BOOK REVIEWS


In the recent flurry of publications in North America on the “historical Jesus” Wright’s book comes as a breath of fresh air. It is refreshing to see a scholar addressing this issue as a historian, i.e., basing his conclusions on sources (in this case, the Synoptic Gospels), rather than on some source-critical or form-critical theory. It is good to be reminded that there are British scholars who find no evidence in the Gospels “for an early non-apocalyptic, largely non-Jewish, non-prophetic form of Christianity” (43).

W.’s judicious survey of the works that have come out of the Jesus Seminar is alone worth the price of the book. I quote his comment on the consequences of travelling the Wredebahn to the end of the line: “Once you doubt everything in the story, and postulate a chain of events by which someone might have taken it upon themselves to invent such a narrative from scratch, all things are possible. But not all things are probable” (61).

W.’s own reconstruction is situated along the Schweitzerbahn: Jesus was an apocalyptic prophet. But what Jesus expected was not the end of the space-time universe but the end of the universe as he knew it, i.e., the end of second-Temple Judaism. It is from within this world that Jesus is to be understood: as a social subversive, to be sure, but as Jewishly subversive, not a Hellenistic cynic.

W. brings the proclamation of the kingdom, “the return of Israel’s God” (204), back to the center of Jesus’ message. Israel went into exile because of her own folly and disobedience, and is now returning because of the prodigal love of her God (cf. Luke 15:11–32). Jesus believed that he was the agent of this return and of the renewal of Israel’s covenant. As a prophet, he bore an urgent, apocalyptic message for Israel, warning her of the imminent and fearful consequences of the direction she was travelling and summoning her to a new and different way.

My problem with W.’s book is the “so what?” question. He contends that history, far from being theology’s sworn enemy, is actually her “younger brother.” He has plausibly situated Jesus in the context of second-Temple Judaism, but it is not clear to me how this second-Temple Jesus is relevant to contemporary Jewish or Christian faith. Jesus may well have believed that he was “the last in the line” of Israel’s prophets, but his warning was rejected, with disastrous consequences for himself and (perhaps) for his people as well. But although Jesus’ world came to an end, our world continues, and the Christian Church is predicated on the failure of Jesus’ historical mis-
sion. (Jesus' vindication in the Resurrection "can only be dealt with in another book" [659]).

Although theory can be a distraction in strictly historical work, it is essential for theological reflection. What I miss in this book is any theory of religion. By shifting his perspective from "the intention of the (biblical) author" to the "mind-set" of Jesus (200), W. has not resolved the issue of the relation between historical criticism and hermeneutics. W. excludes any consideration of psychology from his study of Jesus' worldview; he rejects the "charismatic" label; symbols are third-level derivatives of actions and stories; the distinction between steno-symbols and tensive-symbols is "a false dichotomy" (178). Although the central thesis of the book is that apocalyptic language is to be taken metaphorically and not literally, there is no reflection on the nature or function of metaphor.

The theme of restoration (Greek apokatastasis; see Acts 3:21) is applied by Carl Jung to the restoration of human consciousness to the original state of oneness with the God-image, but no such retrieval of the book's central image is offered by W. For all the differences and conflicts between orthodoxy's declaration of Jesus to be the divine Son of God and Crossan's representation of him as a teacher of aphoristic wisdom, the two approaches have at least one thing in common: they both give Jesus a transtemporal significance. W.'s Jesus, like Schweitzer's, "passes by our time and returns to his own."

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SCHUYLER BROWN


Until the third century Christian churches met in homes. The question that Osiek and Balch ask themselves is how this location shaped early Christianity—its gender roles, class relations, ethics, rituals, and community life. They recognize that this study will not provide any quick blueprints for family or church life in an industrial social order at the turn of the third millennium, but they expect us to live more wisely in our different world if we understand the history that shaped us.

The opening study of the Greco-Roman household as the context for early city churches gathers up neatly the common knowledge of recent generations of social historians, becoming most animated in its illustrated study of how house architecture reflected social life in Pompeii in 79 when Vesuvius's explosion preserved homes and human bodies intact. The rest of the book reviews Christian families and house churches under such topics as gender roles, education, slavery, and meals. In each case the writers proceed exegetically and very clearly through Paul's letters, the Synoptic Gospels, later New Testament sources, and early Christian authors. Keeping their focus on the social
issue under discussion, they make judgments about texts that inte­
grate or contest recent studies in order to set out a broad picture of the developing Christian family.

Their overarching thesis is that the ancient household provides the base both for the creation of a Christian alternative to the patriarchal family and for a reversion to the traditional structures of privilege and subordination in Greco-Roman society. On the second point, reversion to subordination, they are very convincing, perhaps because of the intensive research that both authors have done in late NT and early Christian texts (Balch in I Peter, Osiek in *Shepherd of Hermas*) which has given them sympathetic yet very sharp eyes on this period.

But it is less clear from their study how an alternative community developed in the first place. They are to be commended for facing the fact squarely, as few studies of the Christian family do, that the Gospels show Jesus shaping his family of followers over against traditional family structures: “Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother” (Mk 3:35); “You follow me and let the dead bury their own dead” (Mt 8:22; Lk 9:60). Yet these gospel traditions first generated in the apocalyptically-charged social context of occupied Palestine get short shrift in this study, less than 30 pages focusing largely on Jesus’ parables and the synoptic authors’ views. Greco-Roman literature (including Philo) is used masterfully for social context throughout, but we hear little of what Josephus, the Pseudepigrapha, Talmud, or Midrash might reveal about the rural Jewish social order in which the alternative family of Jesus’ followers first developed.

This puts all the weight on the urban Paul to represent the eschatological gospel that generates new social formations. Paul carries it well when he is carving out God’s one table for Jews and Gentiles with no ready model. But when others generate further formations in Corinth, he becomes defensive; and it does not help to lean so heavily on one man as the model that interpolation theories about post-Pauline glosses lead to a repeated “Paul himself never. . . .” Perhaps Balch and Osiek would write another volume for *The Family, Religion, and Culture* series that grounds the generation of the new family of faith more broadly in Jewish history, Jesus’ circle, and multiple breakthroughs across Christian history. Then they will have more space for Paul to be both right and wrong. And they can help us see yet more about how alternate families of faith might open up and keep on opening up in our different time.

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ANTOINETTE CLARK WIRE


Watson, here continues the programmatic argument of his recent book, *Text, Church, and World* (1994), urging that biblical interpretation must be “in consistently christological perspective” in order that
theology be genuinely biblical and that biblical interpretation be genuinely theological.

W. holds a high and sophisticated view of textual authority, insisting that truth as understood in the Church is "never encountered without textual mediation," and therefore that issues of textual interpretation are of primal significance for theology. He takes aim against autonomous interpretation and insists that responsible interpretation is in the context of the Church and is informed by its regular and nonnegotiable reference to Jesus Christ as the clue to all texts. His sustained and comprehensive christological hermeneutic goes well beyond even Brevard Childs in claiming the Old Testament as a witness to Jesus Christ.

W. takes up many of the vexing questions in hermeneutics. He opens with a discussion of the genre of narrative and insists on "historical event" as a claim that shows most narrative hermeneutics to be inadequate. He focuses upon the "singular Gospel" and refers to Frank Kermode as an example of the inadequacy of interpretive plurality. He takes a strong stand for authorial intent and for the determinative quality of the text, as a counter to excessively emancipated "reader response."

W. deals specifically with significant interpreters before him who have failed to appreciate sufficiently the coherence of the text as a reference to Jesus Christ. Schleiermacher, Harnack, and Bultmann have not taken seriously enough the christological claim made in the whole text. Even major OT interpreters have not made the case either. W. criticizes Eichrodt, but is more appreciative of von Rad. Even in some of the work of Childs, he observes "a definite retreat from the canonical project"; he judges that Childs permits the OT to maintain "its relative independent status," and that he is "misguided" in his reaction to arbitrary and forced christological readings of the OT.

My sympathies are with W. in his critique of "autonomous readings" that refuse to engage the theological claims of the text. In my judgment, however, his notion of "christological" interpretation is much too restrictive, and he groups serious Christian-theological interpreters with autonomous readers because they do not go his narrow christological route.

Much of the book's argument is apodictic. In light of intertextual reading, authorial intent is deeply problematic, because texts were frequently reused without concern for original authorial intent. The reading W. advocates is exceedingly thematic, conceptual, and ideational, without attending to the rhetoric of the text that is at many points disjunctive and "odd" in ways that do not permit easy theological conclusion. The issue is acute in some cases of "close reading"; and large theological summaries often appear reductionist. Furthermore one is conscious throughout of the problem of Jewish reading and Jewish faith and of the seemingly innocent supersessionism implicit in W.'s argument.

In the end, what matters is textual specificity. W. argues that the
weeping in Psalm 42 lends itself to legitimate Christian usage, whereas Psalm 137, filled as it is with vengeance, “could never be” filled with communicative intent in Christian usage. I find such a sorting out of texts to be quite unconvincing and arbitrary. If such a way of handling texts is pursued systematically, the outcome, in my judgment, is sure to be a whitewash (see Ezekiel 13:10); the goodness of God and of Christ are maintained, but the meaning of the text is ignored. I find more compelling the quite different appropriation of such a text suggested by Erich Zenger in *A God of Vengeance*?

I fear that W. tilts toward the sort of christomonistic reading he intends to reject. Not everything to be said about the God of the Bible can be reduced to Jesus Christ. Statements about Jesus Christ stand in the context of the Father’s inscrutability and the Spirit’s freedom.

Having stated my considerable reservations, I believe our debts to W. are notable. He raises important questions. His end-point is to assert that Christian faith “has a right to exist” and has “its own distinctive reasons for concern with the Bible.”

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*Walter Brueggemann*


This study, the fruit of long years of scholarship since Patterson’s 1958 dissertation, *The Anti-Origenist Theology of Methodius of Olympus*, shows all the marks of its long incubation. It is a synthesis of rare probity. From beginning to end it remains strictly focused and demands of the reader more than just following a scholarly analysis; it invites a rethinking of age-old issues challenging Christian faith. It also testifies to a highly significant shift in P.’s attitude toward Methodius. From the “incidental” Methodius (3), studied “for the light that the evidence of his writings sheds on issues only indirectly related to the substance of his own thought” (229), P.’s attention turned to the more “substantial” one (37). P. introduces Methodius as a genuine intellectual of late antique culture, “an independent Christian teacher” (36), an eminent member of the community who was not necessarily a bishop as later tradition claimed, a man who assimilated the legacies of Irenaeus and Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria and Origen, and who came to exercise “an unusual influence on the major theological issues and figures of the fourth century” (132).

P.’s first important contribution here is the establishing of the chronology of Methodius’s works. His whole understanding of Methodius depends on such a classification. In fact one of the principal contributions of the study, P.’s analysis of Methodius’ criticism of Origen, or more exactly, the demonstration of a self-censuring evaluation in Methodius’s attack upon Origen, depends on the chronology fixed at the beginning. A general survey of the writings of Methodius in which the
chronological classification is established is followed by a sequence of studies of Methodius's works: *Maximus: De libero arbitrio* which is focused on dualism and the problem of evil, *The Symposium* on chastity and the plan of salvation, *Aglaophon: De resurrectione*, the initial criticism of Origen, and finally, *Zeno: De creatis*, the later criticism of Origen. The dialogue *Sistelius: De lepra* is relegated to an appendix, while *De sanguisuga* and *De cibis* are also discussed.

P. argues that Methodius who, on the one hand, makes use of Aristotelian arguments, opposes contemporary interpretations of Platonic cosmological issues from within a Platonic framework of thought. At the same time one of Methodius's constant themes is the contrast between the Siren song (of impious teaching) and the chorus of the prophets. Throughout the analysis of the *De libero arbitrio*, P. insists that at this point there is no sign of a covert attack on Origen by Methodius as the dialogue reveals the cosmological dualism at the root of the arguments of the “opponents” in explaining the origin of evil.

P. sheds new light on the depth of Methodius's familiarity with the teaching of Irenaeus, which he brings into a synthesis with the Alexandrian tradition represented by Clement and Origen. Against Gnostic determinism, P. stresses Methodius's concern “that it is the task of those who are advanced in the Christian life to bring others to perfection, and thus to lay stress on the centrality of baptism and participation in the life of the Church” (98). He also corrects a distorted understanding of Methodian eschatology. The elaborate Methodian exegesis of the Feast of Tabernacles in Leviticus 23:39–43 is the “first known evidence of the Christian use of Jewish millenarian interpretation of the feast,” but P. warns that “the common notion that Methodius is an adherent of a millenarian tradition is quite misleading” (106). Methodius's attention is directed “toward the final stages of that perfection as they lead to communion with the divine nature rather than on the millenarian interpretation of the feast” (111) whereby he forges a link in the chain from the ascetic themes of Clement of Alexandria to what would become the mystical teaching of Gregory of Nyssa. In sum, P. places Methodius clearly in the line of thought issuing from Justin Martyr to Clement and on to Origen.

How Methodius could have been so well acquainted with “a considerable body of Origen's writings at an unusually early date” (123) P. refuses to speculate. Like Origen, Methodius insists on the need for studying Scripture, and his rationale for the treatment of the Scriptures in the *Symposium* is indebted to Origen rather than anyone else (128). Most striking in this dialogue is Methodius's following of Origen's own scriptural data with regard to the fall and the restoration of souls. P. notes that an “uninhibited, perhaps unwary, celebration of the spiritual sense of the Scriptures predominates” (129), something that Methodius would correct in later writings.

P. believes that two later works, *De resurrectione* and *De creatis*, witness to Methodius's shift in reevaluating Origenian thinking. In *De
resurrectione, cosmological dualism as a key for solving the problem of evil (the central problematic of the De libero arbitrio) is subjected to further criticism, this time from the perspective of embodiment in the resurrection. P.'s lucid evaluation of how Methodius misunderstands Origen and why he is intent on attacking the latter in order to silence contemporary adversaries is quite remarkable (184–86). Gregory of Nyssa would make Methodius's stance his own point of departure for the rethinking of the problem of human embodiment (198). In De creatis Methodius focuses his later criticism of Origen on the notion of an eternal creation of the spiritual cosmos and of divine Wisdom itself (Proverbs 8:22) which leads Methodius close to the position of Arius, a younger contemporary.

