

*Language in a More-Than-Human World* (1996), as well as to the theological triad of *cosmos–eros–logos* in Martin Buber’s classic, *I and Thou* (1916), S. fuses his grounding in traditional Jewish texts with fluency in the physical sciences, to propose a new understanding of *tselem elohim* as the “more-than-human image” that has the capacity to restore monotheistic religions to their sensual vibrancy. S.’s eco-theology of *tselem* avoids getting trapped in the fallenness of stewardship that emerges in exile from Eden (Gen 1:28; 2:15), which is prescient in suggesting the potential shortcomings of *Laudato si*’s opening reinterpretation of “tilling and tending” as stewardship rather than “dominion” (67, 116, 117, 220, 222). S. warns about the limitations of his own proposed eco-theology as part of his extended conclusions in “Beyond Stewardship (Again)” (343–47), namely, that the further one extends this *theologomenon* of *imago Dei*, the further human culture extends into nature, limiting a more-than-human world, ultimately failing to regain the wild within the human (343).

S. brings a bold eco-theology of the more-than-human world of nature that seeks to “be directed toward the future” (5), one that must “not only push us to evolve theology, but also to illuminate for us, in critical ways, the meaning of ancient texts and ideas, and the history of those ideas and texts” (7). While *Laudato si*’ should be captivating our theological attention, S.’s theology contributes to the emergence of eco-theologies that reach beyond stewardship into a robust, devotional engagement with a more Gaian spiritual activism emerging from Jewish mystical sources.

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*St. Augustine’s Interpretation of the Psalms of Ascent.* By Gerard McLarney.  
Washington: Catholic University of America, 2014. Pp. xxi + 256. \$60.

If one were to trace the history of scriptural interpretation from the beginning of the patristic era, there would appear a list of interpreters who have made indispensable contributions to the reading of the Psalms. Origen, in the third century, set about composing commentaries on the entire Psalter, thereby expanding the scope and methodology of biblical exegesis. The Psalter figured more significantly in the pastoral, devotional, and spiritual lives of Christians in North African communities’ beginning century, after Tertullian and Cyprian bore testimony to the liturgical uses of hymns during the third century. Augustine in particular contributed to this heightened concern with his exegetical treatment of the Psalms, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*.

This revised 2010 doctoral dissertation, completed at St. Patrick’s College, Maynooth, provides the focused study of Augustine’s expositions of the Psalms of Ascent (Pss 119–33) that the author asserts is crucial for a full understanding of biblical passages about the spiritual progress in its ascent to the heavenly city. Taken together with previous studies specifically dedicated to a holistic framework for

Augustine's interpretation of the Psalter, McLarney attempts to gain a deeper insight into Augustine's exegetical commitment. M. acknowledges that the *totus Christus* or the christological approach (see Michael Fiedrowicz, *Psalmus vox totius Christi: Studien zu Augustins "Enarrationes in Psalmos"* [1997]) undoubtedly contributes to the comprehension of Augustine's hermeneutic in the *Enarrationes*. Nevertheless, he sets out to argue that a more detailed examination of a particular grouping of sermons reveals the benefit of "Augustine's exegetical strategy in the *Enarrationes* with regard to how Augustine interprets the Psalms for his audience" (3). With the emphasis on both the broad context of patristic exegesis of the Psalms and Augustine's treatment of the Gradual Psalms, the five chapters of this book are divided into two parts. First, in the introductory chapters 1–3, M. adopts a reception-oriented perspective of patristic exegesis in the early Church and determines the stage for Augustine's expositions on the Psalter. Second, the final two chapters (4–5) provide the analysis of Pss 119–125. In chapter 4, he treats the first of Augustine's interpretations of the Pss of Ascent, thereby assessing the exegetical strategy for his audience at work. The final chapter considers six subsequent expositions in detail.

