFT THE WORLD. By Regina Mara Schwartz. Cultural Memory in the Present. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University, 2008. Pp. xiii + 187. \$19.95.

Schwartz’s subtitle names the impetus for her book and sets the stage for its main thesis: When the Reformation repudiated Catholic sacramental realism, the deeper cultural values celebrated in sacramental ritual reclaimed their mediated immediacy and continued their cultural effectiveness through a sacramental poetics.

S. develops this thesis with particular attention to the Eucharist and the Protestant rejection of transubstantiation. In the Catholic doctrine and the ritual context of its enactment, she identifies four impulses of immense cultural import that, when suppressed by Protestant theology, reemerged in the literature of the early modern period. “When the body of God left the altar” the *sacrificial* impulse and its relationship to justice surfaced in Shakespearean tragedy. (13) The loss of eucharistic *materiality* evoked from John Milton a poetic vision of a cosmos “always materially transubstantiating.” (14) John Donne’s poetic exploration of the longing for *union* evokes the eucharistic eros, the sacramental “communion achieved by the material combining with the body of God.” (14) And George Herbert refashions *communion* as conversation. S. explores her thesis by penetrating exegesis of works by each of these authors.

As a sequel to her *The Curse of Cain* (1997), the present work notes a parallel between the loss of God in the world

at the dawn of modernity and a similar loss in our own postmodern age—the latter loss correlating with the rise of aggression and the forgetting of rituals that could effect just reconciliation. S. concludes “with the hope that the potential of reconciliation harbored by communion could still inspire, in new cultural forms, a world of community” (141).

This richly evocative, challenging work will be of interest to literary scholars, theologians, and anyone wishing to probe more deeply the intersection of religious practice, social order, and cultural (including literary) artifacts.

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ECCLESIALITY AND ECUMENISM: YVES CONGAR AND THE ROAD TO UNITY. By Douglas M. Koskela. Marquette Studies in Theology 61. Milwaukee: Marquette University, 2008. Pp. 174. \$22.

In the context of both the ecumenical promise of Vatican II and the current impasse of the ecumenical movement, Wesleyan theologian Douglas Koskela explores Yves Congar’s contribution to a theology of the church’s nature, which he calls its “ecclesiality.” What are the indispensable elements that a Christian community must have if it is to constitute the genuine and authentic church of Jesus Christ? Divergent responses to this question continue to divide Roman Catholics, the Orthodox, and Protestants. K. advances the threefold thesis that (1) Congar significantly advanced the discussion of ecclesiality within the Roman Catholic tradition; (2) his pneumatology substantially enhanced his vision of ecclesiality; and (3) a theology of degrees of ecclesiality offers promise for ecumenical dialogue.

The monograph offers a good introduction to 20th-century Roman Catholic developments in the theology of ecclesiality and their significance for ecumenism. K. also provides a good survey of Congar’s Pneumatology. The chapter on Congar’s ecclesiology rightly highlights Congar’s effort to articulate a theology of church that includes both a divine and human dimension,

but K. relies almost exclusively on Timothy MacDonald's *Ecclesiology of Yves Congar* as the secondary complement to his primary sources. The chapter would be stronger if he had incorporated discussion of Joseph Famerée's *L'ecclésiologie d'Yves Congar avant Vatican II* (1992), an important book that appears in the bibliography but does not appear to inform the body of K.'s work.

The final chapters suggest important ways that Congar's Pneumatology might contribute to a theology of ecclesiality that could advance ecumenical discussion. Yet K. notes that "even Congar's mature doctrine of the church cannot recognize Protestant communities as churches" (160). The book would be strengthened by a concluding constructive proposal for a theology of ecclesiality in which Catholics, Protestants, and the Orthodox might find some common ground.

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A PLACE AT THE TABLE: GEORGE ELDON LADD AND THE REHABILITATION OF EVANGELICAL SCHOLARSHIP IN AMERICA. By John A. D'Elia. New York: Oxford University, 2008. Pp. xxvi + 271. \$45.

Many readers of this journal will not be familiar with evangelical biblical scholar George Eldon Ladd (1911–1982), but every Evangelical scholar who went to seminary or graduate school during the 1970s knows about him. His *Theology of the New Testament* (1974) was the basic text in numerous Evangelical NT courses. He authored 14 books and numerous journal articles. Considered a groundbreaking and progressive thinker among Evangelicals, fundamentalists vilified him as liberal. His own self-perception was as a person committed to both critical orthodoxy and critical biblical scholarship. He taught NT at Fuller Theological Seminary for many years, training a generation of Evangelical scholars.