P.'s intense probing of the subtle implications of the Methodian text allows for no superficial reading of the present study. A magisterial control over the literature of the early Church allows P. to position Methodius in line with at least two centuries of foundational Christian thought. The reading is deeply rewarding for even the nonspecialist who is motivated to reach an understanding of the contemporary relevance of patristic studies.

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PAMELA BRIGHT


De utilitate credendi, Augustine's first work after ordination to the priesthood, was addressed to Honoratus, whom Augustine himself had led to Manichaeism during his nine-year tenure as a hearer of Faustus. Augustine analyzed the relationship between faith and reason with the goal of demonstrating the truth of the Catholic faith. Many, if not most, contemporary scholars of Augustine build their research on his personal transformations or conversions through the course of his life. In this context scholars frequently use one work of Augustine to shed light upon another in order to judge the significance of the many intellectual influences and human experiences which made Augustine who he was.

Perhaps harkening back to an earlier stage of Augustine research, H. has departed from this trend, placing his emphasis squarely on a philological analysis of the text itself as a closed and complete unit. Only after this first step does he take the second step, a comparison to parallel passages in other works of Augustine for the purpose of obtaining more certain, more precise, or more complete understanding of the text. He identifies his methodology as textimmanent (4); comparison to parallel passages remains clearly secondary. The work is a revised and abbreviated (!) theological dissertation completed at Münster in 1991 under the direction of Erich Feldmann. In 1992 H. published a German translation of De utilitate credendi with an introduction in the
series Fontes Christiani. In both works he used the Latin text of J. Zycha in CSEL 25.1 (Vienna, 1891) with minor emendations based on critical reviews and subsequent scholarship.

Although De utilitate credendi is often considered apologetic, H. insists equally on its protreptic qualities. Indeed, it was an exhortation directed toward Honoratus, whom Augustine wished to bring into the Catholic fold by destroying his false Manichaean presuppositions. Augustine handles two major Manichaean criticisms of the Catholic faith. Against Gigon's thesis that the work was the result of an initial exposition which had been subsequently subjected to several revisions, H. argues for the essential unity of De utilitate credendi. First, in regard to biblical exegesis Augustine describes four distinct methods: history, aetiology, analogy, and allegory. Following Dobschütz, H. finds Augustine's source in a combined Alexandrian and Antiochene exegesis which had developed earlier in the East. Because of its ability to remove apparent absurdities from the text of the Old Testament, the allegorical method (which had been explicitly reject by the Manichaeans) was deemed most important. Second, in regard to what today would be called fundamental theology, the essential problem is the search for truth. Honoratus would easily recognize Augustine's references to Cicero's Hortensius and the Manichaean understanding of the soul which has yet to arrive at gnosis. By equating truth and God, the search for truth becomes a search for God. Augustine then identifies the Catholic Church as the necessary beginning of any such search.

At this point the relationship of faith to reason moves to center stage. Augustine's teaching manifests three characteristics. First, faith is chronologically prior to insight. Augustine describes general faith and religious faith. Relationships in society and family are built on a natural trust or general faith that exists among human beings while religious faith provides the most certain access to truth. Insight is dependent upon faith which is absolutely necessary. Second, ethical purity as a spiritual attitude is an essential prerequisite for knowing. Here the Neoplatonic influence upon Augustine is apparent. Anyone who is bodily imprisoned is not capable of recognizing the truth. Third, authority is absolutely necessary because the soul is initially in error and in need of God's help through Christ and the Church. Following Lütcke, H. attributes to authority the function of mediation. Indeed, authority is a pedagogical introduction to the knowing process. Finally, he turns his attention to the title of the work and specifically the word utilitas (usefulness, Nützen), which he interprets above all as an instrumentality. In fact, he speculates that Augustine could have well used the word "necessity" in the title but chose the more moderate word "usefulness" so that the Manichaeans would not immediately reject the work without giving it a hearing.

In summation, H.'s work is more a commentary than an analysis. Although his research is exhaustive, his commentary is exhausting and verbose. He has managed to write 497 pages on a text that en-
compasses a mere 26 columns in PL or 45 pages in CSEL, yet his inquiry has no stated motive or specific direction, so that ultimately no unifying thesis emerges from his study.

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KENNETH B. STEINHAUSER


This initial volume in a three-part project deals with the first seven centuries of Christian theological practice. The foreword, written by Luciano Pacomio for the Italian publisher, clearly limits the objectives of the project: it is not a history of dogma or doctrine, nor a history of the thought or method of individual theologians, nor a history of the Church. Instead, "the authors have focused on the conditions, incentives, and agents of theological work, their 'way of doing theology,' and, in this perspective, the theologians, the theological currents, the places where they did theology, and the results they achieved" (xix). In its negative objectives, the work succeeds admirably by presuming that readers bring a detailed knowledge of dogmas and doctrines, a familiarity with individual theologians, and a general knowledge of the relation of church and empire; they are even required to decipher Greek and Latin titles and phrases and an occasional German exegetical term. The introduction by Di Berardino and Studer amplifies the positive agenda by noting the importance of the conditions under which the work of theology was performed; it specifies the various literary forms which were employed, the foundational role of biblical interpretation, and the abiding concern with soteriology. Unfortunately, the first volume fulfills this ambitious program only in its second part, composed in its entirety by Basil Studer.

Part 1 covers the first through third centuries. Prosper Grech's chapter on the theologians of the New Testament period betrays assumptions which will jar a reader accustomed to critical history: the regular appeal to inspiration to describe Paul's insight; the claim that Paul knew about the practice of the community of goods in Jerusalem; and the linking of four theological traditions to James, Peter, Paul, and John. The next two chapters, by Eric Osborn, set the context and summarize the work of Justin, Irenaeus, and Tertullian. The writing style, however, is characterized by short sentence and choppy paragraphs—radically different from the smooth flow and nuance of the other parts of the book. I was not able to discover whether Matthew O'Connell is responsible for this lapse from an otherwise excellent translation. Henri Crouzel provides an excellent analysis of the work of Clement and Origen. Manlio Simonetti's chapters on the East after Origen and the beginnings of theology in the West provide a fine analysis of the alternatives to Logos Christology. But the narrowing of focus to theories of the Trinity and the Incarnation, and the ignoring of the conflicts
over the standards of holiness, church unity, and ritual efficacy betray the introduction's promise of a history of theology as "a rational reflection on experience of the evangelical life and on its demands" (2).

In Part 2, dealing with the theology of the imperial period (300–450), Basil Studer is clearly guided by the agenda he established in the introduction. Short chapters on the social institutions of the Church and the empire are followed by fuller studies of the content and form of ancient learning, then their appropriation and adaptation by Christian scholars. Studer explains the significance of the emergence of the Platonic tradition as the dominant philosophical school and the variety of literary forms available to Christian authors. A set of chapters deals with the forms of thought and analysis that Christians applied to the Bible to interpret its meaning for the life of the Church. Topics such as the canon of Scripture, the forms of Christian education, the schemata for structuring theological exposition, the relationship of faith and reason are carefully and amply discussed. Not unexpectedly, the Cappadocians and Augustine emerge as the principal foci of analysis. Trying to discuss them simultaneously, however, results in broad generalizations. Unlike the earlier and later sections, Studer steadfastly avoids the temptation to provide an interpretation of the progress of doctrinal debate: he concentrates on the development of the ways of doing theology rather than on the results achieved.

Part 3 deals with theological developments in the period after Chalcedon. Lorenzo Perrone provides a detailed analysis of the development of Christology in the century after Chalcedon. He alludes to the role of monastic spirituality in the conflicts over the relation of divine and human in Christ, but (like Studer in a subsequent chapter on monastic theology) he fails to explain the stake that the monks had in the outcome and why they fought on both sides of the monophysite-diphysite conflict. In his chapters on the emergence of patristic theology, Studer chronicles the shift from exclusive focus on the Bible to a concern with demonstrating fidelity to authorities, particularly Cyril of Alexandria. The development of new literary forms, such as the florilegia and biblical catenae, and new methods, such as the exact defining of concepts and the use of distinction as a form of argument, was necessary for the defense of Chalcedon and presaged the emergence of medieval theology. The book ends with a set of chronological tables.

For the most part, this volume fails to achieve its ambitious objectives. Yet even where it falls short, in the ante-Nicene and post-Chalcedonian periods, it provides an excellent analysis of doctrinal development and the resources which theologians brought to their task. It may serve as a valuable reference work and, due to the fullness of its documentation, as a guide to the secondary literature. Because of the demands that it makes upon the reader, however, it will find a very narrow market.

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J. Patout Burns

Like many contemporary Dominicans, O'Meara follows the historical and theological approach to Aquinas pioneered by Chenu before Vatican II and carried forward in recent decades by Weisheipl, Torrell, Patfoort, Pinckaers, Pesch, and Principe. Yet, to my knowledge, O. is one of the first Dominican theologians to write a basic introduction to Thomas's theology thoroughly shaped by Chenu's approach. A life-long interest in the relation of theology to history and culture and a thorough grasp both of Thomas's text and of the secondary literature devoted to it have equipped him well to do that.

Instead of being the Universal Doctor of Thomas's 16th-century commentators, the Thomas whom Garrigou-Lagrange made popular earlier in this century, O.'s Thomas is a distinctly individual theologian, whose work should be studied in the context of his own age. Although Thomas can still contribute a great deal to the contemporary Church, he can no longer be its uniquely normative teacher as the neo-Thomists used to think. Influential as his Scholastic philosophy may have been in the Catholic schools, its value should no longer be allowed to overshadow the much greater importance of his personal contribution to theology. Granted that Plato and Aristotle did indeed mold Aquinas's thought, faith and Christian revelation had a much deeper influence upon it. Scripture, tradition, grace, Christology, and the sacraments, rather than a rediscovered Greek metaphysics, were the defining elements out which he formed his own theological synthesis.

O.'s opening chapters are devoted to Aquinas's life and the historical background of his work. The influence of the new and distinctive apostolic mission of the preaching friars on Dominican teaching of theology and the effect of 13th-century culture and the intellectual milieu of the new University at Paris on Thomas's theology is clearly brought to light. Thomas was both a prayerful Dominican friar and a university theologian of the 13th century. The work of Dominican historians, such as Boyle and Torrell, has shown us how deeply those two factors influenced both the form and content of Thomas's works, including the Summa theologiae.

Chapter 2 reveals how those cultural and religious influences manifested themselves in the philosophical and theological patterns that can be found in the Summa. Thomas wrote there as a metaphysical theologian who, like the Aristotle on whose philosophy he drew, inquired into the ultimate causes of the reality on which the human mind reflected. The reality with which Thomas the theologian was concerned, however, was not the reality of Aristotle's eternal self-sufficient world. It was the reality of the contingent universe of Christian revelation created by the triune God and redeemed by the Incarnate Word made present to it through grace and sacrament. For that
reason, despite its masterly use of metaphysics, Thomas's theology was through and through a biblical theology.

Chapter 3 provides a remarkably clear analysis of the *Summa*. While doing full justice to the Platonic and Aristotelian elements in the organization of Thomas's major work, O. demonstrates that Thomas's philosophical analysis of natural reality is always propaedeutic to his theological study of supernatural realities, such as grace, the virtues of the elevated soul, the Word Incarnate, sacraments, and the last things. These are the genuine objects of Thomas's theological concern. O. also enables his reader to appreciate more clearly than Thomas's readers often did in the past the theological significance of the *Summa's* Second Part and helps them to see the integral connection between the christological Third Part and what would seem to be the more philosophical First Part. Far from being primarily a work of philosophical theology, the *Summa* is a reflection on Christian revelation, whose major focus is on the Trinity and the missions of the Word and Holy Spirit.

O.'s closing chapters reveal the continuing vitality of Thomas's thought through a compact history of the two major revivals of Thomistic thought and conclude with a reflection on Thomas's theological relevance for the present age. Years ago, Gilson made the point that Thomas's brilliant use of classical philosophy in the service of his Christian theology produced an original philosophy greater in its range and depth than any of those that preceded or followed it. In the years since Vatican II, as a number of creative Christian thinkers have made use of its resources, Dominican historians have continued to bring out both the Christian and the philosophical dimensions of Thomas's theology. O.'s introduction to Thomas enables younger students to profit from their labor. Medievalists and theologians alike will be grateful to him for his readable and very useful book.

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GERALD A. MCCOOL, S.J.


Goris has written an exhaustive and minutely detailed study of Aquinas's account of how God's providence and predestination are compatible with creaturely contingency and human freedom. In a dense text replete with Latin footnotes and intricate discussions from the secondary literature, he digs to the deepest speculative foundations of Aquinas's positions. In almost all cases, his judgment about Aquinas's views on a wide array of subjects, convincingly warranted by a comprehensive textual and historical analysis, is accurate and appropriately nuanced. This is a difficult and complicated book (marred slightly by some English-language infelicities of expression) meant for the trained scholar and serious student of Aquinas.
After some preliminary remarks stressing Aquinas's negative theology (which G. at times overemphasizes in isolation from his positive theology), and a grammatical analysis of Aquinas's negatively theological notion of eternity (which is not everlastingness but a timeless-ness which may be likened to the nunc stans or to atemporal duration), Part 1 zeroes in on the two thorny issues of temporal fatalism and causal determinism. Temporal fatalism occurs when God infallibly foreknows, from God's eternal present, that some event will happen in some creature's future; causal determinism refers to the unilateral predefinition of effects produced by the power relation between omnipotent divine causality and created causes. G. contends that the Bañezian, Molinist, and Ockhamist approaches to this problematic fail to distinguish the two issues carefully and do not sufficiently underscore God's transcendent uniqueness—that God "differs differently." He also notes that contemporary interpretations of the "eternal vision" solution to temporal fatalism in effect subscribe to that fatalism by presuming the untensed and subjective B-view of time.