M. observes how a renewed and continuing interest in the Psalms and the quest for a collection of hymns led to a greater appreciation for the canonical Psalter and commentaries on the Psalms, and to a serious concern for a hermeneutic of the Psalter and its relation to devotional and liturgical lives in the faith community. How did preachers in late antiquity allow their audience to tap into the narrative of the Psalmist? Before describing further Augustine's strategy for interpreting the Psalter, M. examines the delivery and transmission of the *Enarrationes*, as well as the approach to contextualizing the expositions on the Songs of Ascent: from the process of their composition, recording, and circulation and the manuscript tradition of *Enarrationes* 119–33 to their social, cultural, and ecclesial context, studied in detail. In these examinations of the practical realities within which Augustine's sermons were delivered—particularly with reference to several features of expositions on the Gradual Psalms—M. makes an intriguing claim that, while the ascent motif may reflect the influence of Neoplatonic thought, Augustine's presentation is far less interested in the Platonic ascending scheme than in a Christ-centered understanding of the soul's journey. M.'s attention therefore turns to the interpretative approach of what he terms a "hermeneutic of alignment." Although the christological hermeneutic for reading the *Enarrationes* has been predominantly accepted, M. is clear that the "hermeneutic of alignment" stands at the heart of Augustine's strategy: the establishment or alignment of continuity between the song of the psalmist, the psalmist, and the lives of his readers considered within an overarching common framework.

This clearly structured book is of considerable interest not only to scholars of Augustine and his contemporaries but also to those who have an interest in the patristic exegesis. One problem with the book lies in M.'s affirmation of the difference between his hermeneutic of alignment and a christological approach. One might claim that further consideration is required to clarify whether these can be separated and made independent of each other (210). Despite this minor criticism, M.'s achievement makes

a crucial contribution to the growing body of research on Augustine's *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, particularly with reference to the living milieu of Augustine's congregations and the North African Church.

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*Paul and the Trinity: Persons, Relations, and the Pauline Letters.* By Wesley Hill. Grand Rapids: MI: Eerdmans, 2015. Pp. xiv + 220. \$26.

Hill's exciting volume may prove to be the first-fruits of a trinitarian resurrection in biblical studies. While systematic theology has been enjoying a prolonged trinitarian renaissance, biblical scholars have been uncertain if and how they might speak of the Trinity in the Bible. H.'s way forward neither rejects historical-critical approaches nor allows the raw superimposition of later dogma. Rather H. uses the trinitarian conceptualizations of Nicaea and beyond to probe for a better historical exegesis of Paul's letters than is offered by recent studies.

H.'s overall aim is to demonstrate that "Pauline interpreters ought to return to the 'trinitarian' model when it comes to the task of explicating the identities of God, Jesus, and the Spirit" (1). In demonstrating this thesis, arguably H.'s most innovative and important contribution is his successful problematization of scholarship surrounding monotheism and Christology.

H. shows that the contemporary "low" and "high" christological discourse is predicated on questionable ideas about first-century monotheism. In his brief treatment of the history of scholarship, H. asserts that "monotheism" as a newly coined term in the modern period allowed interpreters a new possibility, "to articulate the dynamics of Pauline Christology and theology without having recourse to trinitarian categories" (24). Eventually this caused biblical scholars to treat Paul's ancestral Jewish monotheism as the fixed point around which Paul, after the Christ event, had to reconcile his new ideas about Jesus and the Spirit.

In making monotheism the fixed point, scholarship gravitated toward a vertical axis, chain-of-being model. God is at the top and material creation at the bottom of a sliding semi-divine scale. Accordingly scholars wonder: How far up the vertical axis does Jesus belong? When and how did he attain to that level? Thus "high" and "low" language is favored for delineating the degree of Jesus's divinity. But as H. points out, not only is monotheism a scholarly construct, so is the vertical axis. The early church preferred to speak of Father, Son, and Spirit in relational rather than vertical terms, so that we should think of God, Jesus, and Spirit as horizontally related or as webbed together.

To demonstrate that God, Jesus, and the Spirit are mutually defining for Paul so that none can be identified adequately alone, H. exegetes specific Pauline texts. He first shows that for Paul, God cannot ultimately be picked out, qua God, apart from his raising and sending of the Son (Rom 4:24; 8:11; Gal 1:1). That is, for Paul there is no procrustean God-known-apart-from-Jesus to which final appeal can be made. For