*A Place at the Table* reads like a Greek tragedy as well as a case study in the coming-of-age of Evangelical

scholarship. Ladd desperately wanted to build a reputation among so-called mainline biblical scholars while remaining within the Evangelical subculture and academy. He was personally devastated by the failure of that dream during his own lifetime. One has to wonder what he would think if he were alive today; Evangelical scholarship has begun to gain acceptance and exercise some influence outside its own scholarly and professional circles.

This book is about more than one scholar; it is a case study in the course of Evangelical scholarship in North America from the 1950s to the 1980s and beyond. The coming of age and acceptance of Evangelical scholarship such as that produced by the Fuller faculty and students has been glacial but noticeable. Ladd did have some company as he suffered under the pace of that coming-of-age, but the movement was so slow that he did not discern it, and he died broken and discouraged. The book is well worth the time of anyone interested in that story and Ladd's contribution to it.

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EVIDENCE AND TRANSCENDENCE: RELIGIOUS EPISTEMOLOGY AND THE GOD-WORLD RELATIONSHIP. By Anne E. Inman. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame, 2008. Pp. ix + 188. \$35.

Has not postmodern thought repudiated the very possibility of communication between distinct discourses? Is not making the term "God" comprehensible to nonbelievers a rightfully abandoned project? And yet, do not theologians who insist on addressing entirely in their own terms the contemporary world achieve two goals: integrity and irrelevance? Such epistemological presumptions help explain why, on the one hand, so few of our secular contemporaries read theology and why, on the other hand, epistemology no longer interests most theologians.

Inman contrasts and explores several contemporary approaches to the ques-

tion of God, adroitly and accurately analyzing the epistemologies of Richard Swinburne, George Lindbeck, and Ronald Theimann. Swinburne, she judges, imperils the very transcendence of God by reducing the Deity to one more element within the world. Lindbeck and Theimann "take seriously the mediation of all knowing" (49) while they eschew foundationalism, that is, the belief that theology can begin with a self-evident philosophic premise. Yet Theimann's making revelation self-evident imperils human freedom. If it is self-evident, how do we reject God? Lindbeck absolves religious assertions of an obligation to be meaningful outside the linguistic community producing them, raising the question of how they can have any cognitive content whatsoever.

I. helpfully returns to two thinkers often undervalued for their attempts to translate Christian terms into concepts comprehensible to nonbelievers. She ably defends Friedrich Schleiermacher's notion of humanity's feeling of absolute dependence upon God from the charge of subjectivism. The philosopher's intention "is not to prove the existence of God; Schleiermacher merely thinks there is an inevitability about positing the existence of God once we have agreed on the concept to which the word 'God' is being applied" (109). I. responds to those who, by severing Karl Rahner's philosophy from his theology, would make him a non-foundationalist. Rahner never posits God as a proposition proven through philosophy; philosophy suggests that some horizon to human knowledge must be posited as a way of affirming its own meaningfulness. When human beings assert that humanity has a future, they reference what believers have always meant by the word "God."

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THE IDENTITY OF ANGLICANISM: ESSENTIALS OF ANGLICAN ECCLESIOLOGY. By Paul Avis. New York: T. & T. Clark, 2007. Pp. xii + 201. \$33.95.

Avis provides a timely explication of the core expressions and values of

Anglican ecclesiology. His essays give rigorous and yet accessible accounts of the evolution of the ecclesiology of the Anglican Communion from its emergence in the 16th century as a distinct tradition through to the present day. The result is detailed description and considered evaluation that will appeal to both academics and practitioners. Most essays were previously published, but A. reworked them, giving the volume a feel of a continuous narrative. Also A. clearly identifies what he here seeks to discuss at length, what to omit, or what to treat only briefly, such as understandings of ministry, mission, and authority (notions that he has discussed elsewhere or plans to do so). The volume deals with what is distinctive about Anglicanism, as well as what it shares with other traditions. It examines how Anglicans structure their understanding of the Church around the Eucharist and Baptism, and discusses focal matters such as Christology and holy orders.

The book is written from the perspective of one committed to the liberal consensus of Anglicanism. A. relies on the values of tolerance, restraint, and learning, which he sees as core identifiers of the Anglican way of doing theology and Church, alongside appeals to the supremacy of conscience and for acceptance of a critical approach to Scripture and tradition. I suggest that A.'s optimistic understanding of reasonable Anglicanism could be balanced with an account of the "dark side" of Anglicanism typified by the 1662 exclusion from the Church of England of more than 1,700 "non-conformist" ministers who were unable in conscience to accept the reimposition of the Book of Common Prayer. I would also have valued a discussion of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral as a tool of inclusion. Nonetheless I commend this very readable volume to all those with an interest in ecclesiology and Anglicanism today.

