

SHORTER NOTICES

DEMANDING OUR ATTENTION: THE HEBREW BIBLE AS A SOURCE FOR CHRISTIAN ETHICS. By Emily Arndt. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2011. Pp. xvi + 197. \$30.

The binding of Isaac (*akedah*) has long been recognized as one of the most challenging yet illuminating texts of the Hebrew Bible. Kierkegaard's interpretation of this text in *Fear and Trembling* has become the standard interpretation for most Christian readers. Arndt not only rereads the text with Kierkegaard, but also with ancient rabbis, Phillip the Chancellor, and three modern interpreters to see how the text may guide contemporary Christian ethics.

Ronald Green understands the text in light of comparative religious studies, seeing it as part of a common religious ethic that attempts to make sense of the seemingly irrational. Philip Quinn takes the *akedah* as an example of moral dilemma, much like the one that Aeschylus's Agamemnon faced. Timothy Jackson, a Christian ethicist, attempts to show that the two greatest commands, love God and love your neighbor, cannot be in conflict even in the *akedah*, and it is thus an example of OT law being transformed by NT love.

After covering interpretations of the text, both ancient and modern, A. returns to the text itself. Jon Levenson, she observes, points out that the text has a context of stories in which God humbles and then exalts a favored child, e.g., Ishmael, Jacob, Joseph. The story itself is silent about the subjective state of the characters involved—God, Abraham, and Isaac—as well as of those not involved, notably Sarah and Ishmael.

The ambiguities of the text must stand. We must be open, A. argues, to the transformative power of narratives, especially profound and elusive ones like the *akedah*. Reading the text itself is an ongoing ethical encounter. A. found this to be the case when she wrote the dissertation and resulting book. The *akedah* overtook her methodological questions but left her with far greater ones: "Am I

attending to God with sensitivity, but without preconceptions? Do I recognize the authority of God to radically change me?" The process of reading and listening to the *akedah* itself became for her an ethic.

Sadly, we will not discover how a person so formed by the *akedah* will live out of the text. Emily Arndt died shortly after completing her degree and dissertation.

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PAUL, THE CORINTHIANS, AND THE BIRTH OF CHRISTIAN HERMENEUTICS. By Margaret M. Mitchell. New York: Cambridge University, 2010. Pp. xiv + 178. \$85.

Mitchell's logical starting point is the aspect of ancient rhetorical education at the secondary level focusing on how to use texts in forensic cases. Interpretation was thus to a great extent adversarial. Cicero's *De inventione* is a valuable witness to the practice of teaching students to employ a set of commonplaces in arguing a variable case for textual meaning. Kathy Eden has shown that this agonistic paradigm of interpretation was the basis of patristic biblical exegesis and that Paul anticipated this development. M.'s aim here is to argue more comprehensively that Paul was the inaugurator of the Christian use of this paradigm. The context in which this innovation occurred was the Corinthian epistolary exchange, which "*was and is a correspondence course in practical, indeed tactical, hermeneutics*" (16).

A second main argument is that the Corinthian correspondence provided patristic exegetes with not only techniques for agonistic interpretation but also the "key to the keys of the meaning of scripture" (106–7). She continues the work of complicating the standard picture of Alexandrian allegorists and Antiochene literalists by showing that exegetes of both schools used the agonistic paradigm. Like Paul, they were

adaptable and employed various means to construct interpretations useful or beneficial to their audiences. M. effectively argues that patristic exegetes should be read to discover not only how they commented *on* Paul's letters but also how they commented *with* them.

The most engaging and persuasive discussion concerns Paul's self-defense against the charge that he was not a "legitimate" or "approved" apostle of Christ. Because Paul had no teachers or apostolic colleagues who could attest to his credentials, he constructed a fool's speech in order to introduce a series of "witnesses" who could provide proof of his apostolic legitimacy. This clever move allowed him to defend himself without engaging in self-praise, which was not only offensive but also ineffective as forensic proof.

The book ends with an interesting and helpful assessment of the current state of biblical scholarship and a proposal showing how the agonistic paradigm might have a positive impact today. M. proposes that "we focus our attention away from the rhetorical poles and onto the spectrum between them" (113). This spectrum entails recognition that exegesis involves "a hermeneutics of clarity and obscurity" (59).