Part 2 opens by situating Aquinas's views on propositional language within the arcane history of the scholastic logic of tenses. Although early in his career he had considered the tense of a proposition as accidental to its essence, by the De veritate Aquinas had changed his mind and saw the proposition's tense as intrinsic to its meaning. His logic of tensed propositions is grounded in his even more foundational psychology of the peculiarly human manner of knowing: humans can only know the truth in an inalienably tensed and temporal manner. G.'s longest and richest chapter delves, with much detail and a copious secondary literature, into Aquinas's theory of the enunciation, predication and assertion, judgment and concept, truth, the intellect's self-reflection and conversion to the phantasm, the interior and exterior verbum, and the distinction between res significata and modus significandi. G. shows how Aquinas, relying on Aristotle's De Interpretatione, chap. 9, rejects temporal fatalism by denying that future contingencies can be definitely known on the grounds that they lack determinate being. Even God, strictly speaking, cannot possess foreknowledge of the future as such. G. also argues that Aquinas avoids temporal fatalism while simultaneously holding to a tensed and objective A-view of time: but this is only possible if future events are present to God's being and knowledge in such a way that they can also remain future to their own temporal finite causes; and this latter situation demands that the term present in the phrase "future event present to God's eternity" be understood analogically. According to G., Aquinas's answer to temporal fatalism can only be understood within the framework of a negative theology which respects the uniqueness and mysteriousness of God's eternity. The reader must judge whether G's exposition of Aquinas's answer is really an improvement over other interpretations of the "eternal vision" solution to temporal fatalism.
Part 3 commences its discussion of Aquinas's riposte to causal determinism by explaining his modal semantics of the necessary, contingent, possible, and impossible. This leads to the basic question: If God's will is an irresistible cause, how can finite causes produce contingent effects? After some unsuccessful responses in his early commentary on the Lombard's *Sentences*, Aquinas eventually based his mature answer on the mysterious and incomprehensible transcendence of divine causality: God's will is such a unique and infinitely powerful agent that it also produces the modality of its effects, whether necessary or contingent. Once again, the ultimate answers to causal determinism are hidden in the mists and flames of divine obscurity.

This is a bulky and at times even unwieldy book whose pages sometimes dip into remote feeder streams which nevertheless do eventually flow into the main river. Those students of Aquinas trained in the close reading of texts will experience G.'s work as a complex and integral whole, the attentive and careful perusal of which will earn an ample reward from some of the richest lodes of the master's oeuvre.

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*Gregory P. Rocca, O.P.*


Nine years after his work *The Spiritual Logic of Ramon Llull*, Johnston offers a second study concentrating on Lullian rhetoric. Making use primarily of the *Rhetorica nova* (1301), J. analyzes various Lullian texts concerning not only rhetoric and grammar (i.e. the part of the disciplines of the trivium to which Lull did not dedicate a separate tract), but also the *ars praedicandi* in which the Middle Ages concretized speculation concerning rhetoric.

After some reflections on the importance of the "art of eloquence" in the formation of the *ars lulliana*, J. dedicates two chapters to Lull's theory of language. A third chapter considers the art in relation to the central theme of classical rhetoric, "invention." J. believes Lull's system is basically "a method for generating copious material to expound in secular and sacred eloquence" (70). The usual definition of rhetoric as the "art of speaking well" is treated in two further chapters which elaborate on the beauty of which language is capable and the method of exposition by way of well-chosen examples. Three further chapters follow on the classical terms used in tracts concerning eloquence: the order, the conditions, and the power of speaking well. A last chapter on Lull's sermons studies the diachronic relationships of the manuscripts and printed editions of his rhetorical and homiletic works. J. concludes with a final justification of his new view of Lull's theory of eloquence by confronting it with the usual view of his personality. Throughout, J. compares classical rhetorical doctrine with the various works of Lull in
an attempt to discover a relation between Lull's system and medieval thought in general. In the richness of its detail and the subtlety of its varied approaches J.'s book is an important addition to Lull studies.

One of J.'s conclusions was already enuntiated in his first book, namely the claim that Lull's work had a popular and not an academic character. He believes that Lull was summing up in the way of the compendia and encyclopedias of the Middle Ages a teaching that was traditional and influenced by contemporary lay movements, distant from the clerical culture of the universities. On the basis of various recent publications, J. believes he has succeeded in distinguishing around the year 1300 that which is popular and that which is academic in the history of thought. Thus the book concludes with some formulations that sum up its intent: “Ramon Lull's private devotion to evangelism and reform unquestionably merits our notice and even admiration, not because it won the attention of great princes, prelates, or philosophers, but simply because it exemplifies so fully the intensity of intellectual and spiritual experience possible among Christian lay-people in Western Europe around 1300” (189).

It is difficult to follow J.'s investigation because he applies again and again this preconceived idea of the laity and of reform in the 14th century to the concrete case of the Lullian system. In points explicitly treated by Lull, J.'s conclusions can perhaps be defended, but when he attempts to evaluate aspects of a system that can be explained only as a reaction to and rejection of the previous norm, popular as well as academic, the argumentation is inadequate.

J. tries to anticipate possible objections by introducing terms such as "evangelical," "reform," or "idiosyncratic," which are never adequately explained. I have to admit that, after reading the book, I am still unable to say what the term "evangelical" in the title means. I suspect that J. employs a hermeneutic applicable only with great difficulty to Lull's world even though it is repeated in recognized studies. The conclusion in which J. distances himself from two modern views of Lull “as a singular genius and a Scholastic giant” is meant “to render Lull more interesting and more comprehensible to someone beside Lullists” who have overestimated “the contribution of his idiosyncratic terminology and methods” (185–86).

It may be appropriate to observe that in reading J.'s suggestive book one must take account of the fact that Lull's work was more than a theory of eloquence; his system must be understood as a body of principles and procedures aimed at the demonstration of the truth of the Catholic faith to nonbelievers. That was the raison d'être of Lull's life and work. That is the key to the understanding of Lull's extremely original system.

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In this sterling contribution to literature on the biblical dimension of Kierkegaard's thought, Polk argues that K.'s readings of texts correlate with the Augustinian rule of faith and are canonical in their logic. The rule affirms that Scripture and world constitute a sign that is properly understandable only in light of the love of God, and as pointing to that very love (61). Polk claims that the rule is implicit in K.'s application of the royal law (love God first and then one's neighbor as oneself), that it enables one to read the Bible as Scripture, and that such a reading is defendable against the charge that it is precritical and oppressively close-ended. He finds too that K.'s reading strategy entails the idea of community and identity, is more constitutive of those two than some other types of Christian hermeneutic, and retains a cognitive edge that cuts against the cultural grain. In demonstrating this, Polk draws on speech-act theory and on the antifoundationalist stance characterizing the Frei-Lindbeck narrative theology.

Epistemologically tricky, the idea of imaginative construal that Polk equates with "vision of love" is crucial for making Christian sense of biblical texts. Strikingly similar to the chicken-egg question, its seeming difficulties are short-shrifted by considering that certain biblical texts read as Scripture are intended for insiders (Christians). As Polk illustrates from Works of Love, the love command as construal is not for subscription to a doctrine or proposition, but for a life lived in contemporaneity with Christ, for acquiring requisite skills which do not preclude the exercise of critical self-scrutiny, rationality, or truthfulness. Polk contextualizes appropriately to bring out the imperatives that reading by a classic construal (Kermode) misses, and to answer current charges that reading with self-sacrificial love for God legitimizes patriarchalism and various forms of barbarism that encourage the hiding of sins.

A slippage occurs, nevertheless, causing a slight blur in the clarity of his concept of Scripture. Polk wants to distinguish the latter from the idea of text or mere reading of biblical texts, by holding that "Scripture" is a construal in itself (19). That is, biblical texts become Scripture by the reader being open to a certain mind-set (vision of Christian love) which in turn makes the text personally informative, edifying, and transformative. But this robust concept is blurred by Polk's tendency to talk about reading Scripture as simply reading text. Clearly that works against the perlocutionary sense that Polk takes as crucial to and reflected in K.'s approach to biblical texts.

Polk is selective in employing the writings and discourses of K. that support his thesis. Yet one wonders whether the reading strategy works successfully with texts that deal with curse, test, or ordeal. His treatment of the Job story is convincing with respect to the application of the rule of faith, persuading one to read the story as doxology, not
theodicy. But reading Job canonically in relation to Genesis creates a problem; it distracts attention from the fact that the rules Satan stipulates for the game, though he does not stipulate all of them, are enough in some cases to threaten or prematurely annul human life, to make injustice and oppression an unbearable form of human existence. Evil as an experienced actuality or as influencing material reality is hardly made tolerable by a doxology that implies Satan does not stipulate all the rules. The persistent experience of evil remains a troubling issue.

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A. H. Khan


The task of the historian, according to Bernard Lonergan, is to grasp "what was going forward" in the drama of life, in the actors' deeds, decisions, oversights, and failures, in order to gain higher "understanding." In this first of three projected volumes, Vecsey exemplifies this task, as well he must, since no history is more in need of deeper understanding, no discussion more neuralgic, than the history of missions among the aboriginal peoples of North America. V.'s stated purpose is “to analyze the effects of [the] Catholic tradition on Native Americans from first meeting [in the 16th century] to the present day” (xi). By continuing his narrative into the present, V. sheds light, not only on what was going forward, but on what is going forward.

This volume deals with the area of what is now northern Mexico and the American Southwest, V. devotes his attention to native people who encountered missionaries and who remain Catholic today: the Pueblos, the Yaquis, the O’odham (Pima and Papago), and the many tribes of California. He thus bypasses the earlier Spanish missions in what was the vast area of Florida, where very few Catholic natives live today.

V. follows a consistent pattern: he narrates the events of early mission activity during the conquista, describes the immediate effects of this activity under the Jesuits and the Franciscans, and ends each section by discussing the contemporary situation. The impressive bibliography is therefore filled not only with primary and secondary historical works, but contains recorded interviews of native people and current pastoral workers. Accordingly, this final phase of each narrative borders on investigative journalism, but it is a journalism that resists descending into the sensational. In fact, modern scholars and church leaders might well wish that such interviews had been attempted from the beginning.

The book is neither hagiography nor invective; it never indulges in smug hindsight judgments, but succeeds in maintaining a careful historical perspective by letting the data speak for themselves. The data, indeed, are often grim, as the conquista was grim, and the narrative illustrates how missions were rarely if ever able to function apart from
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military campaigns or later political activity, with the resulting problem of "cultural invasion."

V. goes into fairly careful detail to describe the conflict of religiocultural systems (what missiologists call "power encounters"), with the resulting forms of "compartmentalization," "dual religious systems," or "syncretism" that still exist today. He deals in special depth with the Franciscan missions in California, and the contemporary results, especially the controversy in 1988 surrounding the beatification of Padre Junipero Serra.

While the overall impression of this volume tends to be melancholy, V. has not failed to describe more positive results and attitudes, as illustrated in the lives of native peoples who remain Catholic. Many of them still resent the treatment of their ancestors, and they are often embroiled in controversies with current pastoral clergy. Many still practice elements of the ancient religion, apparently with greater satisfaction than they derive from church services. Yet they desire to remain Catholic. In general, V. recognizes that every age has its cultural blinders, so that he makes a careful effort to understand what motivated the missionaries, and indeed what often made them heroic.

I find little to criticize here, apart from the usual number of misprints. But V. does share the common misapprehension that the Tekakwitha Conference had as its "goal" the canonization of Kateri Tekakwitha (384), whereas the actual intention in 1939 was that it be a support group for missionaries, and the purpose of the revitalization 40 years later under Gilbert Hemauer was to build dialogue between the Church and native peoples. Finally, the fact that the book does not go deeply into theological reflection is one of its strengths, but constitutes a challenge to theologians and religious educators who read it.

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CARL F. STARKLOFF, S.J.


How did we get today's "evangelical empire"? Carpenter here deftly details its origins in the North American fundamentalism of the 1930s and 1940s and its antecedents. C. knows the story from the inside as former director of both the Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals and the Religion Program of the Pew foundation, and now as provost of Calvin College—a journey itself reflecting the continuities and changes he describes. C. is one of an important new group of evangelical historians—Mark Noll, George Marsden, Nathan Hatch, Margaret Bendroth, and their mentor Timothy Smith—whose studies have challenged secular inattention to the dissenting traditions of evangelicalism.

Fundamentalism is here described as an "evangelical variant," a species of the genus "born again Christian." The latter runs from fun-
damentalists, political and apolitical, through "old evangelical" Pietists (Billy Graham) and neo-evangelical rationalists (Carl Henry) to justice and peace evangelicals (Jim Wallis) and ecumenical evangelicals such as C. himself. The North American fundamentalism of the 30s and 40s is marked theologically by a polemical antimodernism ("the rock of ages rather than the age of rocks" [62]), biblical inerrancy as the litmus test of doctrinal faithfulness, a dispensationalist expectation of the Great Apostasy and imminent End yet a paradoxical hope for society's transformation through religious revival. Institutionally, the era's fundamentalism took form through massive parachurch networks in publishing, radio programming, missionary enterprises, summer conferences and Bible schools. Alienated from the mainline Protestant establishment and sidelined by the cultural elites of the two decades under study, fundamentalist populism attracted countless "ordinary people" and was the matrix of the late 20th century's diverse evangelicalism that now numbers one out of every four adult Christians.

Now and then one of the multitude of formative figures and institutions reported on here will have name recognition for the uninitiated, for example, the giant Billy Graham who bridged the era from fundamentalism to today's diversity and helped to bring the wider evangelicalism to public notice. But will they recognize Harold Ockenga, Boston's Park Street preacher and catalyst of two of today's largest North American seminaries and a founder of the influential National Association of Evangelicals, radio evangelists Charles E. Fuller, Paul Rader and Donald Grey Barnhouse whose audiences reached 20 million people, fire-eating mega-church preachers William Bell Reilly and J. Frank Norris? C. here uncovers a hidden history as worthy of attention as other marginalized groups now the subject of an inclusivist agenda.

C. shows that fundamentalism is no monolith. Highly charged internal disputes went on between the "come-outers" who formed their own small denominations and the "stay-inners" with their caucuses that sought to change the direction of standard-brand church bodies. Another division was that of "militant" vs. "moderate" fundamentalists. Thus the polemical Carl McIntire created his own American and International Council of Churches to oppose not only the then-mainline Federal and World Council of Churches but also Ockenga's National Association of Evangelicals. But here come some more paradoxes. While the moderates did not share the pugnacious temper of the militants, the "social freight" of both their mega-congregations and their parachurch networks made for a massive movement outside of, and set against, the regnant culture and churches. And again, while the dispensational theology of both militants and moderates projected cultural doom and gloom, with it went an eagerness for cultural approval and an avid use of modern communication technologies.