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CAN THESE BONES LIVE?: A CATHOLIC BAPTIST ENGAGEMENT WITH ECCLESIOLOGY, HERMENEUTICS, AND SOCIAL THEORY. By Barry Harvey. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Brazos, 2008. Pp. 318. \$24.99.

When, at Vatican II, the Catholic Church abandoned its historic reliance on state support of its faith, ethics, and community life, it made possible new engagements with Christians who have historically repudiated state-sponsored support and enforcement of belief. Among the most productive engagements have been those with Anabaptists and Baptists.

The "catholic" and "baptist" in Harvey's title are theological and not confessional designations. He attempts to give a universal/catholic account of Christianity from the perspective of a church free from, and critical toward, its surrounding social orders. In this, H. expands on the theologies of James McClendon, John Howard Yoder, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. He explicates Christian practice as the locus of Christian confession, identifying hermeneutics as the heir of practical reasoning.

In his extensive methodological introduction, H. insists that the church's fragmentation is rooted not in the schisms of the second millennium, but in the fourth-century Constantinian accommodation to political and civil norms. While critical of Constantinianism, H. acknowledges in a nuanced manner the cultural accommodations of the so-called Free Church and restoration traditions, providing examples of Orthodox, Catholic, Magisterial Protestant, and right and left wing Baptist identification with secular powers.

H. establishes his narrative base in an apocalyptic eschatology and the early community's sense of marginality (chaps. 1 and 2), then outlines the captivity of modern culture by the individualism inherent in the communications and advertising cyberculture (chap. 3). Chapters 4 through 6 deal with Scripture, doctrine, and sacramentalism, the last attempting to get beyond analyses in terms of substance and mediation to an conception of ritual that can give the Christian community the ability "to

embody the social idiom of God's apocalyptic regime" (227). Chapter 7, on holy vulnerability, sketches a formation program with an eye to building a new age in the midst of alien culture. The final chapter, "Becoming Artisans of the Age to Come," articulates a community in dialectic with a violent political and market-driven civil society, resisting social forces with a Christian alternative view of nature and the destiny of the human person in history.

This volume, from a countercultural perspective, draws richly on historical, Catholic, and literary resources to chart an ecclesiological future that is both critical and reconciling. Its synthetic narrative provides a provocative partner in dialogues on a long list of theological and ethical issues. I suspect many readers will find it too ambitious, but that very comprehensiveness is a challenge to expand the discussion, catholic and prophetic.

BROTHER JEFFREY GROS, F.S.C.  
Memphis Theological Seminary

CHRIST IN EVOLUTION. By Ilia Delio, O.S.F. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 2008. Pp. xi + 228. \$18.

Judging Western, academic Christology to be overintellectualized, sterile in content, and impotent to change minds and hearts, Delio argues for a mystical, affective, relational approach. Through the lens of evolution, of both the universe and human consciousness, she sees that Christology itself must evolve so that its knowledge becomes a step toward union with the God of love. To that end she draws first on the Franciscan tradition, especially Bonaventure, who recapitulates the Greek Fathers' idea that Christ is the redeeming center of creation. She fleshes out this vision with the insights of four 20th-century writers who do Christology in the prayerful way of mystics: Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Raimon Panikkar, Thomas Merton, and Bede Griffiths. A final chapter on extraterrestrial life widens understanding of the mystical Christ beyond earth chauvinism to embrace the whole universe.

This work helpfully illuminates some of the rich resources available in tradition for interpreting Christ within an evolutionary framework. Its argument as a whole, however, is plagued by a troubling dichotomy between mysticism and history. The dichotomy surfaces: (1) in her judgment that it is ill-informed to mistake "the centrality of Christ as the personalizing center of the universe for a white, Western, male Jesus, who was really Middle Eastern and Jewish" (135); (2) in the envisioning that Christ relates to the universe not in terms of history but in terms of teleology and eschatology; (3) in her claim that "the whole concept of evolution has liberated Christ from the limits of the man Jesus" (174); and (4) in her argument that the Resurrection ought to take priority over the historical life of Jesus. These claims shortchange the fullness of Christian proclamation rooted in the scandal of the Incarnation. Even in terms of the Franciscan tradition, does this not underplay the manger and the cross? Does it not silence the consequent call to identify with the poor?

D. writes that "Christ is the Trinity incarnate" (136); perhaps this erroneous idea signals the core of the difficulty. If in her next work she can connect history with the vibrant cosmic vision she is limning, she, her readers, and her book will be better served.