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CATHOLIC THEOLOGY OF REVELATION ON THE EVE OF VATICAN II: A REDACTION HISTORY OF THE SCHEMA *DE FONTIBUS REVELATIONIS* (1960–1962). By Karim Schelkens. Brill's Series in Church History 41. Boston: Brill, 2010. Pp. x + 295. \$147.

This book, by Vatican II researcher and historian Schelkens, is a remarkable piece of scholarship both in terms of its depth of analysis and its conclusion. *De fontibus revelationis* was the draft schema developed by a subunit of the Theological Commission during the preparatory period of Vatican II (1960–1962), which eventually became in 1965 *Dei verbum* (Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation). Its history at Vatican II—especially during the first

session—was turbulent and is often shown to be the turning point of the council from the church of the Middle Ages to that of the modern world. S.'s work is a meticulously researched, close-grained analysis of the existing literature—much of it archival—that builds upon the previous redaction histories of Francisco Gil Hellín, Hanjo Sauer, and Riccardo Burigana.

S.'s method is important. Instead of being influenced by the commonly held belief that *De fontibus* was the product of a conservative "Roman" commission and using this as his hermeneutic, S. reads the sources closely and carefully and lets them speak for themselves. Most of the book is a technical, detailed study of the redaction history by following who said what, when, and why. Especially helpful is the historical background that S. provides throughout to contextualize the debates (e.g., Integralism vs. Modernism in the 19th and 20th centuries, and the Biblicum/Lateran controversy in the 1950s). The result is a new discovery. *De fontibus* was a schema drafted by an international team of scholars who were keenly attentive to the tension between neo-Scholasticism and the *nouvelle théologie* and sought to incorporate the best insights of both into the text. The schema's negative reception during the first session was due to a lack of awareness at the time of the nuances within the text coupled with an anti-curial sentiment in the air as the council opened that influenced its reading.

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DIE KATHOLISCHE TÜBINGER SCHULE: ZUR GESCHICHTE IHRER WAHRNEHMUNG. Contubernium 75. By Stefan Warthmann. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2011. Pp. x + 639. €94.

The importance of the Tübingen School for the development of Catholic theology can hardly be overemphasized. Nevertheless, today scholars disagree about what it was or still is, as we see in the works of Cardinal Walter Kasper and even Hans Küng (553). Warthmann's dissertation, therefore, wants to reconstruct

a reception history of scholarship on the Tübingen School to give theologians and historians a clearer understanding of the perplexing history of the term "Tübingen School."

W. provides meticulous scholarship and bountiful information of how German theologians of the 20th century viewed the school (28–70), especially theologians like Karl Adam (195–207), M.-D. Chenu (345–51), Yves Congar (358–70), and its reception history in Italy, England, and Spain (407–25). The main value of his study lies here. The author synthesizes an enormous number of sources about the name of school, its founders (J. S. Drey and J. A. Möhler), the nature of the conceptualizations of what "Tübingen School" means (e.g. formal direction of theology or a quality), its members, its life span, and numerous other aspects. This renders the book an indispensable resource for every theological library.

Despite the impressive scholarship, a number of serious shortcomings need mentioning. In a reception history that intends to be somewhat an encyclopedic "harvest," one expects the same biographical information for each of the authors. Indeed, for most authors such extensive bibliographies and well-synthesized biographies are presented. Therefore, the lack of this information for a considerable number of crucial authors, who could have been easily researched by contacting the dioceses in which these priests were incardinated, is somewhat surprising. Moreover, it is an unforgivable lack of detail for a book published in 2011 to count the long-deceased Cardinal Leo Scheffczyk (d. 2005), Louis Bouyer (d. 2004), and Roger Aubert (d. 2009) still among the living!

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INQUISITIONEN UND BUCHZENSUR IM ZEITALTER DER AUFKLÄRUNG, 1701–1813. Edited by Hubert Wolf. *Römische Inquisition und Indexkongregation* 16. Paderborn: Schöningh, 2011. Pp. 479. €60.

