

mode in the final chapters, in which C. ventures into his own theological speculation. In these last pages, he raises creative and intriguing questions about Jewish–Christian relations in light of Catholic notions of salvation, trinitarian theology, and Christology.

With exacting attention, C. has successfully mapped the scriptural, theological, and historical elements of the Catholic Church’s effort to reach “right relationship” with the Jewish people. Because of its impeccable thoroughness in covering its intended scope, this volume allows us to ask what lies beyond this particular scope, and to ask what work still remains to be done in the field of Jewish–Christian relations and inter-religious studies more generally defined. It also allows us to question, for instance, how far official documents are capable of taking us in this journey. What are the reaches of magisterial documents, given the complexities of a living faith that is experienced uniquely by each person? What lies beyond the authoritative and textual—beyond the promulgation of documents and commentary upon them, and beyond scriptural interpretation—and how do we get there?

C.’s conscientious and thorough scholarship on the journey to “right relationship” also permits us to reconsider this kind of relationship as a goal in Jewish–Christian relations. May the spectrum of the possible kinds of relationship be divided clearly into right and wrong? Is there only one right relationship? And, may we find other criteria to guide our development of new modes of relationship?

C.’s work serves as an incomparable guide for the search of faithful Catholics for “right relationship” with Jews and Judaism according to recent official teachings of the church, and in doing so it invites us to ask how a similar path may be drawn for other populations—for those whose religious identity might be hybrid or in flux, or for those whose faith is moved less by magisterial documents and scriptural exegesis than by other aspects of faith, such as work in social justice, or in the liturgical arts, or any of the other diverse forms of religious practice in today’s world.

C. also invites us to explore many other dimensions of Jewish–Christian relationship, and to ask, for example, how we might reconsider Christian–Jewish relations in light of the particularities of each lived experience of faith and the complexities of interpersonal relationships, and also how we might navigate the intersection of Christian–Jewish relations and politics, particularly in today’s tense interreligious global environment. Of these questions and the many more that arise as we consider ways forward, none can be answered simply or conclusively, showing us that in addition to the excellent scholarship already accomplished in the field, as exemplified by C.’s volume, there is indeed still more work to be done.

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Max Weber’s Theory of Modernity. The Endless Pursuit of Meaning. By Michael Symonds. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015. Pp. x + 193. \$109.95

At first glance, this book looks very promising. S. has courageously chosen one of the most difficult topics regarding Weber’s thinking and he has wisely focused on

passages in which Weber deals with the concepts of modernity and meaning. “Modernity” is not a term that Weber tended to use, yet he was preoccupied with the future and Germany’s role in it. In contrast, Weber frequently used the term *Sinn* (“meaning”) but he uses it in different ways. One use is technical and Weber frequently employed it in his methodological writings. Another use is more philosophical and more important. This is *Sinn* as in the “meaning” of life and S. correctly focuses his attention on it. Unfortunately, disappointment with the book begins when S. announces that his investigation will concentrate on two themes: “paradox” and “brotherliness.” The problem is not that these themes are uninteresting or unimportant, because they are rather intriguing and crucial; rather it is because “paradox” is not often present in Weber’s writings and that Weber’s use of “brotherliness” is not S.’s use.

“Paradox” is not found in the index to the definitive text of the original 1904–05 version of the *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, nor in the volume containing “Science as Vocation” and “Politics as Vocation,” nor in the volume containing the “Introduction” and the “Immediate Reflections.” It is listed in the *Gesamtregister* for the five volumes which make up the definitive edition of *Economy and Society*—but only twice (*Max Weber Gesamtausgabe* volume I/9; see also I/17, I/19, and I/25). Numbers are not everything, but they clearly indicate that Weber was not preoccupied with paradoxes.

There is little doubt that the notion of “brotherliness” is found in Weber’s writings on the sociology of religion, but a substantial problem lies in S.’s interpretation. “Brotherliness” is an important component of Weber’s sociology of religion because it is *sociologically* important. However, S. wants it to be *ethically* important. This interpretation violates Weber’s fundamental principle to keep facts and values separate, and while it might be ethically appealing, true “brotherliness” is too rare and too idealistic for this world.