ELIZABETH A. JOHNSON  
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INCARNATION ANYWAY: ARGUMENTS FOR SUPRALAPSARIAN CHRISTOLOGY. By Edwin Chr. van Driel. AAR Academy. New York: Oxford University, 2008. Pp. xi + 194. \$74.

In this lively and concise Yale dissertation van Driel moves dialectically through the supralapsarian Christologies of Friedrich Schleiermacher, I. A. Dorner, and Karl Barth to set the stage for his own constructive proposal. Schleiermacher's starting point in

redemption as restoration of the feeling of absolute dependence leads, D. claims, to an untenable *felix culpa* whereby God needs evil to accomplish his eternal decree. Dorner in turn embeds creation within the very nature of God and thus tends to instrumentalize the Incarnation as a means to the fulfillment of divine love. Barth shakes free of the deterministic ontologies of the former two and finds a more adequate starting point in the eschatological notion of divine election. Yet his interpretation of our election in Christ visualizes the Incarnation as the transformative assumption of human nature *tout court* and thereby risks obliterating the individuality of other human beings. In addition, Barth's construal of resurrection as preservation in God's eternity of life previously lived robs those so raised of the active exercise of their subjectivity in the *eschaton*. Rather, D. counters, on biblical warrants, that we should reconceive eschatological bliss as delight in God's self-gift, both intellectual and bodily, and hence still centered on the incarnate Christ, exercised in a realm of transformed, not abolished, temporality and spatiality. Such is the intent of God's eternal decree, an intimacy of friendship with God in Christ that is not of itself contingent upon sin and its remedy, so that supralapsarian Christology corresponds to the actual, and not merely hypothetical, state of affairs.

D.'s explication of Barth's controverted statements about the eternal being of Jesus Christ makes a substantive contribution to that ongoing discussion, and his critical attention to the ontologies of the figures he studies yields illuminating insights. Yet his sharp disjunction between the metaphysical and the personal/historical may be questioned by those who stand outside his Reformed tradition. A brief but helpful appendix traces the genealogy of supralapsarianism from Rupert of Deutz to the present.

WILLIAM P. LOEWE  
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THE PARADOX OF CHRISTIAN SACRIFICE: THE LOSS OF SELF, THE GIFT OF SELF. By Erin Loathes Biviano. New York: Crossroad, 2007. Pp. x + 294. \$39.95.

The cultivation of Christian identity, whether anthropologically or ecclesio-logically considered, gains its specific character from Jesus' call to self-sacrificial love in discipleship (Mt 16:25). And yet, the language of sacrifice has come under considerable scrutiny, especially among feminist theologians who argue that the call to sacrifice can lead to the oppression of women who have traditionally occupied subordinate roles in family, religion, and society. Limiting her study to anthropology, and primarily structuring her argument around several related feminist objections to sacrificial language, Biviano maintains that, rather than jettison the language of sacrifice as irredeemably oppressive, Christian theology must contextualize and patiently sift through the many-layered meanings of sacrifice to retrieve what remains essential to Jesus' call to discipleship. While remaining sympathetic with feminist criticism, B. maintains that Christian theology must creatively appropriate sacrificial language while keeping in careful balance the paradox of self-expropriation and self-realization; unless these two ostensibly opposed poles are kept in creative tension, significant distortions will arise in the formation of Christian identity.

While this thesis breaks no new ground, B.'s book, which began as a doctoral dissertation, creatively synthesizes an array of critical resources. Chapter 1 provides an overview of sacrificial language in Scripture, and chapter 2 examines feminist critiques of its continued usage. Chapter 3 is particularly admirable. Working with the philosophical anthropology of Paul Ricoeur (Ricoeur also functions prominently in the book's method of retrieval and appropriation), B. makes a convincing case that a robust ontology of mutuality gives philosophical coherence to the central paradox of discipleship. Chapter 4 helpfully engages

Edward Schillebeeckx's theology to highlight the appropriate and inappropriate ways to relate sacrifice to suffering. And while the final chapter could be extended to explore more systematically and richly the trinitarian dynamics of gift and reception—this is where, B. argues, the paradox is most fully realized—it does synthesize the several themes raised throughout this engaging and well-written volume.

BRIAN D. ROBINETTE  
Saint Louis University

ON THE MYSTERY: DISCERNING DIVINITY IN PROCESS. By Catherine Keller. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008. Pp. xv + 208. \$17.

Keller (of Drew University) intends this book to be an unconventional introduction to theology for seminary and graduate students. She states that it may also be read as an introduction to process theology (xiii). It succeeds in both respects. K. uses the main ideas of process theology while avoiding the technical vocabulary that frequently impedes comprehension. The book is also profoundly feminist in its sensibilities and modes of analysis.