In fall 2011 the oldest manuscript of Spinoza's *Ethics* was found in the archives of the Vatican's Holy Office of

the Inquisition. For many this was a sensation, but historians who work on the Inquisition know the riches of these archives and could hardly be surprised. Wolf's volume shows the vast amount of information that has been gained since the opening of the archives of the Inquisition and the Congregation for the Index of Forbidden Books. It gives a good insight into new discoveries of both offices during the Enlightenment. In part 1 (17–88), the reader becomes acquainted with the working style of these offices—e.g., how and why a book was investigated, who investigated it, and so on—and are presented with analyses of contemporary criticism and defenses of the Index.

In part 2 (89–226), W. cites cases of censorship such as Peter Walter's shedding new light on the former Mainz theologian Felix Anton Blau (1754–1798) and his radical critical theology. Other essays contextualize the papal censoring policies by comparisons with policies in England, Portugal, Spain, Mexico, and France.

Part 3 (245–322) investigates the act of censoring as cultural praxis, while part 4 introduces results of Index and Inquisition research, such as finding that the Holy Roman Empire was the only nation that censored and proscribed anti-Jewish writings. Part 4 also suggests lacunae in censorship research, with the question of whether or not the Index paradoxically buttressed the privatization of faith and its disappearance from the public realm.

The volume demonstrates once again that the papacy's stance toward modernity has to be seen in the context of other states and institutions. It is highly recommended for everybody who wants seriously to study modern Catholic theology and Catholic history.

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TOWARD A GENEROUS ORTHODOXY: PROSPECTS FOR HANS FREI'S POSTLIBERAL THEOLOGY. By James A. Springs. New York: Oxford, 2010. Pp. xii + 234. \$74.

Despite his relatively modest output (just two monographs and a handful

of articles), Hans Frei (1922–1988) has had an enduring influence on theology, one that continues to this day, as witnessed by Springs's fine and sensitive analysis of his legacy. The author does not merely recount the development of Frei's thought but also vigorously espouses its lasting relevance. The task he has taken on cannot have been easy, since Frei's thought is not easily pigeonholed—a complexity stemming, at least in part, from the meandering trajectory of his career.

Born in Germany of an assimilated Jewish family, who all submitted to baptism in the Lutheran Church (more for reasons of social acceptance, it seems, than from strong religious conviction), he was sent to England as an adolescent in 1935 to escape Nazi persecution (his parents joined him in 1938). Later, he and his family made their way to the United States. Soon after his emigration, he won a grant to study at North Carolina State University. One day H. Richard Niebuhr happened to be lecturing on campus; hearing Niebuhr immediately set Frei's mind to the discipline of theology, and with Niebuhr's encouragement he was admitted to Yale's School of Divinity. Awarded a bachelor of divinity in 1945, he became a Baptist minister in New Hampshire.

After two years of ministry, he returned to Yale and wrote a dissertation on Karl Barth's theology of revelation. Frei never ceased to be fascinated by the vast diversity of theological resources available to him, which in S.'s interpretation accounts for both the difficulty in pinning him down and also, most crucially, the enduring value of his work: "Frei's work was a rich and textured mixture of intuitively articulated insight . . . and a delicate balance between philosophical and theological sensibilities" (6).

S. has succeeded admirably in explaining that balance and thereby also in demonstrating Frei's enduring and valuable witness. All graduate theological libraries will want this book in their collections.

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WRATH AMONG THE PERFECTIONS OF GOD'S LIFE. By Jeremy J. Wynne. T & T Clark Studies in Systematic Theology. London: T. & T. Clark. Pp. viii + 232. \$120.

Originally a doctoral dissertation, this constructive study by Jeremy Wynne proposes that, rather than viewing divine wrath either as an exclusively economic representation of God's being or simply as an eternal attribute to be twinned competitively with God's love, we might better regard divine wrath as a "*redemptive mode* of divine perfection," specifically, "a redemptive mode of [God's] righteousness" (13). For W., any treatment of divine wrath is determined directly by one's doctrine of God, a topic, he urges, that must be handled "responsively," that is, under the assumption that the form of God's revelation is relevant for grasping its content. To demonstrate this, W. surveys in part 1 three Reformed systematic treatments: those of Francis Turretin, Friedrich Schleiermacher, and Karl Barth. For delicately balancing attendance to God's immanent life alongside the economic expression of that life, Barth is ultimately preferred (with slight criticism) as a dialogue partner for W.'s constructive task. This is executed in part 2 through an extended exegesis of three scriptural themes: God's surprising generosity as seen in the image of the vineyard (Mt 20:1–6; Isa 5:1–7), the acquittal of the guilty in the atonement (Rom 3:21–26; Exod 34:6–7), and the *telos* of God's dealings with humanity in eschatological redemption (Rev 14:14–20; Amos 3:2).