S. claims that Weber scholars have overlooked the roles of paradox and of brotherliness, but perhaps they have been overlooked because they are not actually there. S. confesses to having to reconstruct this theory of modernity and he admits to having to “follow a trail of terms,” to “trace its path throughout Weber’s works,” and to “tease out these elements” (115, 143, 117). He allows that he is ignoring most of the critical literature and he insists that his goal is simply to provide a “clear articulation of Weber’s theory” (11). Yet, he accomplishes neither.

S. frequently complains about translations of Weber, but he rarely attempts to provide better ones. When he does, he often falls short. For example, “fate” is an important word for Weber and he uses *Schicksal* frequently. Yet, S. translates *Verhängnis* as “fate” and he claims that it demonstrates Weber’s “gloomier conclusions” about capitalism (166 n. 23). But *Verhängnis* is better rendered as “serious obstacle” which can, with great effort, be overcome; however, “fate” simply cannot be avoided. S. cites passages in the English translations but he rarely offers citations to German editions so comparisons are very difficult. He appears to consult some volumes in the *Max Weber Gesamtausgabe*, but the latest volume that he refers to was published in 2001. Since then more than 20 volumes have appeared, many containing letters, lectures, and writings that could have helped clarify Weber’s notions of meaning and modernity.

Contrary to his claim at the outset, S. often makes remarks about the vast interpretative literature; yet he utilizes only about a dozen works, and almost all of these are in English. The references to the Weber scholar Wolfgang Schluchter are not to the original German editions but to translations. Regarding the two German works S. uses, one is a minor article while the other is a slim introduction to Weber. Many of the secondary sources S. uses were published in the 1980s and 1990s and he mostly ignores those which have appeared since 2000. Yet *Max Weber Studies* and the *Journal of Classical Sociology* have carefully researched articles on pertinent topics such as charisma, ethics, and theodicy. Despite these flaws, S. is to be commended for tackling such crucially important topics and anyone interested in Weber's thoughts about meaning and modernity should consider reading this book.

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Conscience in Context: Historical and Existential Perspectives. By Stuart P. Chalmers. Bern: Peter Lang, 2014. Pp. xvii + 453. \$89.95.

This volume is an elaboration of Chalmers's doctoral thesis in theology at St. Patrick's College (Ireland) in 2008. Understanding this helps the reader to better focus one's expectations and to understand the systematic establishment and thematic development of the book. The academic character of a doctoral thesis thus shows the intertwining of the sense of the topic on the one hand, and, on the other, its linear and scholarly development.

The author's motivation comes from his analysis of the contemporary moral phenomenon which he characterizes as fragmentation often described by recent neo-Aristotelian philosophy and moral theology. The references to authors such as MacIntyre, Potter, and Pinckaers are indications of this. Following these authors C. describes the situation as "loss of cohesion and dynamism in moral theology" (27). He thereby adopts the diagnosis of the situation of the papal magisterium of the 1990s as expressed in the encyclical *Veritatis Splendor* and the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

This starting point guides the author in reconstructing the doctrine of conscience developed from Pauline writings, through the patristic era and medieval thought. An accurate presentation of the position of Bonaventure, Albert the Great, and Thomas Aquinas and the scholastic definition of the concept of *synderesis* occupy a central position in the first part of the book. The author concentrates on the position of Aquinas especially in regard to the distinction of conscience as both habitus and act. His analysis of the Thomistic text terminates with a clear preference for the second meaning: conscience takes a predominantly cognitive meaning of the objective moral order and relates to the act both as prior and subsequent judgment, that is, both as motivation of the act and its evaluation. Hence comes the idea that conscience is mainly "an act of judgment of practical reason, which is the conclusion of the process of an application of universal moral principles to the particular situation. Albert and Aquinas presented this in terms of a syllogism" (151).