K. strives to present a "third way" between the poles of absolutism and relativism, between biblical literalism and secular agnosticism. Her analysis is mainly directed against the absolutism of a literalist Evangelical theology, befitting a seminary audience and an educated laity in the Protestant or Reformed traditions.

In eight chapters she covers the nature of theology, revelation (truth as process), creation, divine power, divine activity, justice and compassion, christological issues, and the Spirit and eschatology. Her analysis is done in conversation with the tradition but in a very unconventional and effective way. The volume closes with a teaching resource comprised of study questions for each chapter and suggested further readings. Beginning undergraduates would not be able fully to appreciate or absorb this thought-provoking



book, but it would be a fine resource for its intended audience.

Anyone holding a “high” Christology, including most Roman Catholics, will find K.’s discussion of christological and soteriological topics the least satisfying part of her discussion, despite the novel and interesting way she approaches and develops these topics. Her Christology, while not exactly “low,” seems minimalist, and her discussion of salvation is rather underdeveloped, even for an introductory treatment.

K. writes with wisdom, humor, and literary grace. The book will reward readers at all levels, from seminary students and educated laity to professional theologians. It succeeds at being an unconventional and attractive introduction to contemporary Christian theology.

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SEEING FILM AND READING FEMINIST THEOLOGY: A DIALOGUE. By Ulrike Vollmer. New York: Palgrave, 2007. Pp. 297. \$74.95.

From a feminist perspective, Vollmer explores the ways in which “seeing” and “being seen” are represented in film. She selects three films that have women-artists as central characters and configures this interdisciplinary project as a critical dialogue involving feminist theology and film theory.

After noting that certain philosophical views (e.g., Foucault, Lacan, Levinas) represent the act of seeing in unequal, male-female power relations, V. briefly surveys perspectives from feminist film theory, concluding that the discipline has narrowly focused on how women are seen, not how women see. She then explores feminist theology and finds, in its emphasis on the relationality between God and human beings, a useful foundation for exploring seeing and being seen in film.

While V. expressly intends an analysis of film qua film, she offers only the barest allusions to the cinematic grammar of her first case study, *Camille Claudel* (Bruno Nuytten, 1988). For

her study of *Artemisia* (Agnes Merlet, 1997), she does analyze the film’s more stylistic aspects, paying closer attention to camerawork. When she takes up her final case, *The Tango Lesson* (Sally Potter, 1997), V.’s hermeneutical exploration is thorough and energetic. Here her engagement with the film is seamless as she navigates through its layers of meaning with an incisive examination of cinematography, mise-en-scène, and music.

V. keeps the dialectic between the film and the feminist theological perspectives in creative tension, yielding a remarkable interpretative process. Yet, I suggest it is not feminist theology that can best lead to her conclusion that seeing is an act of faith and love. Better would be the thought of Martin Buber, for example, who offers a more resonant discursive framework for revealing the birthing of mutuality in the seeing and being seen represented by *The Tango Lesson*. Still, V. conclusively succeeds in forging a complex intertextual dialogue, a noteworthy contribution that scholars in the field of theology and film will be sure “to see.”

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LOVE AND OBJECTIVITY IN VIRTUE ETHICS: ARISTOTLE, LONERGAN, AND NUSSBAUM ON EMOTIONS AND MORAL INSIGHT. By Robert J. Fitterer. Toronto: University of Toronto, 2008. Pp. 133. \$45.

Fitterer draws on key thinkers in ancient and contemporary virtue ethics to defend the insightful thesis that, although virtue ethics gives a certain kind of priority to the experience of the subject, objectivity plays an important role in understanding what it means in Aristotelian terms to be virtuous. Building on Aristotle, Lonergan, and Nussbaum, F. explores precisely how the experience of “being objective” can best be understood from a moral subject’s point of view. He contends that the proper exercise of *phronesis* lies at the heart of an Aristotelian account of a virtuous individual’s objectivity, and that properly functioning emotions play

a crucial role in the process through which an agent becomes objective.

F.'s discussion of the emotions' moral value represents one of his most important contributions to contemporary conversation. In recent years, virtue ethicists such as Nussbaum, Diana Fritz Cates, and Simon Blackburn have sought to defend the moral significance of the emotions, and while F. does not engage this conversation explicitly, he lays out a plausible defense of the moral significance of the emotions in generally Aristotelian terms. He argues that human emotions and desires are essential to moral formation precisely because love fosters in us a kind of objectivity that is appropriate to a virtuous individual. Emotions may appear to be a source of bias, but F. contends that they are in fact a "corrective" to bias (5, 65–68). He concludes that the exercise of compassion promotes and encourages *phronesis* (94–95) and, correlatively, increases an agent's ability to be objective (91).