What do we make of the fundamentalist phenomenon of these decades? C.'s considered and astute judgment is that "Fundamentalism was often intellectually lame, provincial, petty, mean spirited, stulti-
fying, and manipulative, but it could be enabling and energizing as well, and by the 1940s it had produced a restive and visionary younger generation” (87).

This book should be required reading for anyone interested in a neglected but formative North American subculture, and also for students of a society today impacted by its heirs, whether they be the political fundamentalism of a Robertson and Falwell or the irenic evangelicalism of Joel Carpenter and his numerous compatriots.

Andover Newton Theological School


The document that is the subject of this study is proposed as “the Vatican’s lost opportunity to oppose Nazi racial policies that led to the holocaust.” Passelecq and Suchecky see the failure of Pius XI’s successor, Pius XII, to publish the document as another example of his inadequate concern about the evils of Nazism.

But there are problems with that view. The document is not an encyclical. It is a rough draft for an encyclical, something very preliminary to a finished product. The adjective “hidden” suggests an element of concealment, or intrigue. “It is the stuff of spy novels,” says Garry Wills’s introduction. The actual story is far more prosaic.

In the late spring of 1938, American Jesuit John LaFarge was in Rome. He had gone to Europe to report for America magazine on the Budapest Eucharistic Congress and to revisit the scenes of his theological studies in Germany and Austria. The Roman detour brought him to a general papal audience at Castelgondolfo. He was preparing to leave for home when he received a summons to a private meeting with Pius XI, then in the 17th year of his papacy. Pius had read and been favorably impressed by LaFarge’s book Interracial Justice, pronouncing it, as LaFarge later told the story in The Manner Is Ordinary, “the best thing written on the topic.” He liked “the spiritual and moral treatment of the topic,” and the fact that it combined “Catholic doctrine and the natural law and the pertinent facts as well as some practical methods for dealing with the question.” The pope commissioned the American priest to write a draft for an encyclical letter on the subject: “Say quite simply what you would say to the whole world if you were yourself the pope.”

It is unfortunate that the pope’s original intention was not carried out; LaFarge’s ideas might have been just what was needed. Instead the American turned for help to the Jesuit general, Wlodimir Ledochowski, who assigned him as collaborators the German Jesuit Gustav Gundlach, a man of impeccable anti-Nazi credentials, and the French-
man Gustave Desbuquois of the *Action Populaire* center. They produced a document in three months that bore the impress of Gundlach's heavily philosophical approach and was marked also by deep suspicion of the dangerous influence of Jews in European life, all the while denying any anti-Semitism. Desbuquois, a major figure in the development of French social Catholicism, would hasten to Vichy after the fall of France, hoping that Marshal Pétain’s government would look more favorably on his initiatives than had the Third Republic.

When in September 1938 Lafarge submitted German, French, and English drafts to Ledóchowski, the latter asked Enrico Rosa, longtime editor of *La Civiltà Cattolica* and a fierce anti-Modernist, for his opinion. But Rosa died in late November and the “encyclical” might have died with him had not LaFarge, prodded by Gundlach, pressured Ledóchowski to forward it to the pope, who died in February 1939 without taking any action. Pius XII, elected in March, did not take up the draft document, although some of its argument is to be found in his encyclical letter *Summi pontificatus* (1939), and both LaFarge and Gundlach used material from the draft in subsequent writings.

The *National Catholic Reporter* brought the affair to life again in issues in December 1972, and January 1973. Plans had been made to create an archival center for New York Jesuits at Loyola Seminary, Shrub Oak, N.Y. A Jesuit scholastic assigned to work in the archives found LaFarge’s English draft and, after leaving the order, made it available to the newspaper. No really dramatic impact followed. Several German and American scholars knew of the document, but none thought publication worthwhile. The sections on racism were offset by those critical of the Jewish people’s influence in Europe.

Passelecq and Suchecky use a great deal of space tracking down the various German, French, and English texts, but eventually they rely on the one found in the LaFarge papers. It is published here in full. As a period piece, the document fulfills a historical function. It shows how retrograde even some of Catholicism’s more advanced scholars were with regard to the Jews, even as Pius XI was proclaiming (6 September 1938) that “we are spiritually Semites.” Garry Wills’s introduction attempts to situate the story historically (xv-xvi) but he has an uncertain grasp on events. The battle over the temporal power did not heat up, but actually slacked off under Pius X and especially Benedict XV. The “non expedit” was not a creation of Pius X, but goes back to the days of Pius IX. Don Luigi Sturzo, not “Bosco” (xvi), headed the *Partito popolare italiano*.

To sum up, this book is not about an encyclical, hidden or not. It does tell the story of a flawed effort to address a crucial problem of our times.

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JAMES HENNESEY, S.J.

Johnson argues that Barth's theology is nonfoundationalist because Barth was always willing to subject his beliefs to criticism and to reconstruction. Thus we (like Barth) need to "begin again at the beginning" to see that Barth’s theology encourages a constant "decentering" of theology so that, against the ordinary view that Barth would have nothing to say to the "postmodern" situation, we may indeed rely on his writings to construct a truly "postmodern" theology. This will avoid any abstract or universally applicable legitimating "story" for grasping life itself and will provide a genuinely moral concern that is open-ended in the postmodern sense.

Since God is ultimately a mystery, theology must not only be continually reconstructed, but we must go further than Barth in appropriating non-Christian sources for explaining Christian theology, emphasizing "a multidimensional approach" (37). This theme is explicated in three parts which deal with God, Christ (creation, reconciliation, and redemption, including an interesting overview of Barth’s pneumatology), and ethics (treating the role of experience and the importance of vocation in his theology by linking these to justification and sanctification).

J.’s discussion of the Trinity disallows Moltmann’s charge that Barth’s theology was modalist; there is an important discussion of Barth’s doctrine of election and of the divine perfections, together with an impressive critical assessment of the present-day trend to move beyond Barth by suggesting that Jesus’ suffering somehow constituted God’s eternal being. God remains a mystery who does not depend upon history; working within history does not exhaust God’s being. In short, this book represents a compact, stimulating, and thorough overview of Barth’s entire theology, suggesting—contrary to the majority who thought Barth’s sacramental theology was off the track—that Barth’s ethical treatment of the sacrament was a proper working out of his strongly theocentric theology. But that is not the end of the story.

Anyone familiar with Barth’s theology might wonder whether someone like J., who was "profoundly influenced" by Gordon Kaufman, could present Barth’s theology accurately. I judge that J. has succeeded to a good extent but not entirely. In many ways he nicely captures the nuances of Barth’s theology and how those nuances could lead to new insights for postmodern theology. But enough is said throughout this work to suggest that there is also an a priori at work, which occasionally leads to significant distortions of Barth’s own position.

In a manner reminiscent of Kaufman, trinitarian theology is described as “the fallible, imaginative construction of the church’s theologians” (44). J. believes that distinguishing the immanent and eco-
nomic Trinity runs the risk of dividing God into two “Trinities.” So he suggests that we should give up speaking about “Trinity” and instead speak (more dynamically) of the “‘triune’ act of God” (46). The problem with this from the vantage of Barth’s theology is enormous: it could separate God’s being and act precisely by collapsing the immanent Trinity into the economic Trinity. J. wishes (as did Kaufman) to move away from a “reified ‘Trinity’,” and a “reified” Jesus Christ, which might imply that they could be “statically and objectively described” (28). But it is just this kind of thinking that tends to destabilize theology permanently and allows us to become the ones who ultimately define theological truth rather than God.

For instance, J. thinks the terms Father and Son are insufficient to grasp the divine mystery. Yet Barth emphasized that, while our concepts do not grasp the divine mystery, still God can enable us to know that God is not something other than Father and Son. The original meaning of these terms is truly found in God and not in creation. J.’s emphasis suggests the agnostic idea that God, as mystery, is never known, and that therefore we need as many images of divine mystery as possible, especially those from outside Christianity, to preserve this insight. Indeed this thinking leads J. to say that Barth did not intend “to reify this talk of ‘Father’ and ‘Son’” since “the term ‘Son’ remained for him an imprecise pointer that ‘does not correspond to its object’ (IV/1, 210)” (105). Here, however, Barth actually was distinguishing the immanent and the economic Trinity (without separation), pointing out that our terms only indicate “the living God in Himself,” and that “the term [Son] as applied in this way does correspond to its object . . . it tells us what Jesus Christ in fact is.”

J. concludes that Jesus’ true divinity therefore “is not something straightforward and ‘given,’” but “consists in the manner of his action . . . in Jesus’ willing obedience . . . nothing more” (105–6). This incorporates the idea that Jesus’ human stance toward God “constitutes” his divinity (81–82, 91)—a view that could hardly be Barth’s. Here it certainly appears that there is no clear distinction between Jesus’ divinity and his humanity, and that his action has become defined by the postmodern propensity for destabilization rather than by the simple fact that Jesus simply is God’s Son in time and in eternity because he is and for no other reason. J. tends to see God’s act as his working only in history instead of seeing that his being is his act as Father, Son, and Spirit ad intra and ad extra.

Despite the importance of J.’s insight that Barth does indeed have something positive to say to postmodern theology, his own presuppositions lead him to distort the specific content of key aspects of Barth’s theology and this, unfortunately, weakens an otherwise interesting and important project.

In his *From Existence to God* (1992), Miller offered a rigorous philosophical argument for the existence of God (considered to be pure Subsistent Existence) as Creator. In this volume he attempts to draw out the logical and metaphysical implications of that conclusion for any coherent theory of the divine attributes. In passing he ventures a number of compelling solutions for some of the best known problems of philosophical theology, including the legitimacy of asserting divine simplicity concomitantly with various other attributes and traditional disputes over God's knowledge of human free choices, creation out of nothingness, and the relation between divine and created causality.

Well versed in the terminology and techniques of contemporary analytic philosophy, M. challenges the frequent critiques that approach has raised about the coherence of attributes of God normally maintained in classical Thomistic natural theology. He responds in particular to the objections of philosophers like Anthony Kenny, who complains that the idea of God as Subsistent Existence has no meaningful content, and Christopher Hughes, who finds fault with all possible construals of the simplicity of God as the central divine attribute and the fundamental identity of all the divine attributes.

M.'s explanation and defense of God's nature as Subsistent Existence rests on a sophisticated account of "existence" and "Subsistent Existence" in terms of the distinction between a limit *simpliciter* (such as the speed of light, which is itself a speed) and a limit case (zero m.p.h., for example, is not itself a speed—a limit case is different in kind from the series it limits but has enough similarity to be useful). Whereas proponents of a strictly negative theology see no possibility of any likeness between the divine and the series which it is beyond, the "perfect being" theologians tend to ignore the possibility of something being similar to but beyond a series's maximum. But a genuinely transcendent view of God requires a deep grasp of the principle of analogy as a legitimate option besides univocal and equivocal predication.

Unlike many contemporary analytic philosophers, who often accept the dictum that "existence is not a predicate," M. defends the meaningfulness of asserting "exists" as a real property of concrete individuals and argues that Subsistent Existence is not an empty concept but the fullest of all attributes, such that one may readily hold for both divine simplicity and the identity of all divine attributes. These attributes remain distinct for our cognition when we are careful to respect the analogical nature of the predicates attributed to God.

More perhaps could be said about the relation of causal participation as an explanation of this analogical similarity between God and creatures than M. attempts in this volume, and to do so would divide the burden which M.'s own explanation (in terms of the distinction between a limit *simpliciter* and a limit case) has to bear alone. God is
seen as the limit case beyond the entire series of instances of existents toward which that series is ascending. M.'s explanation and his numerous mathematical examples (in the fashion of Nicholas of Cusa) go far toward making a case for the legitimacy of this distinction, but they do not show the ontological dependence that this theory still needs and that a properly developed notion of causal participation could supply. My suspicion is that M.'s commitment to the argument for God as Creator in the earlier book will allow this suggestion to be offered as a friendly amendment appropriate for further work in the next volume.

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JOSEPH W. KOTERSKI, S.J.


Baugh leaves two important questions unanswered in this study of filmic portrayals of Jesus, the Christ. Providing a subtext to the structure of the entire book, the questions eventually challenge the reader to examine personal assumptions as well as the author's.

Most basically, B. examines representations of Jesus—literally in the case of biblical films and metaphorically in the case of Christ figures throughout the history of cinema. To accomplish this task he combines the tools of film study (narrative techniques, montage, framing, sound, intra- and extra-"textual" material) with those of theology (primarily hermeneutics).

B. follows more or less the same method throughout. Within the confines of an auteur approach, he introduces a film, summarizes the plot and treatment, notes its critical reception, and discusses the larger factors that may have influenced the director: the cultural, economic, and political situation of the film. Only then does he offer an analysis and critique of the picture. In this way, B. provides a treasure trove of information about the films. However, the method runs certain risks, not least the intentional fallacy and the contradiction between auteur approaches and political-economy approaches. To compensate for these, his more detailed examination of the films rests on an analysis of each film's component parts.

After a historical overview of biblical films, Part 1 treats nine films in depth: King of Kings (Director: Nicholas Ray, 1961), The Greatest Story Ever Told (George Stevens, 1965), Jesus Christ Superstar (Norman Jewison, 1973), Godspell (David Greene, 1973), The Life of Brian (Monty Python, 1979), The Last Temptation of Christ (Martin Scorsese, 1988), Jesus of Nazereth (Franco Zeffirelli, 1977), The Messiah (Roberto Rossellini, 1975), and The Gospel According to Saint Matthew (Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1964). B. finds only the last of these satisfying as a representation of Jesus, rejecting the others as unfaithful to the
biblical text. Herein lies the first important unanswered question of this book: What constitutes fidelity in “translating” the Bible to another medium? Clearly B. has some criteria in mind when he evaluates his chosen films, but these criteria vary. Some films leave out portions of the gospel narrative, he tells us; some add elements; some distract from the content by focusing on the actors; some change the tone of the Gospels; others misinterpret by taking too popular a reading. Of course, it is easier to indicate why a film does not work, but the question of what defines fidelity deserves an answer. Perhaps we should also ask a related question: Do any of these films even attempt a faithful portrayal of the Gospels, and should they not be judged as films rather than as biblical expressions?