Alongside its astute engagement with contemporary sources, the book nevertheless challenges one's expectations of what a modern theological text should be. Rather than neutral analysis, the argument is built on what W. terms theological "judgments." In other words, the book essentially presents a systematic exposition of certain commitments that W. claims early on (e.g., that the divine economy is coherent only on the basis of God's life *in se*). Consequently, the book's style illustrates its own argument in that the form of the exposition seeks to match its subject matter. In places, this makes the

prose somewhat labored (and, incidentally, readers without knowledge of Greek and Hebrew may be frustrated by the many untranslated biblical references), but in general, W.'s study illustrates expertly how doctrinal theology might yet be serviceable to contemporary Protestantism.

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THE THEOLOGICAL AND THE POLITICAL:
ON THE WEIGHT OF THE WORLD.
By Mark Lewis Taylor. Minneapolis:
Fortress, 2011. Pp. ix + 236. \$29.

How do we account for "the seething presence of the effaced" in theological inquiry (34)? Charting a course through the shoals of postmodern philosophy, Taylor's book brings into sharp relief "the part that has no part" in the grand schemas of Western history, those "rendered absent or subjugated to structured and systemic violence" (6, 168). For T. the "agonistic political" (67–114) is not so much a predicate of a specific discipline, "political theology," than the privileged place (*locus/topos*) of theological inquiry itself. And for T. such inquiry is transformed by its subject matter.

T. considers the "theological" to be a term of art, signifying not "the ethos of transcendence" elaborated in "Guild theology" (50, 55), but what Jean-Luc Nancy calls the practice of "transimmanence" (115–58)—the artful eruption into history of Judith Butler's "spectral humans" (16). Indeed, the great merit of T.'s book is the artful marshaling of the "post-theological" criticisms of Nancy, Bultmann, Michel Foucault, Theodore Schatzki, Pierre Bourdieu, Slavoj Žižek, et al. in the service of a poetics of the oppressed.

Paradoxically, the very strength of the work also betrays certain limits. For T.'s own criticism is beholden to the dense, allusive rhetoric of his interlocutors. "Subaltern knowledges" speak, but in the accents of the academy (56). Such theory, to be sure, illumines; yet if language limns the limits of our world, then we must ask, what is occluded or still effaced? In resisting the theology of transcendence, T. risks foreclosing

the poetics of the poor themselves—the women whom I serve in prison are not, after all, devotees of a "failed transcendence" or "grotesque transcendentalism" (23, 212). What they see inscribed in their cells is not Foucault's panoptic "God sees you" (xiii, 186), but the haunting faith that the effaced *are* seen: that a suffering God redeems their stubborn hopes.

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CREATIVE CONFORMITY: THE FEMINIST
POLITICS OF U.S. CATHOLIC AND IRANIAN
SHI'A WOMEN. By Elizabeth M. Bucar.
Moral Traditions Series. Washington:
Georgetown University, 2011. Pp. xxv +
201. \$39.95.

Bucar takes on the serious challenge of comparing the intellectual interpretations that inspire both Catholic and Shi'a spokeswomen as they attempt to represent two enormously disparate religious worlds. She uses logic as the lens through which each views her studies, and she herself uses this means to go beyond superficial explanations regarding the thinking and conduct of women within any moral arena. According to B., the phenomenon demonstrated by leading spokeswomen of any religion can be explained in terms of the neologism "dianomy"—that is, "an accounting of moral agency that does not rely exclusively on either the self or religious traditions as the source of moral authority" (185). This reliance on dianomy, she maintains, is what allows both Catholic and Shi'a spokeswomen to speak and to act in ways that go beyond adherence to the authority of their spiritual leaders. In their separate intellectual worlds, albeit dominated by two charismatic male leaders, i.e., Pope John Paul II and Imam Ayatollah Khomeini, she argues, women have found their own way to respond. The resulting text becomes B.'s way of explaining the response of U.S. Catholic and Iranian Shi'a women to key feminist positions.