F. could do more to explain what is theologically and philosophically at stake in his argument, and to situate his claims in relation to a broader array of current scholars. Nevertheless, he offers a valuable contribution to contemporary scholarship, particularly to conversations centered on the nature and moral significance of love.

ELIZABETH AGNEW COCHRAN  
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ESSENTIAL CATHOLIC SOCIAL THOUGHT.  
By Bernard V. Brady. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 2008. Pp. ix + 294. \$26.

Brady's book joins a fine collection of recently published introductions by Charles Curran, Joe Holland, Thomas Massaro, Marvin Mich, and Judith Merkle, each of which offers strengths for classroom use. An established scholar of Catholic social thought, B. here demonstrates that he is also a fine teacher.

B. distinguishes between Catholic social teaching and Catholic social thought: the former designates hierarchical-magisterial pronouncements while the latter broadly includes the ideas and

writings of socially active Catholics such as Dorothy Day, Jacques Maritain, John Courtney Murray, and Gustavo Gutiérrez. As his title suggests, B. selects for this broader field. In a style geared to the undergraduate reader, each chapter begins with an opening prayer or biblical passage and ends with study questions and a brief quotation. B. also includes edits and abridgements of many Catholic social documents. Thus, in one volume he brings primary texts and his own sensible, clear expositions in mutually informative configurations. Such an advantage, though, has its drawbacks. Some chapters are mostly composed of primary texts; B.'s original material can be less than one-fifth of a chapter.

Still, the book's organization and accessible prose make it useful as an introductory text for undergraduates and high school students.

KENNETH R. HIMES, O.F.M.  
Boston College

FREEDOM IN RESPONSE: LUTHERAN ETHICS: SOURCES AND CONTROVERSIES.  
By Oswald Bayer. Translated from the German by Jeffery F. Cayzer. Oxford Studies in Theological Ethics. New York: Oxford University, 2007. Pp. xi + 275. \$99.

Bayer is a highly respected theologian recently retired from the University of Tübingen. This, only his second work available in English, is a collection of selected chapters, written between 1975 and 1994, from a larger volume of essays, lectures, and sermons bearing the same title. We find here expositions, sometimes familiar and sometimes challenging, of major themes of Luther's theology related to issues of ethics. The freedom of the Christian, Law and Gospel, the estates or orders of creation, the two realms, Luther's views on marriage, and other important aspects of Luther's thought are well represented.

However, B. is not simply reviewing Luther's thought. He is concerned to bring it into critical dialogue with modern thought. Central to his understanding of Luther's heritage is that human freedom is a function of God's grace

and promise in Christ. This premise becomes the foundation of his extensive critique of Kant and his dialogue with certain major figures of 19th- and 20th-century Continental philosophy and theology, most prominently Hegel. In the process of engaging Kant, a singular contribution of the book emerges in B.'s use of the work of Johann Georg Hamann, an important contemporary and critic of Kant.

The book is in the grand style of German theology. It is technical, scholarly, and elaborate. The essays frequently refer to the works of various thinkers, obscure at least to English speakers and non-Lutherans. Readers not thoroughly familiar with the ideas and content of those specific works will find it difficult to appreciate the full significance of the argument but the *cantus firmus* of Luther's thought is readily apparent throughout. While the engagement with the likes of Kant and Hegel may seem simply an interesting intellectual enterprise, B. is sincerely concerned with discipleship as is evident in chapters on marriage and on topics related to social ethics and the care of nature.

JAMES M. CHILDS  
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unevenness typical of symposium collections. First, the quality varies, even though all essays contribute something constructive to the comparative project. The articles on Evangelicalism, Catholic natural law, and Islam are particularly cogent and compelling. Second, there are differences in focus. Some essays zoom in squarely on the broad jurisprudential questions of religious views of law while others address much narrower aspects of U.S. law. For example, the article on Calvinism considers neo-Calvinist approaches to science and resulting implications for law, a question that, while interesting, misses the fundamental questions of jurisprudence presented in the editor's introduction.

The picture that unfolds is one of the tremendous diversity within religious communities. Baptists, Catholics, and Mormons all consider themselves Christians, but they accept very different theological assumptions and modes of discourse. Still, by the end of the book it is clear that all the religious traditions represented share similar visions of justice and the common good. It is this powerful image of commonality that is the most important contribution of this volume.