Part 2, principally examining ten films, poses the problem of the Christ figure. Such figures, analogical or allegorical representation of Jesus, have appeared in literature for hundreds of years and in films almost from their beginning. To show the range of possible depictions of the Christ figure, B. examines in some detail Jesus of Montreal (Denys Arcand, 1989), La Strada (Federico Fellini, 1954), Nights of Cabiria (Fellini, 1957), Babette’s Feast (Gabriel Axel, 1987), Out of Rosenheim (Percy Adlon, 1987), Dead Man Walking (Tim Robbins, 1995), Shane (George Stevens, 1953), A Short Film about Love (Krzysztof Kieślowski, 1988), Decalogue Six (Kieślowski, 1988–89), and Au Hasard Balthazar (Robert Bresson, 1966). In addition he looks at Christ figures in other films of Robert Bresson and in films of Andrei Tarkovsky.

Though he provides an initial discussion of Christ figures and Jesus figures as well as a chapter on typical guises of the Christ figure (the saint, the priest, the woman, the clown, the hero, the outlaw, the child), a second unanswered question appears: How should the viewer judge the adequacy of a filmic Christ figure? To his credit, B. does provide considerable information and a number of typologies of these figures. But what really counts as one? With so many possibilities, what makes up the defining quality? Should it be intratextual or based on something extrinsic?

The unanswered questions serve to engage the reader in the overall premise of B.’s argument. Taking as his subject “the most popular art” of our culture, B. demonstrates where it succeeds in communicating theological truths and where it fails. By not telling us why it fails, he asks us as readers to give our answers to his assumptions about fidelity and figuration.

Santa Clara University, Calif.  

Paul A. Soukup, S.J.
French, and English, on the relation between Jesus Christ and other religious traditions. The issue for Christian theology, as D. reads it, is the status of religious pluralism in God's design for human history according to Christian faith. The thesis of this extensive historical and synthetic study is that religious pluralism is willed by God de jure, in principle: the religions are vehicles of God's saving grace and authentic revelation.

D. lays out his position in two parts. The first surveys the history of themes in Christian self-understanding related to other religions. These include biblical universalism, early patristic speculation on a pre-existent Logos illumining all human beings, the logic of the maxim "there is no salvation outside the Church" up to the Council of Florence, the theological tradition of implicit faith and baptism of desire in the wake of the discovery of a "new world," the contrasting theories about the religions that surrounded Vatican II, the official teachings of the Catholic Church at the council and thereafter, and a survey of the current theological debate.

The second, constructive part consists of concise essays on topics that together represent a synthetic valuation of religious pluralism. The topics include an account of salvation history that accommodates religious pluralism, a theology of revelation that includes other religious traditions, a statement countering John Hick's pluralism by identifying the ultimately Real as the triune God, a high, ontological Christology that also allows related "autonomy" to the world's religions, a view of salvation that rejects Mark Heim's pluralism of salvations and that recognizes different paths to the same goal, and finally an ecclesiology that is "kingdom"- and salvation-centered, one that gives a high but not exclusive priority to interfaith dialogue in church mission.

How does D. arrive at his conclusion that a dramatically new and positive appreciation of the world's religions is warranted by Christian theology? The key lies in Christology. Inspired by Karl Rahner's position that Jesus Christ is the inclusive and constitutive cause of all human salvation, and that the grace of Christ is universally available and effective, D. expands it in terms of the Trinity. He calls his Christology trinitarian and pneumato-christological, one that contains a twofold dialectic. First, his trinitarianism allows him to see God as Logos and Spirit working "autonomously" in the world's religions, from the beginning to the end of history, while at the same time this effective presence is essentially related to the Incarnation of the Logos in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the sacrament of what God as Trinity is carrying forward in the whole of history. In D.'s view, this dialectic binds together inseparably christocentrism and trinitarian theocentrism. Second, although in one respect the Incarnation is the qualitatively full and definitive presence of the Son of God to humanity in Jesus Christ, still, human limitation, historicity, and the particularity of Jesus and his message open up a space for a fuller appreciation of
God in other historical revelations. The qualitative fullness of God's commitment to humanity in Jesus does not preclude the possibility of new and further revelation by God through other media.

Despite the magisterial scope of this work, the extensive and careful research it displays, its comprehensive bibliography, and the lucidity of the theological prose, certain limitations should be noted. These are not defects but the inherent consequences of the deliberately chosen audience and method of the work. It is, first of all, narrowly Roman Catholic. D. is well read in Protestant literature on the subject, but he has cast this work in dialogue mainly with the magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church. Thus it does not reflect the wide range of options that are actually entertained in this area. Second, although he characterizes his method loosely as hermeneutical dialogue with his sources from within the context of interfaith dialogue, still his Christology and trinitarian theology exemplify a theology from above. Classical trinitarianism and the Incarnation of the Son are the premises of this work. Thus for D. the \emph{kairos} involved in the dramatically new Christian appreciation of the world's religions does not call for a reinterpretation of the classical Christian doctrines.

Within the confines of these limits, however, D.'s work is a landmark interpretation of the state of the question for official Catholic theology at present. From the hermeneutical situation of de facto religious pluralism, he integrates all the major topics of theology into a comprehensive theory which, on the premises and in the terms of classical doctrine, replaces the idea that Christianity supersedes the other religions, and establishes on Christian grounds the autonomy and divine voice of other religions in the dialogue.

\textit{Weston Jesuit School of Theology} \quad \textit{ROGER HAIGHT, S.J.}


Edith Wyschogrod remarks in her Preface that "Magliola has written a highly unusual book"; she is surely correct. For one thing, M. devotes two-thirds of the book to his own autobiography; and, for another, this unexpected subject matter is presented in unconventional prose—alternatively playful, lyrical, oblique, and morose, as if M. desired to convey how different periods and events in his life felt to him rather than to present a dry rehearsal of the facts.

Nevertheless, a couple of points about academic method emerge from this story which are worth mentioning. First, M. clearly dislikes the tendency of the academy to compartmentalize itself into various "disciplines." Even while the academy pays lip-service to the idea of interdisciplinary studies, M. observes that his own shift from one discipline to another required him to make new friends and colleagues, join new
learned societies, go to new conferences, and subscribe to new journals. Our courses may be interdisciplinary (sometimes), but our research and the institutional apparatuses that support it remain very inbred.

Second, M. wants to pursue his work in a more holistic manner. Religion and literature both create “life-worlds” which people inhabit as whole psycho-physical-spiritual beings. In studying Buddhism, for example, M. reminds us that the old masters, who produced the philosophical texts that scholars study today, were meditators, and their ruminations frequently came from subsequent reflection on meditative experiences. How can scholars understand the depth of these works when they do not meditate? To correct this, especially in the area of interreligious dialogue, M. ends his autobiography with a form of meditation to be practiced by mixed religious groups, and it is significant that this book itself represents a kind of valedictory as he moves out of urban academic life into a Vipassana meditation community in Thailand to deepen his own practice.

The remainder of the book contains four short essays that make connections between Buddhism (particularly of the Prāśangika-Mādhyyamika school), Derridean deconstruction, and Christian theology. The first sets the general tone and agenda for the others. It seeks to show that the particular way in which the Prāśangika-Mādhyyamika school presented (or chose not to present) its elaboration on the Mahayana Buddhist notion of emptiness (śūnyatā) shares much in common with Derrida’s deconstruction thought, and in fact can help to complete it. M. assumes that readers are familiar with both postmodern deconstructive thought and ancient Buddhist philosophy.

M.’s claim here is that Derrida’s thought intersects that of the second-century Buddhist philosopher Nāgārjuna. Both use the logic of their debate partners to undermine the foundations of that logic. (The Prāśangika-Mādhyyamikas got their name from their procedure of showing that the opponents’ position necessarily led them, by their own rules, to absurd consequences, or prāsanga.) Both refuse to put forth any “system” of their own that would imply “closure” to any given problem. The Prāśangikas, following Nāgārjuna, had no philosophical system of their own, but confined their activity to demolishing their opponent’s positions in a relentless campaign of reductio ad absurdum.

The way in which Nāgārjuna can help to complete Derrida’s project lies in the Buddhist doctrine of the Two Truths, Conventional Truth and Ultimate Truth. Conventional Truth is the provisional construction we put on the pure factuality of the world and its “goings-on,” and they enable us to function within it by making distinctions between, say, food and nonfood, enemies and nonenemies. This Conventional Truth, M. asserts, corresponds roughly to Derrida’s “logocentrism” (143). Ultimate Truth consists in discovering the pure provisionality of all our groupings and differentiations. However, Nāgārjuna and his followers were able to affirm the value of Conventional Truth: without it, we could not long survive, and so it remains Truth, not deceit. This
is the move that could complete Derrida's system, which so far has not come back to assigning a positive value to our "logocentric" constructions of the world (150).

The other essays deal with various consequences of applying Nāgārjunian/Derridean thought to different religious/philosophical enterprises. The second analyzes a specific Derridean text (the Dénégations), the third criticizes the Abe-Cobb strand of Buddhist-Christian dialogue for its overly logocentric emphasis (via Masao Abe's presentation of a Yogacara Buddhist-based reading of Zen), and the fourth is a marvellous analysis of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity as seen through the application of Nāgārjunian/Derridean thought to conciliar theology. All of the essays are dense and difficult, but worth reading.

M.'s initial autobiographical statement should appeal to anyone interested in the interplay of emotion and intellect in the development of a modern academic. The later essays are addressed to scholars conversant with both Buddhist thought and postmodern critical theory. Readers with backgrounds in both these areas will find M.'s reflections on the intersections and double-binds with Nāgārjuna's and Derrida's systems provocative and stimulating.

Catholic University of America, D.C.  

CHARLES B. JONES

The End of Time: Religion, Ritual, and the Forging of the Soul.  

For most of us who inhabit the academic world, time is a series of classes, meetings, and interviews broken up by occasional research and writing. We rarely reflect on the role time plays in our lives, other than to note its paucity. Fenn sees our predicament as evidence of a greater crisis that afflicts both academics and nonacademics—the end of time and the crisis of meaning it ineluctably brings about. Without significant chronological markers to make deeper sense of our existence as time-bound humans, we run the risk of meaninglessness and a sociopolitical reaction in the form of fascism.

F. begins his discussion of the meaning of time by describing time's crucial role in the succession of generations. All cultures, and each generation, face the challenge of inculcating a sense of common purpose in their young in a relatively short period of time. If this pedagogical process fails, sociocultural decline and eventual collapse are inevitable. Now bereft of natural chronological markers and increasingly controlled by technology that either pays no heed to time or measures it in the artificial currency of nanoseconds, we postmoderns face a crisis of meaning as we frantically try to avoid what F. refers to as the "end of time." The acuity of the present crisis is borne out in his mind by our increasingly desperate attempts to gain control and meaning over time itself. Fascist political schemes and religiopolitical messianism, evident in the Christian Right, point to a deep-seated crisis in the very fiber of our cultural self-understanding.
F. develops his initial thesis by analyzing, in a social scientific and phenomenological vein, the role of ritual in regulating and rendering time meaningful. His fundamental assertion is that ritual, which comes in various modalities, is crucial for creating and categorizing time. Concomitantly, societies like our own, whose ritual system is in decline or on the point of disappearing, run the risk of personal and collective disintegration. Without the proper ritual devices, time literally runs out, not unlike our personal existence. Although each of us is fated to die, one expects a sociocultural system to be multigenerational and to carry itself into the future.

In healthier sociocultural systems than our own, rituals function on multiple levels. First, they transform and sacralize the meaning of time, thus avoiding the dangers of meaninglessness and collective self-destruction. Rituals avert the nagging suspicion we entertain about our common survival. Enigmatically, what F. calls rituals of aversion raise the specter of the apocalyptic in order to negate real destruction. By raising the prospect of collective annihilation, rituals help us postpone our collective demise, provided that we accept and conform to the sociocultural premises that underpin the rituals themselves. Rituals of purification, another subset of ritual F. discusses, expel those residual doubts and deviant individuals that might lead believers to entertain questions about the order of things.

F. is saying that most rituals are meant to induce conformity. At their deepest level, they display fascistic tendencies that brook no challenge from the skeptic or nonbeliever. F. believes that this explains the behavior and vocabulary of the Christian Right in contemporary America. Frantic to avoid Armageddon, the Christian Right obsesses about it, calling on Americans to return to their biblical roots in order to avoid an untimely end. Their conservatism is frankly regressive. It is also fascistic in its willingness to impose a sense of time and meaning on everyone in order to avoid chronological and cultural disaster. F. has little patience with such religious prattle, seeing it as a self-serving ploy utilized by the Christian Right to increase its political capital as a chaplain to the status quo as it replaces the mainstream churches as the principal source of ritual and meaning in desperate times.

University of Rochester, New York

CURT CADORETTE


This collection of 15 essays written from 1983 to 1993 reflects British Methodist Wainwright’s deep commitment to the parallel tracks of the contemporary movements for liturgical reform and ecumenical reunion. Hence the first essay supplies both the book’s subtitle and a helpful historical retrospective of persons similarly committed. That the work of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of
Churches receive significant, complimentary treatment throughout reflects W.'s personal and passionate engagement in its work, notably in the publication of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*. His generous appreciation of the contemporary Roman Catholic liturgical revisions for the Eucharist and adult initiation as well as the Vatican response to *BEM* will be welcomed in Catholic quarters. Whether it signals a decidedly Catholic and Orthodox proclivity in such matters (as opposed to what he terms “liberal” or “moderate” Protestantism in North America) remains explicitly unanswered. However, evidence abounds for such a conclusion.

Not surprisingly a major tenet in these essays concerns the ecclesiology of worship, specified when W. summarizes the varying liturgical reforms in the U.K., the U.S., and Australia, the reconciliation of divided churches, and how Christian churches today need to shun the twin temptations of relativism and syncretism even as they deal with the challenges of religious pluralism and inculturation. The scandal of divided Christian churches is poignantly evoked in a talk given to a Belfast audience in 1993 dealing with divisions in Irish society and among the Christian churches in Ireland. That worship carries imperatives and implications for life is treated from ecclesiological and ethical perspectives.

