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Politische Theologie "nach" der Postmoderne: Geistergespräche mit Derrida & Co. By Ulrich Engel. Ostfildern: Matthias Grünewald, 2016. Pp. 222. €25.

A third generation of political theology has been taking shape in Europe, especially in the German-speaking area. If the work of Carl Schmitt shaped the first generation, and that of Johann Baptist Metz the second, a third generation continues the legacy of Metz but also engages contemporary political philosophers, especially in Italy and France. This is a public theology that strives to express itself not only after Auschwitz, but also grapples with the concept of postmodernity. The postmodern as understood here is a post-metaphysical reality marked by fragmentation, what Gianni Vattimo called "weak reason," and encounters with alterity.

Ulrich Engel takes up the challenge of a political theology that engages both the church and the public sphere in this pluralistic setting by a series of *Geistergespräche* or conversations with thinkers who have grappled with the place of reason in the post-modern condition, including Agamben, Derrida, de Certeau, Esposito, Nancy and others. As the title of the book suggests, it is to develop a political theology both "after" (*nach*) the postmodern as well as "according to" (*nach*) the postmodern. The result is not a thoroughgoing or exhaustive treatment of the relation of faith and reason in the ecclesial and public sphere, but rather some forays into post-metaphysical thinking on the basis of themes such as representation, community, boundary, alterity, church, and prayer. Many of these themes are then tied back to the work of Metz, especially as mediated by one of Metz's foremost students, Timo Rainer Peters.

Readers will not get a systematic overview of postmodern thinking within political theology from this book, but rather have the opportunity to develop a greater sensibility of what theology looks like within the purview of contemporary postmodern philosophy as it struggles to articulate how the Christian understanding of God, revelation, church and prayer takes shape within the Procrustean bed of the postmodern.

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The New Evangelization: Faith, People, Context and Practice. Eds. Paul Grogan and Kirsteen Kim. T&T Clark Theology. New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2015. Pp. xii + 296. \$112.

This collection of essays grew out of a 2012 conference on the "New Evangelization" hosted by Leeds Trinity University in the UK, which drew academics, churchmen and pastoral leaders from the UK, the US, Belgium, the Vatican, Australia and Africa. Each of the contributors to the volume provides a perspective on the character, history, and

challenges of the church's fifty-year effort of evangelizing after the opening of Vatican II. While the church is still actively engaged in *missio ad gentes*, new situations, especially the secularization of "territories of Christian traditions" and the loss of Christian identity, this is a call for a re-assessment of the evangelistic approach of the church.

The first set of essays situates the new evangelization within its historical setting—from Vatican II (Lamberigts) to the 1983 Latin American Bishops' Conference (Gorski), and through the reigns of Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI (Rowman). The second part of the book explores the impacts of the new evangelization on the church's self-understanding and on mission: as a call to communion and solidarity (Wood), and as an instrument of conversion of a whole culture to Gospel values (George). The challenges of ecumenism (Murray) and globalization of the church (Linden) are also duly noted.

The essays in the third and fourth parts of the volumes address the challenges of the new evangelization in specific contexts: the situation of the younger churches in Global South (Filoni) and in Africa (Baawobr), the challenges of other world religions (D'Costa) and of religious pluralism (Mayer), and the effort of re-evangelization in Europe. Examples of the new evangelization effort in the UK are also discussed: the role of the magisterium (Willey), the "heart-to-heart" approach of John Henry Newman (Morgan), the need to learn the "truth about Jesus" (Brooks), and the encounter with God in interreligious dialogue and collaboration (Smith-Muller).

At the heart of the new evangelization, which can be seen as *missio inter gentes*, is the conversion and commitment to Christ, as various authors have shown. The book provides an excellent overview of the current status of mission and evangelization and, as such, can be used in a graduate level course on ecclesiology or missiology.

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Christian Understandings of Evil: The Historical Trajectory. By Charlene P. E. Burns.
Minneapolis: Fortress, 2016. Pp. xi + 218. \$19.93.

Burns is to be commended for her comprehensive survey of major thinkers in Christian thought and theology from the Church Fathers up through to the contemporary era. Her subject, despite its title, focuses more on the question of how these figures philosophically resolve the problem of evil, i.e. theodicy, than it does on the more currently relevant question of how we might best and most compassionately live out our lives in light of injustice, suffering, and brutality indelibly affixed to the human condition. For the most part, the volume is a solid account of the critical distinctions among classic theodicies. Along the way, B. helpfully breaks down the kinds of arguments that one might use to engage these issues.

The volume's limitation is that it might seem like a reduction of two millennia of Christian theology to a singular focus on theodicy's justification of divine cruelty. But this limitation is also its strength, for B. demonstrates that some unlikely candidates