RUSSELL POWELL  
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FAITH & LAW: HOW RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS FROM CALVINISM TO ISLAM VIEW AMERICAN LAW. Edited by Robert F. Cochran Jr. New York: New York University, 2008. Pp. 299. \$75; \$25.

These 16 essays grew out of roundtable discussions at a conference, sponsored by Pepperdine University School of Law, entitled "Viewing Law through the Eyes of Faith." The broad question concerns how scholars from various religious traditions perceive law, particularly the law of the United States. The fascinating results add depth and breadth to law and religion discourse. Although most essays are from Christian perspectives, Orthodox Jewish, Reform Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, and Muslim scholars also contribute.

The book engages both lay and scholarly readers, but it suffers from the

WHAT IS ECONOMIC JUSTICE?: BIBLICAL AND SECULAR PERSPECTIVES CONTRASTED. By Andrew Hartropp. Paternoster Theological Monographs. Colorado Springs: Paternoster, 2007. Pp. xiii + 222. \$29.

Hartropp establishes a biblically-rooted conception of economic justice, and demonstrates how this conception is applicable to contemporary economic challenges. He begins with a comprehensive treatment of how justice is presented within Scripture, then presents his own four-part understanding of what economic justice entails. This foundational material, comprising his first 100 pages, constitutes the book's true value. H.'s conception of economic justice is generally well researched, coherent, and based solidly in biblical texts. Its only major drawback is its

overdependence on the Hebrew Scriptures. H. does not review the Gospels at all and the Pauline epistles are dealt with in ten short pages.

In chapter 4, H. places his conception of economic justice in dialogue with both secular and theological notions of justice. Here he attempts too much, presenting and critiquing conceptions of justice from the Utilitarians, Rawls, Nozick, Catholic social teaching, Reinhold Niebuhr, and liberation theology. These presentations/critiques are exceptionally brief, (Nozick: 5 pages, Niebuhr: 6, liberation theology: 4, etc.), and H. at times misrepresents what these theories actually maintain. For example, he argues that Catholic social teaching “has not grappled adequately with the seriousness of sin” (141) yet never mentions *Gaudium et spes*’s treatment of the human person or John Paul II’s discussion of the “structures of sin” from *Sollicitudo rei socialis* (1987).

H. then demonstrates how his biblically-based conception of economic justice is relevant for contemporary economic life. His articulation of commutative justice is noteworthy, but his treatment of distributive justice remains vague and unconvincing. He concludes by engaging the U.S. bishops’ pastoral Economic Justice for All (1986) on the inadequacy of human rights as the foundation for economic justice, as well as the tension between public and private responsibility for economic life. Here again H. raises some excellent themes, but his overall treatment is too brief and not helpful beyond the barest of introductions.

JOZEF D. ZALOT  
College of Mount St. Joseph, Cincinnati

SOCIAL SELVES AND POLITICAL REFORM: FIVE VISIONS IN CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN ETHICS. By C. Melissa Snarr. New York: T. & T. Clark, 2007. Pp. xxvi + 134. \$125.

Snarr argues that Christian ethics calls for political engagement, but she also claims that the exact nature of the engagement is influenced by how one understands the “social self.” She then examines the moral anthropologies

of five Protestant Christian ethicists, demonstrating varying conceptions of the social self. Each conception, in turn, justifies the legitimacy of differing methods of political participation, as well as differing goals for and efforts at political reform. In individual chapters she places Walter Rauschenbusch, Reinhold Niebuhr, Stanley Hauerwas, Beverly Harrison, and Emilie Townes each within his/her social context, explains how they developed their particular understanding of the social self, and demonstrates how these understandings entail practical political engagement. Her final chapter summarizes the main contributions of the previous chapters and correlates these contributions into six “Core Convictions of the Social Self.”

The book’s overall value lies with its depictions of how the authors develop their respective understandings of the social self; thus the book is most relevant to those working in moral anthropology. Still, while these presentations are informative, they also are too brief, too similar, and thus too repetitive. Focusing on fewer authors would have helped, as would the inclusion of a contrasting Catholic author—say, John Courtney Murray. S. also spends as much time discussing the limitations of each author’s vision of the social self (and thus their contribution to active political engagement) as she does discussing the strengths, without drawing the limitations to helpful conclusions.

JOZEF D. ZALOT  
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ETTY HILLESUM AND THE FLOW OF PRESENCE: A VOEGELINIAN ANALYSIS. By Meins G. S. Coetsier. Eric Voegelin Institute Series in Political Philosophy: Studies in Religion and Politics. Columbia: University of Missouri, 2008. Pp. xiv + 228. \$37.50.