The predilection of liturgical reformers in this century for the patristic era is stated and echoed in a number of essays. Exactly why this is viewed altogether positively is never addressed, despite the rather complete discussion of this method for reform. Such an exposition could assist Roman Catholic liturgists and theologians alike in justifying why the present liturgical rites are theologically normative and ecumenically pertinent in the face of contrary voices today who seek to “reform the reform.” Readers familiar with the efforts of liturgical and ecumenical “pioneers” in this century will welcome W.’s positive retrospective on the work of Daniélou and his reliance throughout on authors like Schmemann, Vagaggini, and von Allmen.

Less successful aspects of the book include W.’s treatment of symbol, esthetics, and sacramental theology (especially the essay on sacraments and the world church). Yet Catholic readers will profit from the essay on sacraments from a Wesleyan perspective. Welcome additions would be observations on what one can say ecumenically about how sacraments work and what they accomplish. That W. can be characterized as moderate in matters liturgical and theological is evidenced in his forcefully urging the retention of the trinitarian character of worship and naming God as Father, Son, and Spirit and in his arguing from the officially sanctioned worship orders of the churches rather than from experimental or feminist liturgies.

Tucked away in an essay about how and why “human rulers” should be included in intercessory prayer is the apologia “I am a (Methodist) systematic theologian who holds that Christian faith begins and ends in worship, which is therefore a constant reference-point for theology”
(230). This collection attests to W.'s important vocation. Yet readers of his earlier, theologically profound, liturgically informed, and ecumenically attuned books, *Eucharist and Eschatology* and *Doxology*, may be frustrated because this is a collection of essays. Many of us have returned to those earlier books again and again to restudy and evaluate amply documented, cogent arguments about liturgical/systematic theology. Not surprisingly the genre of collected essays leaves us yearning for the former works' seamless-garment method and content, rather than the patchwork quilt of these admittedly theologically significant disparate articles.

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KEVIN W. IRWIN


In this collection of lectures Ashley attempts to provide an apologia for the Church's continuing exclusion of women from leadership roles, especially ordination. He exercises what he understands to be the Catholic theologian's role, to help Catholics to accept this admittedly difficult magisterial teaching, which he views as definitive.

A.'s primary thesis is that what appears to be an injustice is, in fact, an expression of a legitimate distinction between personal equality and functional difference. He grounds this thesis in his conviction that hierarchical order is the order of creation, rooted in the natural law and positively willed by Jesus, who established it among his disciples. For A., the opposite of hierarchy is anarchy. Personal equality is grounded in the human being's intelligence, freedom, and transcendence toward God. Such personal equality allows relations of functional inequality based on the natural and complementary qualities of the sexes. Men, he says, have a natural relation to headship, both in the family and in the Church, while, in these areas, women's natural inclinations place them in a subordinate role. This is, of course, the very definition of patriarchy.

This troubling book raises many issues. I will mention only a few. First, I wonder if A. really wants to view ordination in the functional terms that his separation of the personal and functional seems to imply? Second, for the most part A. does not engage specifically the arguments of those with whom he is disagreeing. These arguments are consigned to appendices. He often indicts the generic group "feminists" for holding views to which he is opposed, without sensitivity to the reality that feminists hold a plurality of views. He also conveys the impression that only those who would self-identify as feminists, i.e. women, would hold such theological positions. The only feminist theologian he takes on in any depth is Elizabeth Johnson. Although it is only tangentially related to his theme, A. offers, in an appendix, an extended and entirely negative analysis of Johnson's highly regarded
book *She Who Is*. This is after suggesting that all Christians need to approach the works of female theologians "as learners more than mere critics" (189).

Third, A.'s insistence on the complementarity of the sexes as an outgrowth of his reading of natural law and as presupposition for his thesis of personal equality and functional difference leads to other problematic assertions. While women are nurturing and gentle, men are violent and sexually exploitative (101), needing women to tame them. Homosexuality he views as a disability needing the compassion and sympathy of heterosexuals while the afflicted struggle to live the celibacy which the Church requires.

Much more could be said. A.'s failure to recognize that there are other legitimate interpretations of Scripture, tradition, and human experience makes true dialogue impossible. This is a book that, I suspect, will be persuasive only to those who already share A.'s views and will, as anticipated in his introduction, anger and offend many others.

*Emmanuel College, Boston*  
MARY E. HINES


Jordan's investigation into the "invention" of the concept of sodomy echoes the similar, albeit fictitious, pursuit in Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*; both uncover luminously so much hidden medieval material that inevitably we become more fascinated with the story than in catching the culprit. Though Peter Damian was the first to coin the term "sodomy" (Hrothswitha anticipated Peter with her disdainful reference to pagan "sodomitic vices"), by the end of this inquest, J. concludes that "from the beginning, 'sodomy' has meant whatever anyone wanted it to mean" (163). The instability of the term coupled with its extraordinary longevity prompts a study to find how "a memorial site that records God's power to judge" became translated into "an exotic, foreign vice that cannot be mentioned" (32).

This is a powerfully passionate exposé of about ten texts extending from the mid-10th to the mid-13th century. They vary in genre and purpose: from Raguel's account of the witness of the martyr Pelagius, through Alan of Lille's *The Plaint of Nature* (a revisionist gloss on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*) and the Penitential manuals of Paul of Hungary and Robert of Flambourgh, to Aquinas's *Summa theologiae*. Through them all, J. demonstrates clearly that sodomy is a word packed with judgment but not intelligibility.

Though early Christian commentaries created the "Sodomite," a person who was inhospitable, idolatrous, or lascivious, it was not until the medieval era, with the construction of categories of actions, that the term "sodomy" appeared. When Peter introduced it in the polemical *Gomorran Book*, he did so to persuade the reigning pope of the need for
clerical reform. For him sodomy included, among several activities, masturbation.

While Peter and Alan did not hesitate to describe their notions of this activity, later theologians, notably Albert and especially Thomas seemed to pass it over. J.'s suggestion that Thomas deliberately avoided extended comment on the sin might well be challenged, but he offers somewhat compelling evidence that theologians engaged in a conspiracy of silence about the sin of "sodomy." The penitentials' ad­monition to confessors to avoid mention of a sin that could prompt the penitents to consider a previously unconsidered vice may play an im­portant causal explanation here. In any event, sodomy became an un­nameable vice by the 13th century.

Like Eco, J.'s metier is texts; his own text is as rich in rhetorical argument and content as some of the more interesting ones that he treats. He respects the uniqueness of each: its form, function, and context. The differing theologies out of which they come he presents with considerable nuance and sophistication. Each chapter reads as a complete work on its own.

Despite this, readers may not be completely convinced. At the end of his investigation, J. is not narrator so much as prosecutor. He seeks to convict theologians (both medieval and their successors) of using un­stable terms, unfaithful descriptions, and inconsistent arguments. In his summation, it is the inherent incoherence of the "tradition" on sodomy that must be rejected. He admits that there might be some factors that led to the unintelligible judgments: biases about the un­clean, the ignoble, and the feminine. Likewise he pursues the clerical clue in Peter to the stonewalled silence of the usually meticulous Scho­lastics and infers that the silence points to the "closet," "a very old ecclesiastical dwelling place" (165). But he concludes that these vari­ous causes are themselves contributors to a very incoherent teaching.

Others might look at these texts differently and find coherence. On the one hand, Dale Martin investigates the biblical antihomosexual term malakos and suggests that the bias is fundamentally misogynis­tic. Similarly, feminists looking at J.'s texts might argue that the "sod­omy" injunctions ought to be rejected because they are based on anti­women bias. In fact, throughout the texts, J. offers plenty of evidence that attacks on sodomy are linked to fears of effeminacy. On the other hand, other theologians might argue that Albert and Thomas retreat from Peter's attacks because of their broad-mindedness; perhaps they mark an incipient tolerance.

Still others might question the merit of isolating sodomy from other sexual tabus. Sex itself was for a long time unspeakable. The moral manuals written in English reverted to Latin to discuss the sixth com­mandment; many sexual sins were themselves unnameable and a bi­zarre nomenclature was developed to help penitents confess forbidden activity. When investigators bracket one activity from other sexual tabus, do they illuminate or detract from ongoing investigations?
Though Giovanni Capelli, like J., studied church teachings on masturbation in the first millennium to understand its very inconsistent history, Hubertus Lutterbach argues that only when all these tabus are brought together do we find an incredibly odd, but coherent belief about the near sanctity of semen.

Evidently, this provocative work will be countered on many fronts; it will not be ignored. J. concludes by recognizing the "deeply unbiological character of Christian love" and arguing that the Gospels ought not to be surrendered to contemporary secular biases that are "enslaved by the tyranny of gender hierarchies." He proposes instead a theological reflection on what Christians "need for wholeness" (174). J.'s challenging though profoundly hopeful book makes a cogent case for the irrationality of bias, for the importance of the erotic, and for having confidence in revelation.

Weston Jesuit School of Theology

JAMES F. KEENAN, S.J.


Atonement, understood as satisfaction for sin made by the sacrificial death of Christ, has always been a doctrine open to primitive anthropomorphic interpretations. Gorringe sets out to show the negative impact of the doctrine and its imagery from the time of Anselm of Canterbury. He is convinced not only that "satisfaction theory" is a distortion because of its stark retributivism, but also that it had much to do with the rise of harsh penal practices in the West.

The opening chapter is the broadest, addressing the central problem of "religion and retribution." It depicts graphically at the very start a puzzling anomaly of 18th-century Britain: Why was it that "even saintly figures" like John Fletcher and John Wesley routinely and without objection gave their blessing to, and took part in, state executions, even when those hanged were the poorest of the poor whose capital offense was petty larceny? Such "social blindfolds" on Christian clergy of the day had many causes, but G. suggests that among them "the satisfaction theory of the atonement has a role that must not be underestimated" (6).

This was the ideology, he contends, which moved the crucifix to the heart of Western art and piety, presenting Jesus, the suffering and dying victim, in such a way that the full "gospel" was muted, the necessity of punishment was highlighted, and the cross became "subconsciously, an endorsement of violence and cruelty" especially accounting for the highly punitive legal system (27).

The remainder of the book attempts to sustain this thesis and indicates how it should be improved upon. Part 1 surveys the biblical elements involved, laying out a perennial paradox: While anger is con-
demned as sinful for humans, it is regularly predicated as an attribute of God. The "wrath of God" metaphor is so easily misunderstood that G. finds it responsible for the "justification of retributivism by Christianity . . . [which] is a deformation of biblical faith" (82). Christianity was thereby burdened with the brutal business of sanctioning violent punishment of offenders rather than fostering forgiveness.

Part 2 traces the distortion back to Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo?* with its "profoundly ahistorical" legal theory of redemption by satisfaction, the worst aspect of which, as Harnack noted, was "its picture of God" exacting as payment for sin the bloody sacrifice of his Son. The consequence of this doctrine was a deeply entrenched demand for all human misconduct to be expiated by suffering, just as "God himself had demanded it" of Jesus (103). Peter Abelard saw the weakness of "Anselm's central metaphor" and developed an alternative, but his position never prevailed. Things only got worse with the two-kingdoms theology of Luther, in which secular rulers enjoy public authority and esteem as "God's hangmen" (131), while for Calvin, "the need for blood to make expiation" for misconduct became absolutely basic. This bent toward unrelieved retributivism enabled Locke to define the very nature of political power as "the right of making laws with penalties of death" (153).

Routine state-induced bloodshed thus became indispensable in theory and in practice, even though a few saw more clearly. William Blake, e.g., viewed the executions of the poor at Tyburn as "more appropriate to Druid worship than to the religion of Christ" (188–89). The bewildering entanglement of churchmen in sanctioning this penal system contributed greatly to the 19th-century alienation of the working-class. In our own century R. C. Moberly and Hastings Rashdall were among the few who tried to shift the emphasis away from retributivism toward rehabilitation, but these efforts and accompanying penal reform did not last.

G. also discusses contemporary developments in atonement theory, but finds little of importance other than the probings of René Girard. He concludes that "we need to shift the centre of our reflection from satisfaction to the biblical roots of redemption and reconciliation" (269). But in doing so it is essential, he contends, that the faith community signify and engage in a different praxis, living forgiveness rather than retribution as the Christian ideal, and giving the lie to notions that punishment deters or serves other positive functions.

While G. offers many pertinent and practical insights, at the end of the day it is still not clear that he has adequately established his basic thesis. Over the centuries "atonement" and "satisfaction" have conjured up many different nuances and images in Christian theology; so one may well question whether Anselm's particular contributions had the profound negative influence alleged. The case seems overdrawn, especially since G.'s recommendations would seem to be quite compatible with a continued appreciation for Anselm as long as the meta-
phorical nature of his work is kept in mind. In this regard, it may be worth noting that, while G. is obviously well read, his conversation partners seem limited. He might find welcome reinforcements (as well as occasional challenges) by extending his net to include recent Catholic thought on the atonement, such as in the work of Lyonnet, Rahner, and Küng, to mention but three. Overall, however, G. has done a fine piece of detective work, even if the jury is still out on the role of Anselm.

University of North Carolina, Wilmington JAMES J. MEGIVERN


After Vatican II endorsed a shift from the classicist to the historically conscious worldview, Catholic moral theology abandoned the manuals that had been the standard moral textbooks. What a sea change in Catholic morality that represented is often lost on students of moral theology today. That is partly due to the fact that moral theologians have not given sufficient attention to the history of their own discipline. Curran corrects that situation, helping us appreciate why the manuals survived as long as they did, why the shifts that occurred were necessary, and why today’s methodological diversity is not an entirely new feature of the discipline.

C. first lays out the historical antecedents of moral theology, with special attention to Alphonsus Liguori and his understanding of conscience. He also gives an account of the intellectual and ecclesial climate of Roman Catholicism in the 19th century. Then he studies in depth the approaches of three immigrant moral theologians who were well-known figures of the nascent intellectual life of the Church in the U.S. and who shaped moral theology at the end of the 19th century: Aloysius Sabetti (a Jesuit), Thomas J. Bouquillon (a diocesan priest), and John B. Hogan (a Sulpician).