B.'s clarity of logical explication, organizational strategy, and deft personal

touch make for excellent reading. While appreciating this well-crafted monograph, one is still led to question its overall contribution beyond the world of feminist dialogue. For example, of what value is it to examine Pope John Paul's writings regarding women mainly in terms of U.S. Catholic feminist theologians' critique? Why are the discussions of Iranian women regarding their Imam's views based only on political rather than on theological considerations? Nevertheless, in its admirable willingness to examine, in a coherent way, the methods by which Catholic and Shi'a women "take on" their spiritual leaders, this book adds to any discussion of feminist theological views.

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SPIRITUAL HEALING: SCIENTIFIC AND RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES. Edited by Fraser Watts. New York: Cambridge University, 2011. Pp. xiv + 207. \$90.

As author-editor Fraser Watts notes in his preface to this collection, "spiritual healing . . . has been strangely neglected in the academic literature" (xiii). For that very reason, this book—originating in a three-day symposium of medical and social scientists, philosophers, and theologians held at Cambridge in 2004—represents a significant contribution to the field.

An opening chapter by W. lays out conceptual issues and includes a useful review of the "small and scattered academic literature" (14) on the subject. Chapters 2 through 5 focus mainly on religious and theological aspects of spiritual healing, while chapters 6 through 10 concentrate on psychological and biological processes by which such healing might be mediated. The chapters vary widely in methodology and approach, but all are solid and engaging.

Striking throughout is the respectful and open approach to interdisciplinary dialogue. The theologians seem genuinely eager for whatever lights both the hard and social sciences can contribute; and the scientists, while remaining empiricists, acknowledge that their role is "not

about explaining away, but rather about exploring what else is going on in a reported encounter . . . with the divine" (111). Taken collectively, they illustrate W.'s claims that "theological and scientific approaches to healing are complementary in that they answer different questions" (11), and also that "dialogue . . . generally leads to mutual revision, rather than . . . acceptance or rejection" (12) of perspectives from another field.

Especially fascinating is Michael J. Boivin's and Burton Webb's presentation of controverted "empirical evidence" showing the positive effects of spirituality on physical healing ("Modeling the Biomedical Role of Spirituality through Breast Cancer Research"). Also of interest is David Leech's "Relating Spiritual Healing and Science," which helpfully explores the intellectual middle ground between scientific reductionism on the one hand and pure supernaturalism on the other.

W. returns with a final chapter, "Concluding Integration," which gathers the insights of previous chapters and concludes by placing the current interest in spiritual healing in a broad social and historical context. An extensive bibliography of primary and secondary sources rounds out the volume and will prove invaluable to researchers.

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EATING AND DRINKING. By Elizabeth Groppe. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011. Pp. xiii + 122. \$15.

Groppe's book belongs to Fortress's Compass series: Christian Explorations of Daily Living, which aims to explore the quotidian as *locus theologicus* in response to current sociopolitical issues, in this case, North American eating practices and food production. G. begins her project with a hermeneutic of suspicion—that her personal experiences of eating and drinking in a normal day are disconnected from the processes and conditions of production that bring food to her table. Like an investigative journalist, she widens her aperture and virtually

travels to various locations—from plantations in Guatemala where subsistence farmers raise and harvest the coffee beans she enjoys in her daily breakfast brew, to factory-style poultry sheds in U.S. farms that produce the genetically modified meat in her “chicken nuggets” dinner—to come to a critical awareness of where her food is coming from. Here, G.’s seamless blending of vivid prose with incisive social analysis provides a compelling, thought-provoking read, easily the best part of the book.

In the middle section, G. moves to a theological survey of eating and drinking as based on a biblical framework, beginning with the genesis accounts of creation down to the eschatological understanding of table fellowship in the theological symbol of the reign of God. While the theological threads she interweaves are illuminating and certainly relevant to a Christian vision of food and drink, in terms of scope, the chapter appears to have bitten off more than it could chew (pun intended); given the book’s brevity, a sharper focus would have been more apropos.