Coetsier carefully studies the diaries and letters of Etty Hillesum, devoting special effort to a linguistic analysis of central Hillesum language symbols. Drawing extensively on the philosophy of Eric Voegelin—and particularly on his concept of “the flow of presence” (100) in the response of the human soul

to the divine, C. seeks to better understand the “relationship between the life of Etty Hillesum and her writings” (193), proposing that Hillesum had an experience “that broke with the ordinary diary” (197, i.e., that pushed her beyond an ordinary form of diary writing), revealing a “symbolic form of transcendent address” (198). C. suggests that this interpretive insight can help us more fully understand Hillesum’s encounter with the “transcendent Other” (197), an encounter that eventually emerged at the center of her extraordinary life, suffering, and relationships.

C. actually offers carefully detailed analysis of both Hillesum and Voegelin. Hillesum’s writings and central Voegelinian ideas enter into creative dialogue, resulting in richer understandings of each. In places, however, the book progresses slowly, due mostly to its technical analysis and extensive quotations of Hillesum and Voegelin. This density may challenge some readers. Others might question the use of a comprehensive philosophical framework to examine diaries and letters that often break beyond linguistic analysis, at least in their spiritual and mystical dimensions.

These questions aside, C.’s analysis is original, carefully researched, and highly creative. His study of the original Dutch texts is a particularly valuable contribution, placing the volume among the best English, book-length studies of Hillesum. In the end, C.’s appeal to Voegelin’s theory of “the flow of presence” succeeds in presenting more fully the depth and power of Hillesum’s astounding prayer-filled experience during a period of horrendous violence, evil, and suffering—a time, but also an experience, that must never be forgotten.

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HOLY ANGER: JACOB, JOB, JESUS. By Lytta Basset. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2007. Pp. 295. \$28.

Appealing to the biblical stories of Cain, Jacob, Job, and Jesus, Basset argues that anger is a gift that invites us into the deepest engagement with self and other. Drawing on exegetical, theological, philo-

sophical, and psychoanalytic disciplines, she defends anger against censure and silence, arguing instead that anger plays key roles in discovering one’s own identity (especially uncovering those convictions one simply cannot relinquish without ceasing to be oneself), differentiating oneself from others, and simultaneously pulling one’s true self into relationship with others, particularly with the Other. Above all, anger can provoke a confrontation with God who is perfectly capable of absorbing all of our anger without retaliation or withdrawal. Through different paths, Jacob and Job eventually respond positively to anger’s divine invitation; Cain, by contrast, gives in to an unholy rage that eliminates the other rather than confront the Other.

B. draws on an astonishing breadth of resources, engaging Hebrew and Greek word studies, Jewish and Christian biblical commentators (both ancient and modern), classic psychoanalysis, and dialogue partners running from René Girard and Paul Ricoeur to Elie Wiesel and Albert Camus. While the work is often insightful, the intertwining of these resources sometimes leaves the book stylistically muddled. More importantly, B.’s argument for anger is one-sided. For example, the NT receives far less attention than the Hebrew Bible, and when looking at Jesus, B. focuses far more on Jesus’ words about bringing division than on his reconciling work or teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. Likewise, B. does not acknowledge that anger is not always a gift. Anger can be malformed, directed at the wrong person, with the wrong intensity, for the wrong reason. It is unlikely that such anger should always be expressed or is always an invitation to identity and relationship.

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POPE PAUL VI.: CHRISTIAN VALUES AND VIRTUES. Edited and introduced by Karl A. Schulz. New York: Crossroad, 2007. Pp. 221. \$19.95.

Schulz has edited a special type of book in spiritual theology that will appeal greatly to some. In eleven chapters,

he combines brief meditative selections from the writings of Pope Paul VI with a beautifully written, clear, and helpful instruction on *lectio divina*, an important way to pray with both the mind and the heart, contemplatively. While this basic concept will not interest everyone, the book can serve as an excellent prayer manual, what we used to call a "meditation book." But also, by means of an interesting two-part introduction, it teaches about the life and times of Paul VI. The first part presents Paul's life, in the context of his times, and the second gives S.'s assessment of

Paul's life and his writings, especially those of his papacy.

Each of the eleven chapters with brief selections of Paul's writings are preceded by an editor's introduction and followed by a conclusion. The subjects range from the art of dialogue, peace, love, joy, and chastity to evangelization. The chapters are meditative and ideally suited to *lectio divina*. Many will find the book useful not just for instruction but also for prayer.

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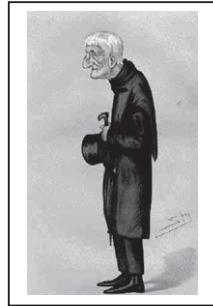
## 2009 National Newman Conference

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