Sabetti taught for 28 years at Woodstock College, the Jesuit scholasticate in Maryland; his popular manual developed a legal model of moral theology and served the pastoral concern of preparing seminarians to be confessors. Bouquillon was the first professor of moral theology at Catholic University; he developed theoretical aspects of moral theology by drawing on neo-Scholasticism. Hogan never wrote a textbook in moral theology, but his publications connected to his seminary work showed an acceptance of the new intellectual approaches to natural science, history, philosophy, and biblical studies. His emphasis on history led him to accept an inductive and historically conscious method of theological inquiry, though he still maintained a legal understanding of moral theology.

In treating each figure, C. applies the same analytic framework of the four sources of moral wisdom (Scripture, tradition, reason, experi-
ence) so that similarities and differences stand out. He shows that reason prevailed for each theologian, while experience was given the least attention. Scripture was for proof texts. Magisterial teaching was treated variously: Sabetti used Roman statements to settle matters, Bouquillon allowed for the possibility of some disagreement with Rome, and Hogan recognized from within his historical consciousness that magisterial teaching can change.

C. also makes a critical assessment of each and shows common deficiencies: Sabetti’s penchant for clarity and precision reduced the role of prudence in moral judgment; Bouquillon pleaded for moral theology to be integrated with dogma and the social sciences but never let these influence the development or interpretation of moral principles; Hogan was not satisfied with moral theology’s focus on what is obligatory, but he left to spirituality what pertains to a nobler life. Some common deficiencies were lack of concern for virtue, an inadequate account of intuition in their casuistry, insufficient use of experience as a source of moral wisdom, exalting reason as the primary means to moral truth, relatively little use of Scripture or systematic theology, and lack of an ecumenical spirit.

C.’s critical responses are woven into his description and analysis. They reflect his own contributions to the development of postconciliar moral theology: casuistry is much more an intuitive judgment than a deduction from principles; there are more gray areas in the moral life than the mortal/venial sin distinction might suggest; the legal model inadequately accounts for the complexity of the moral life; the experience of women has been ignored; creative and newer theological approaches have often been received with suspicion; there is more room for pluralism of approaches in the Catholic tradition than is often acknowledged; virtue must play a wider role in understanding the moral life; magisterial authority is legitimate but not absolute; authority must conform to what is reasonable.

A striking feature of this study is that it reveals patterns of diversity, showing that preconciliar moral theology was not as rigidly homogeneous as it is often made out to be. By calling Sabetti a manualist, Bouquillon a neo-Scholastic, and Hogan historically conscious, C. focuses the methodological pluralism that existed in moral theology at that time. He argues that this ferment had little effect on changing the structure and method of the discipline prior to the council, because such intellectual creativity was stifled by the defensive climate as the Catholic Church moved in a more authoritarian and centralized direction at the turn of the century.

This volume makes a good companion to John Mahoney’s The Making of Moral Theology, a thematic treatment of the history of moral theology, and John A. Gallagher’s Time Past, Time Future, a study of the manualist tradition and recent developments. We are a generation away from Vatican II, and some of today’s students may find it difficult to appreciate the great strides that have been made in the revision of
moral theology. C.'s book, along with the others just mentioned, fills in the historical background, enabling us to understand where we were, evaluate the present discussion more accurately, and see the direction of future development more clearly.

Franciscan School of Theology, Berkeley  Richard M. Gula, S.S.


Lakoff makes a major contribution to our understanding of American political culture, a field of study which inquires into such questions as what characteristics distinguish U.S. politics from that of other contexts and what fundamentally separates the core political approaches of American liberals and conservatives. On this latter question, L.'s volume represents something of a Rosetta stone, for it provides a crucial but previously neglected hermeneutical key which allows its users to transcend the usual issue-by-issue debates and so to analyze the underlying unconscious worldviews of liberals and conservatives.

L. brings to the task of political observation the tools of linguistics and cognitive science. Why do liberals and conservatives so often talk past one another? Primarily because their positions on public issues are grounded in complex, subtle, and surprisingly unified systems of metaphors for moral meaning and social priorities. The contrast between conservative political discourse (characterized by references to virtue, discipline, self-reliance, authority, standards, and individual responsibility) and liberal discourse (featuring prominent references to concern, care, human dignity, diversity, and social responsibility) is emblematic of deeper divisions. The emotional dimension of U.S. politics has much to do with the tendency to employ an unconscious "nation as family" metaphor. The split between "strict-father" and "nurturant-parent" approaches to child rearing correspond to comprehensive systems of morality which lie behind the opposed worldviews and public-policy orientations of liberals and conservatives.

L. cogently and exhaustively spells out the differences between these two approaches and their relative merits. He makes no secret of his opinion that "strict-father morality" entails a paradigm of moral strength, moral authority, and moral order that ultimately "is unhealthy for children . . . [and] for any society . . . [because] it breeds a divisive culture of exclusion and blame" (383). Along the way, the media receives considerable blame for failing to situate controversial public issues within their larger conceptual matrix and for accepting uncritically the loaded moral vocabulary within which conservatives frame entire ranges of issues. Few would doubt L.'s claim that liberals are far behind in their efforts to organize themselves based on an adequate understanding of the worldview difference from which all
other political differences flow. However, it is harder to accept L.'s assertions that conservatives are usually unaware of the coherence of their own system of beliefs, and that the nature and significance of conservatism remain opaque even to most conservatives themselves.

L.'s analysis is vulnerable to the usual perils that accompany any employment of ideal types in cultural analysis: the constant risks of over-simplification, of over-drawing dichotomies and neglecting variations and middle positions which mix the operative models. Most of these objections are adequately anticipated by caveats and explanations within the text, although these present the drawback of making this volume longer and more compendious than it should be. Despite the occasional inclusion of some cumbersome schemas and terms from the field of cognitive science, this volume is accessible to a fairly general audience, including most undergraduates.

Perhaps the weakest aspect of L.'s treatment of American political culture is a tendency to neglect or flatten out the role of religion in creating and sustaining the systems of political values prevalent in our remarkably religious society. Except for a brief discussion of biblical fundamentalism, practically no attention is paid to the role of religious authority or the correlation of religious identity and political beliefs. Nevertheless, religious social ethicists will find this book valuable for the original and insightful clues it provides toward understanding the conceptual roots of the dominant American attitudes toward fairness, criminal justice, education, and the legitimate role of government in society.

Weston Jesuit School of Theology

THOMAS J. MASSARO, S.J.

SHORTER NOTICES


Cohn presents the story of the flood from the Book of Genesis and the history of its exegesis. He contrasts the hope-filled insights of the Priestly editors with earlier pessimistic Mesopotamian versions. He then draws a profile of early Christian typologies and allegories and cites examples of Jewish (and Christian) haggadah, in which endless details about the ark's structure or the animals were added to the biblical data. Such hypothetical explanations continued into the 18th century.

Even pioneers in research attributed the dispersion of fossils to the flood, since they could not imagine the upward movement of ancient seabeds. The key missing concept was that of time. Most thinkers agreed with James Usher that the world was only as old as humanity, 6000 years or so. Investigators classifying mountains or matching strata on cliffs on each side of a valley kept assuming that only the flood could have caused the newer mountains or the erosion of the valley itself. C. breaks the reader's adventure at this point, providing a bibliography of the process by which people learned that the earth is over four billion years old (147, n. 15). He quotes early questioners of the earth's true age, who postulated that the forces that move mountains are so slow that one flood could not have caused such large events.

The diminution of the flood's impor-
stance drew a rebuttal by Richard Kirwan in his *Geological Essays*. He was in effect a pioneer of fundamentalism, in that his arguments are apologiae based on Usher's chronology. Two mainly British schools followed. The first accepted the great antiquity of the earth by having the six "days" of creation correspond to eons, followed by a cataclysmic flood. Another geological factor not yet understood was the movement of glaciers in past ice ages, which disturbed the earth's surface more than any flood could have. The second group, starting with Granville Penn, held that there can be no biblical error. From this descended contemporary fundamentalists, who speak of creation science, flood geology, and ark remnants on Mount Ararat.

C. gives us a clear, well-documented review of the astounding advances made in the earth sciences. Moreover, he shows us the beauty and power of the story of Noah, which is not limited by the exegetical trends of any one time or school.

**William T. Miller, S.J.**
Mount Angel Seminary, Oregon

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This remarkable book fits into three categories. It is a book of art, containing 150 reprints of illustrations, most in black and white but many in brilliant colors. It is a book of biblical theology that traces the history of the interpretation of the Book of Job. It is a book of hermeneutics that demonstrates the role played by contemporary context in understanding theology. The critique, which is done more with an eye to the interpretation of the biblical themes represented in the art rather than to artistic style and detail, is written by a scholar renown for his own study of this enigmatic biblical book.

The iconography included in the collection, taken from frescoes, manuscripts, and mosaics, spans the period from the third century to modern times. Along with Blake's famous engravings are works from Bellini and Chagall, representations from Patmos, Chartres, and Pamplona. Each depiction demonstrates the respective artist's unique struggle with the biblical subject. It also reveals something about the age that produced it. The enduring interest in the subject and the variety in its representation is evidence that Job is indeed a "man for all seasons."

Terrien's commentary demonstrates not only his profound grasp of the biblical subject and its possibilities for interpretation, but also the scope of his knowledge of history and the stamp that history leaves on the artifacts that survive it. He reads the art with the same insight with which he reads the biblical text, conscious of the human drama depicted there. The collection sketches the face of human suffering through the ages. T.'s reflections help us to understand some of the causes of that suffering, and to marvel at the human spirit that has refused to be crushed by it.

**Dianne Bergant, C.S.A.**
Catholic Theol. Union, Chicago

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This book is a disappointment. While written apparently with the current situation of the Protestant Church in Germany in mind, in many respects it reads better as an 18th-century Enlightenment tract against Christianity. In fact, Lüdemann acknowledges the debt his critique owes to the Enlightenment, even as he charges contemporary theology with failing to apply its principles to its use of the Bible. In L.'s view, that use is marked by a precritical and highly selective reading of the Bible, one motivated by a partisanship and deceit (28) that has nothing to do with academic scholarship.

Theology's failure to take seriously the results of historical-critical research arises out of its continuing
commitment to outmoded creeds and to the Bible as the "good news of God's mercy to all human beings" (26). Thus L. focuses on the dark and suppressed aspects of the Bible, recapitulating Old Testament texts containing God's command to exterminate the Canaanites or examining New Testament passages which are anti-Jewish. In each case, L. aims to show how confessional theology bends and obscures the fact of brutal violence in order to maintain its belief in the Bible as the inspired Word of God. Yet the only hope for a genuinely responsible theology lies, he insists, in a return to the historical Jesus, a purely human Jesus, a "Reform Jew" (130), whose own picture of God is indeed one of mercy and not one of vengeance.

As deserving as theology may be of criticism for its sometimes highly selective use of the Bible, it is difficult to see in all of this how L. himself has advanced beyond a typical Enlightenment critique. His own historicist, if not rationalist, "solution" to contemporary theology's credibility problem has been simply to eliminate the problem.

ROBERT A. DI VITO
Loyola University, Chicago


A man of letters whose many essays have been published widely, Beeching took up the study of Greek at age 50 after volunteering to teach a course on the New Testament as Literature at his state university. Suddenly he was faced with teaching texts he associated primarily with his Catholic upbringing in the 1930s. What he developed in the process is what he calls reading biblical texts "sensibly," without having "to carry the immense load of belief and commitment and guilt with which they once were burdened" (1). This book shares the fruits of that labor.

B. reveals himself as a modern U.S. reader of the text—one who is not afraid to ask questions for which he does not always have good answers. Nor is he afraid to question the wisdom or rightness of the truth claim of a text. For example, he ends his discussion of Matthew's Gospel by suggesting that "it might be useful to Christian readers to pause at this point to ask themselves how much of this core they still believe" (83). His brisk review of selected items in 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus concludes simply: "The Pastorals are not nice" (218).

Like many adult lay readers who encounter modern biblical criticism, B. is somewhat resentful that the results of NT scholarship over the last two centuries have had so little influence on how the Bible is interpreted, especially by church ministers and teachers. Every page of this finely written book challenges biblical scholars and theologians to deal more directly with questions regarding the meaning, truth, and value of NT texts.

KAREN A. BARTA
Seattle University


Talbert has already contributed volumes on Luke, John, and the Corinthian Letters to the Reading the New Testament series. The present commentary on Acts easily achieves the series's stated purpose of presenting current scholarship "in popular form that is accessible" to students and educated laity (ix). T. writes well. He is able to incorporate a remarkable amount of technical material without sacrificing clarity and continuity. Scholars and nonspecialists alike will appreciate this work.

T. demonstrates that Acts, read in its precanonical context (i.e., as part of the two-volume work we now call Luke-Acts) is "a narrative of fulfillment" (3; cf. Luke 1:1). The narrative
of Luke-Acts is a working out of the divine plan, an attempt to show how Jesus the messianic king accomplishes God's mission and how the messianic people continue God's program—and philosophy—between ascension and parousia. As such, Acts is a succession narrative. When read canonically Acts becomes the bridge between the Gospels and the Epistles. Acts reads as a life, not of one individual but of a people. Christians are a distinctive people called into existence by Jesus the Messiah and empowered by God's Spirit after Pentecost.

The commentary falls into some 20 discreet units. The text is not treated verse by verse, but in large blocks of coherent material. The approach is effective, maintaining the visibility of themes. Two appendixes treat the historicity of Acts and aspects of biography in Mediterranean antiquity.

_The author of the document possibly used a Stoic framework to clarify to non-Jews the meaning of the Human One but goes far beyond Stoic doctrine by insisting that one needs more than simply a life lived in accord with Nature. One needs the Human One's law of love and redemption. The document also reveals the developing current of misogyny in the early Church as men asked whether they needed to listen to women. This shows that in the early second century there were women with something to say who did not assume they had to keep silent. I highly recommend this book, for it exemplifies an excellent methodology for dealing with ancient texts._

SONYA A. QUITSLUND, Emeritus
George Washington University, D.C.


De Boer offers significant new insights into the real Mary Magdalene in a very readable, well-documented work which focuses on the first 400 years of pertinent Christian texts and traditions. To establish a context she first sketches the New Testament portraits of Mary Magdalene, underscoring the ambivalence of Matthew and Luke. Then she marshals testimony from the Fathers and finally turns her attention to the key text, the Gospel of Mary, discovered in 1896 but not published in translation until 1955.