G. concludes with an integrative discussion of contemporary Christian practices of eating and drinking within the horizon of current ecojustice issues. She also provides a ten-question reader’s guide, a useful resource for the classroom and for various pastoral applications.

Looking at G.’s book within the context of its intended use—as a Christian guide to how faith is concretely lived—it is a helpful, thought-provoking reference for pastors, undergraduate and adult education students, or simply the ordinary Christian who, like G., asks the question between bites of a hamburger value-meal, “Am I really what I eat?”

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THE ONE, THE MANY AND THE TRINITY: JOSEPH A. BRACKEN AND THE CHALLENGE OF PROCESS METAPHYSICS. Marc A. Pugliese. Washington: Catholic University of America, 2011. Pp. xii + 297. \$69.95.

One of the great, seminal thinkers of the 20th century was the mathematician

and philosopher Alfred North Whitehead, who sought to reconcile “religion with science and the modern world” (22). Pugliese provides an excellent introduction to the thought of Whitehead and the system of process theology with its corresponding metaphysics of relatedness. His clear discussion of Whitehead’s process philosophy is attentive to the distinctions between classical and process metaphysics. He sees process thought as a challenge to classical theology, especially the idea that God is not the great exception but the chief exemplification of metaphysics.

In light of Whitehead’s process thought, P. examines the work of Joseph A. Bracken, S.J., who was influenced by Whitehead but who extends process theology in new directions. Bracken’s overarching system has a trinitarian foundation from which he explicates divine creativity, intersubjectivity, causality and freedom, and his primary interest, the One and the Many.

P.’s analysis of Bracken’s work is critical yet sympathetic to his efforts to synthesize classical and contemporary theological and philosophical ideas. In the final two chapters, P. undertakes a critical analysis of process theology and concludes that process metaphysics lacks sufficient grounding to explain reality compared to classical metaphysics.

Given his fine analysis of Whitehead and Bracken, P.’s conclusion is disappointing but not surprising. His study relies only on theological and philosophical sources, which precludes a thoroughgoing study of process theology as inherently creative. I hope P. will revisit process metaphysics in dialogue with contemporary biology and physics and develop the excellent work he has begun.

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INFINITY: NEW RESEARCH FRONTIERS. Edited by Michael Heller and W. Hugh Woodin. New York: Cambridge University, 2011. Pp. xiii + 311. \$99.

The editors begin their inquiry into the nature and reality of the infinite with a rousing call from the mathematician

David Hilbert, who asserts that “no other concept stands in greater need of clarification than that of the infinite.” In this collection, more than a dozen contributors representing mathematics, cosmology, philosophy, and theology seek diligently to provide that clarification, and they mostly succeed. The volume begins with a critical historical survey of the entrance of mathematics into the study of infinity, once dominated by philosophers and theologians, before turning to advanced technical discussions from mathematics. Later sections examine the concept of infinity in physics and cosmology before concluding with perspectives from philosophy and theology.

The novice reader may not be up to the challenge of comprehending the technical section (less than a quarter of the volume), but that is of little concern. As an accessible survey of the most recent thought about its subject, the book lives up to its subtitle, “New Research Frontiers” with impressive interdisciplinary contributions and novel insights that are more profound than technical.

In a volume filled with open questions and original ideas, disagreements are to be expected. Can mathematics enlighten metaphysics and theology? In the sheer boundlessness of space or the inexhaustible plurality of worlds is the universe actually infinite? Responses vary, but by wrestling with such issues, the contributors appreciate the symbolic, esthetic, and existential, as well as the intellectual and empirical, dimensions of their ambitious project. The impulse to understand the infinite naturally carries over into metaphysics and theology as the consequence of an unassuaged yearning for connection with the transcendent. While theological questions are examined explicitly in the book’s final sections, the deeper matter of the nature of God silently pervades even the previous discussions of mathematics and cosmology.

The question of infinity and time is treated as a minor theme or spatialized as Einsteinian space/time, and the important qualitative distinctions between endless duration and eternity are not addressed. Nonetheless, the book is an exciting and

wide-ranging adventure into one of the most difficult yet fundamental ideas in human thought.

