

The Spirit of Vatican II: Western European Progressive Catholicism in the Long Sixties. By Gerd-Rainer Horn. Oxford: Oxford University, 2015. Pp. ix + 264. \$90.

Vatican II is celebrated for shifting the church's orientation from the distant past to engaging the modern world. This shift impacted not only the church's life *ad intra* but placed it in partnership with important social movements of the 1960s and 1970s. This partnership often goes unrecognized given a trend among historians to treat social movements as "virtually secular affairs" with scant attention given to their religious motivations and undercurrents. Horn's previous volume *The Spirit of '68* examined the dynamism of that "flashpoint year" without consideration of the impact of religious forces. While the lacunae went unnoticed in the book's largely positive reception, H.'s appreciation of Catholic energies and trajectories shaping the "Long Sixties" drew him to reconsider the period in light of these dimensions (1). H. explores how Vatican II's theology and early implementation impacted social movements in five European countries: Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, and France. He considers critical and unexamined ways that the "spirit of Vatican II" bolstered progressive forces within the Catholic Church which worked in collaborative and sometimes parallel ways to advance European social movements.

H. traces the way that the theological messages of Vatican II and efforts to implement the council's teachings translated into activism by a "growing army of believers across Europe" (58). This was a surprising result for events set in motion by a pope who was selected precisely not to be extraordinary. John XXIII himself did not foresee the tensions his decision to announce a council would unleash, but it soon became clear that his announcement catalyzed a "tug of war" within the church between members of the Opposition Left and the established seats of power. Many of the bishops began the council in "sleep mode" lulled by expectations of Pius XII, but their hesitation soon turned to "proactive enthusiasm" (8). Critical to this awakening was a shift advocated by Pope John and eventually embraced by a majority of council fathers to engage contemporary questions by looking to the "signs of the times" as "measures and tools to comprehend the reality of a constantly changing world" (14). H. surveys the thought of several theologians whose work before and during the council paved the way for this shift; in particular, he examines Karl Rahner's argument that theology had become too focused on method and should shift its attention to the needs of human beings so as to speak effectively to modern men and women and build a bridge between the church and the world (32). The positive view of the world that emerged at the council gave rise to a sense that the church and individual Christians must actively participate in building *this* world, and it generated tremendous optimism regarding the potential for realizing broad-scale improvements in the human condition.

After the council, Vatican II's vision for embracing the signs of the times stoked the imagination of progressive Catholics. For many, the church seemed to be moving from a "primacy of the spiritual" to focusing attention on concrete world events which meant that it could act as a partner in the transformation for which many longed (58). Thus, in the years following the council there was "an astounding multiplicity of initiatives wishing to study, to deepen and translate into practice the teachings of Vatican

II" (115). The formation of groups representing a wide range of concerns sprung after the council "like mushrooms in the rain" (133). The resurgence of worker priest movements, increases in lay activism, the creation of spontaneous ecclesial communities, and spikes in student activism all found inspiration and a call to action from the council and its implementation. H. offers a particularly instructive example of Vatican II's impact and cross-fertilizing effects in his study of Italian base communities. He explores a rich culture that integrated commitments to social reform and a concern for ecclesial topics while remaining outside of the normal channels of church action. H. sees movements like these exemplifying the way in which political and religious forces combined to challenge contemporary modes of authority under shared convictions that the world needed to change and that individuals must play a role in shaping the future.

H.'s volume achieves a remarkable balance in reviewing key social elements of the "Long Sixties" and their relation to critical issues in Roman Catholicism that endure until today. He demonstrates that the "'spirit of Vatican II' operated on multiple levels and in appropriately mysterious ways" to change direction in the Catholic Church and in the wider world—a shift still felt in many ways today particularly in Francis's papacy (253). This volume is both meticulously researched and written in an engaging style—a combination that is often hard to sustain. Scholars of Vatican II will find fresh insights into the council and its impact, while those interested primarily in the history of social movements will find an accessible introduction to a keynote event in Catholic history. H.'s book goes a long way towards putting Vatican II and the social history of the "Long Sixties" into productive conversation with one another, an achievement which is long overdue. The real achievement lies, perhaps, in his ability to demonstrate that these two should never have been separated in the first place and that such an artificial estrangement greatly impoverishes our understanding of the council and this critical period.

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Sacramentality Renewed: Contemporary Conversations in Sacramental Theology. By Lizette Larson-Miller. A Michael Glazier Book. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2016. Pp. xviii +189. \$29.95.

Among its many merits, Larson-Miller has produced a superbly useful book. It offers an informative, charitable, versatile, yet always theologically full-bodied introduction and overview of the dominant Western developments in mainstream sacramental studies stirred by the twentieth-century Liturgical Movement and its theological interlocutors. L-M.'s work is embedded and ultimately gravitates toward Anglicanism yet her charting of the contemporary scene of sacramental theology is ecumenical (with a particular engagement with Roman Catholicism) and thus particularly helpful in educational settings.