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ARCHIVES AND THE EVENT OF GOD: THE IMPACT OF MICHEL FOUCAULT ON PHILOSOPHICAL THEOLOGY. By David Galston. London: McGill-Queen, 2011. Pp. x + 165. \$75.

The effort to understand God as something more than a(nother) Being has characterized some of the most important theological projects conceived over the last 50 years. Within the Catholic conversation alone, figures such as David Tracy, Jean-Luc Marion, John Caputo, and Merold Westphal have sought to move the conversation about God beyond the traditional understanding of God as celestial creature. David Galston contributes a compelling approach to this effort to describe the divine reality by using the thought of Michel Foucault to identify God as “event.”

Instead of approaching the concept of God from an ontological or epistemological perspective, G. presents the possibility of explaining God phenomenologically. According to G., understanding the Divine as “archive event” allows us to be concerned with the “practical experience” of God (ix). By discussing God as “social effect or product,” it is possible to better understand how the divine reality is “produced in human experience” (ix). The result is a novel theological approach that attempts to identify how God is made present within the discourse of a community.

As a work of philosophical theology in the Continental tradition, this book depicts theology as a “hermeneutical struggle” that seeks to explain “how linguistic acts produce religious concepts” (8). Ultimately, the goal of the text is to produce a “redefinition of systematic theology” that G. labels “archival theology” (111). This innovative approach is produced by using two central strategies of Foucault, namely, his effort to explain the production of “truth” within a community by means of archeological and

genealogical explorations of communally accepted realities.

In the end, it is difficult to label G.'s text as truly groundbreaking, largely due to the level of expertise necessary to keep up with his argument. Indeed, nearly two-thirds of the book is dedicated to outlining and explaining the intricacies of Foucault's thought. The result is that while the book will be especially valuable to Foucault scholars wanting to understand how his thought can be applied to theology, those not well acquainted with the French scholar will be hard-pressed to determine how this approach can actually be executed.

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MAN IN THE FIELD OF RESPONSIBILITY. By Karol Wojtyła. Trans. Kenneth W. Kemp and Zuzanna Maslanka Kieron. South Bend, Ind.: St. Augustine's, 2011. Pp. xx + 84. \$17.

Written while Archbishop of Krakow and professor at the Catholic University of Lublin, this early work begun in 1972 by Wojtyła was first published in Polish in 1991. A continuation of his *Person and Act*, the work is described by W. as a "metaethics" (4) that examines "morality as a reality subjectivized in the person" (5). Central to this study is the view that "the experience of morality" (10) is itself an important foundation of ethics.

The book is a structural outline for a more expanded fundamental ethics. It acknowledges the primary dignity of the person and the existence of objective moral norms seen as necessary for living a good human life. W. examines important subjects in ethical theory: the nature of the good, the relationship between subjective and objective

morality, justifications for moral norms, epistemological foundations, and moral methodology. The strengths and weaknesses of utilitarian morality and Kant's ethical thought are carefully considered throughout. For W., a personalist understanding of the natural moral law in the tradition of Thomas Aquinas best unites teleological and deontological tensions in modern moral theory.

The translation from the Polish includes helpful explanatory notes and W.'s own comments from the original manuscript. These aid the reader and provide useful background. Nonprofessionals will likely find the book challenging to read due to the complex subject matter—the study is highly theoretical, and it remains unfinished. Yet this important book sheds much light on W.'s ethical thought and reveals his deep moral wisdom. It is inspiring to encounter the early mind of the future pope as he wrestles with foundational questions of ethical theory. The careful reader will discover important insights into John Paul II's later thinking about complex challenges of modern moral life that are developed in his encyclicals and other teachings, such as his emphasis on the dignity of the human person, the truth of objective moral norms, and the transcendental character of the natural law.

The translators have done a great service in making this work accessible to English-speaking audiences. The book will be of special interest to scholars and others interested in W.'s philosophical and ethical thought and the influential social teachings of John Paul II. Encountering here the early moral thought of the future pope expands our knowledge of and admiration for his rich intellectual and pastoral gifts to the Church and world.

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