Since only nine out of nineteen pages of the Gospel of Mary have survived, one may wonder whether any valid conclusions can be drawn from it. De Boer examines the commentaries of Till, Pasquier, and Tardieu before making her own case. Quite convincingly she shows why the text probably dates from 100 to 150 and then argues that, contrary to popular belief, this gospel is not a Gnostic work at all. If Gnostics preserved and praised it in the third to fifth centuries, it was because it contained in germ ideas that became important to Gnostics. Essentially, however, the content of the pluriform Christian spirituality of the early second century provides sufficient explanation for the teaching of this text.

The author of the document possibly used a Stoic framework to clarify to non-Jews the meaning of the Human One but goes far beyond Stoic doctrine by insisting that one needs more than simply a life lived in accord with Nature. One needs the Human One's law of love and redemption. The document also reveals the developing current of misogyny in the early Church as men asked whether they needed to listen to women. This shows that in the early second century there were women with something to say who did not assume they had to keep silent. I highly recommend this book, for it exemplifies an excellent methodology for dealing with ancient texts.

SONYA A. QUITSLUND, Emeritus
George Washington University, D.C.


Finn's synthesis on conversion from the time of Alexander to Augustine, in Greco-Roman paganism, philosophical schools, Judaism, and Christianity, aims to correct Arthur Darby Nock's classic, _Conversion_. F.'s definition of religion as "that system of activities and beliefs directed toward that which is perceived to be of sacred value and transforming power" (12) extends the possibility of conversion to and within not only Judaism and Christianity but also paganism (pace Nock). Unfortunately, what F.'s devotion of most chapters to specific individuals or texts gains in vividness it loses in critical use of some documents, like the _Golden Ass_ or _Joseph and Asenath_. F. tries, with mixed suc-
cess, to supplement his primary expertise in patristics and the history of the catechuminate by referring to secondary literature and by consulting experts in Judaism and Greco-Roman religion.

For this New Testament specialist, F.'s most problematic section is Chapter 6, with its hypothetical historical reconstructions that beg controverted questions about the relationship between the Baptist, "his disciple" Jesus, and the Johannine community (104). Sometimes these attempted reconstructions impugn crucial NT doctrines. Especially offensive for Christian believers are F.'s hypothetical "conversions" of John the Baptist and Jesus, which totally ignore the central emphasis in writers like Paul on the sinlessness of Jesus (hence in no need for conversion), which result in a "historical" Jesus perhaps needing to change his previously evil artisan collaboration with oppressive systems (138–39).

In sum, F.'s book is significant but does not fully supplant Nock's Conversion. His main thesis, that "conversion in Greco-Roman religion, whether Pagan, Jewish, or Christian, was an extended ritual process that combined teaching and symbolic enactment" (9), not surprisingly is convincing primarily for his church order and catechuminate sources (including Qumran). However his ritual perspective provides important correctives to Nock's classic.

WILLIAM S. KURZ, S.J.
Marquette University, Milwaukee


Augustine's later works on grace, Creswell notes, have been somewhat neglected by recent studies of his thought. Convinced that Calvin's doctrine of double predestination is found in these works, C. sets out to discover how Augustine came to this doctrine. His initial conclusion is that there is a conflict between Augustine's Neoplatonic doctrine of God's immutable will, including the eternal moral law, and grace as a purely gratuitous gift. C. formed the hypothesis that the doctrine of double predestination might be the key that allowed Augustine to solve his dilemma by making the gratuitous divine election take place in God's eternal decree.

In order to verify his hypothesis, C. surveys Augustine's thought on eternal law and divine grace in his major writings from immediately after his conversion up to his last, unfinished work against Julian. The scope of C.'s project is far too vast for a convincing determination of the question in a small volume. Despite his initial claim that Augustine in his later works held the Calvinist doctrine of double predestination, C. does not state with precision what he takes that doctrine to imply, and he seems unaware of important distinctions, such as that between positive and negative predestination and reprobation.

There are several factual errors, e.g., that Julian's works were "written mostly in Jerusalem" (96), that Pelagius was tried by "eighteen bishops in Diospolis" (97), and that Julian wrote a long reply to Augustine's Contra Julianum to which Augustine replied with his Opus imperfectum contra Julianum (125).

ROLAND J. TESKE, S.J.
Marquette University, Milwaukee


Jolly argues that the San Marco Genesis mosaics present an "independent and legible text" that effectively revises and nuances the established tale of the first humans' creation, fall, and expulsion from Eden (6). Original viewers, "verbally illiterate but visually literate," would have read the
mosaics as a strong statement denying Eve "her visual affinity with the Creator and Adam," and communicating that she is not in the image of God (7). A careful and thorough examination of the visual conventions (such as the use of profile depiction to represent evil) through which this misogynistic message was presented provides support for Jolly's argument.

The ultimate weight of the message, however, was not about a mythical narrative set in a fictional past, but a contemporary warning to the male citizens of 13th-century Venice "not to forget that the mundane world is full of sinful women with powers not to be underestimated" (66). Noting the irony of Eve's visual and narrative centrality to the saga of creation and fall, J. nevertheless finds the significance of the figural Eve to be that she, "like the animals (named by Adam), is a creature to be mastered" (44). Pivotal to the story, Eve is little more than a strategy for Adam's salvation. The Genesis cycle ends with a depiction of Adam toiling while Eve, a kind of "Queen of Misrule," is enthroned and idle.

J. does not examine the social arrangements to which this intensified misogynistic message related. She does incorporate historical and roughly contemporary theological writings to support her interpretation, but the strength of the book lies in her skill in identifying visual clues to representations of Eve. She provides a detailed local investigation of a well-established motif in medieval art and the history of Christianity, namely, a startling discrepancy in the salvation histories of women and men: "With the help of the new Adam, [Adam] will regain his initial perfection. Eve's story is more complex... Fashioned initially from Adam's rib, she has become the thorn in his side, ever ready to exert her power over him and cause him further pain. Essentially unchanged from her prelapsarian self, Eve is still ruled by pride, disobedience, and her carnal nature" (88).

MARGARET R. MILES
Graduate Theol. Union, Berkeley


Nonspecialists will welcome this first English collection of the essential mystical writings of the all-but-forgotten, enigmatic 15th-century genius, Nicholas of Cusa. Bond's limpid translation, introductory essay, and glossary of key Cusan terms will aid readers to appreciate both the depth and the evolution of the mystical dimension of N.'s thought.

In his most famous treatise, On Learned Ignorance, N. claims that his two most significant concepts—learned ignorance and the coincidence of opposites—came not from learning but from a "celestial gift" which led him to "embrace incomprehensibles incomprehensibly." That "God is known to God alone" grounds this dark, yet learned and holy ignorance—an ignorance both experiential and speculative. The "coincidence" of Christ's two natures is both the criterion and the model for iconographic theology.

The treatise On the Hidden God celebrates God's utter simplicity and incomprehensibility. The more contemplative work On Seeking God underscores an ignorance illuminated from within by God's knowing within us. N. exhorts his reader not to know but to seek God. The devotional classic On the Vision of God discusses "the wall of paradise," the contradiction beyond contradiction over and above which the unveiled God exists. In this treatise N. speaks of theology as a vision through union which must precede theology as discourse. Its evocative function rouses and kindles the person to receive God's presence.

The most controversial work, On the Summit of Contemplation, presents a theology beyond negation, affirmation, and even the coincidence of opposites. The essay contends that the highest contemplation is of Possibility Itself (an infelicitous divine name?) and its appearances (Christ being the perfect appearance)
through which one easily sees God everywhere.

Harvey D. Egan, S.J.
Boston College


Lucas makes much of that old Jesuit saying which states that “Ignatius loved great cities” (v). Ignatius’s preference for large cities, however, was solely the result of his apostolic vision: the larger the city, the greater the number of souls that could be brought to Christ. L.’s central chapters deal specifically with Jesuit urban strategy.

The earlier chapters are introductory. One of them gives an outline of Ignatius’s life prior to his arrival in Rome in 1537. This outline, however, is done with so fleeting a pen that the accuracy of some historical details has been disregarded. When Ignatius entered Rome in late 1537, his thoughts were not on settling there—though L. states that “Ignatius settled definitively in Rome in 1537” (32). Rome became the Jesuits’ base of operations only when their hoped-for Jerusalem trip proved impossible and when Paul III, in the autumn of 1538, accepted their services, saying that “Italy is a good and true Jerusalem” (90).

Of great interest is the story of how Ignatius acquired the Church of Our Lady of the Way and surrounding property in order to build a fitting church and a suitable residence for his men. At the request of the pope, Jesuits soon traveled to other cities and foreign lands, always settling in large cities, because it was there that the greatest good could be done for souls. Jesuit urban strategy is always linked with the apostolate. There is an engaging chapter on letter writing, which was Ignatius’s way of preserving unity among his dispersed brethren. The volume is beautifully illustrated with engravings and contemporary maps indicating the site of Jesuit operations in various European cities.

Joseph N. Tylenda, S.J.
Georgetown University, D.C.


Byrne here offers a very adequate overview of some of the major issues and people in the area of the relationship between religion and the Enlightenment during the 17th and 18th centuries. Readers will learn that the relation between the ideals of the Enlightenment and some of the core values of religion at the time involved a complicated interweaving of forces in many ways beyond the control of the participants. There were reasons why the Enlightenment emerged and religion struggled (sometimes awkwardly) against a movement that seemed to undermine all that was important to social and spiritual stability. On the other hand, the Enlightenment itself involved a mix of religious thinkers and materialists, revolutionaries and aristocracy. It too had to debate its self-image and the effect that its evolving principles would have on morality and government. Readers will see all this in helpful perspective, and will come away with a good introduction to a few monumental influences from various sides of the religion/Enlightenment issue, including Descartes, Pascal, Rousseau, and Kant.

B. does not give us an in-depth history of what was going on in the various churches and evangelical movements that might have been affected by the new science and cult of reason. Instead, he describes the roots of the Enlightenment as a philosophical movement and then discusses the issues that it presented to key religious ideas, such as belief in the existence of God and the authority that religion held in a post-Aristotelian intellectual milieu. B. takes pains to present a very balanced appraisal of the ideals of Enlightenment over against the continuing power of faith in any age.

This is not a book that celebrates
the dawn of modern thinking to the
detriment of priestcraft and supersti-
tion, nor does it give in to the recent
fashion of depicting the Enlighten-
ment as a superficial worship of rea-
son. Fair to both sides, B. describes
the relentless forces of reason and re-
ligion in a changing and often tragic
world. He lets the reader decide how
to feel about it. In an age such as to-
day, when ideology and historical re-
vision often seem to speak more
loudly in education than a search af-
after truth, this book should be wel-
come to students. It is also a good
primer for anyone who cares about
philosophy and religion, and wants to
enter the world of this fascinating era
that formed the basis of so much that
we take for granted intellectually and
spiritually today.

MARK F. WILMS
Salem Lutheran Church
Wakefield, Nebraska

BLAISE PASCAL: REASONS OF THE
HEART. By Marvin R. O'Connell. Li-
brary of Religious Biography. Grand
210. $16.00.

O'Connell's volume augments a se-
ries of original biographical works
that seek to provide readers with
scholarly yet accessible accounts of
the lives of important figures who
have had a significant impact upon
Anglo-American religious experience
and thought. He presents a delight-
fully readable and critically informa-
tive introduction to the life and times
of Pascal.

O. makes no pretense to original
scholarship. Based upon previously
published materials and original
sources, he presents a detailed
chronological narrative of Pascal's life
and times in which he discusses those
events and influences essential for
understanding Pascal's life and
thought. He skillfully immerses the
reader in the controversially vibrant
age of France's grand siècle where an
emergent revival of an Augustinian-
inspired form of faith vied against the
dynamic rationalism of the savants
and the moral laxity of the French
Church. He explores Pascal's life with
an eye to helping the reader under-
stand how personal, familial, social,
political, and religious influences
shaped his character and vision of
faith. His detailed discussion of the
Provincial Letters proves the fruitful-
ness of his approach.

O.'s tone throughout the book is
critically sympathetic toward Pascal
and the company of Port-Royal. His
treatment of the theological dimen-
sion of the controversy is substantial.
Nevertheless, a deeper understand-
ing of the implications of the
Jansenist doctrine of grace and hu-
man freedom for Catholic orthodoxy
must be supplemented from other
sources. O.'s volume whets one's ap-
petite for learning more of Pascal and
the resurgence of piety in 17th-
century France and his "Note on the
Sources" offers a helpful guide for fur-
ther study. The book would serve as
an excellent text for an appropriate
undergraduate or graduate course in
either history or theology.

DENNIS J. MARSHALL
Wheeling Jesuit University, W.V.

LOUIS MASSIGNON: THE CRUCIBLE OF
COMPASSION. By Mary Louise Gude.
Notre Dame: University of Notre
Dame, 1996. Pp. xii + 283. $34.95.

Gude offers a well-documented bi-
ography of the very significant and
controversial Orientalist, Louis Mas-
signon (1883-1962). Drawing on an
extensive collection of primary
sources, including published material
as well as private correspondence, she
shows that Massignon was a critical
figure in the development of the Ro-
man Catholic approach to Islam in the
years preceding Vatican II.

Massignon is known primarily for
his work on the Muslim mystic Hal-
laj, and in turn, the Christian dia-
logue with Islam, but here G. shows
that this is but one of many areas of
his interest, scholarship, and influ-
ence. She carefully demonstrates how
his study of Hallaj led to his Catholic
conversion, which later in his life led
to ordination. Yet her main thesis is
that Massignon was single-minded in
his application of what he termed
l'hospitalité sacrée, or "the accep-

tance, the transfer to ourselves of the sufferings of others" (86). She masterfully follows the thread of this term through the fabric of Massignon's life, and its intersection with friends and others who served as his mentors: Hallaj, Charles de Foucauld, Abraham, Salman Pak, Francis of Assisi, and Gandhi. It was the latter who, according to Massignon himself, especially taught him how to integrate a radical mystical faith with the struggle for political and social justice.

G. also succeeds in showing the reader the controversies surrounding Massignon's positions, his personal stubbornness and drivenness, his alienation of colleagues, his life-long preoccupation with the relationship between France and Algeria, and his misunderstood stance regarding the state of Israel and the need for a Palestinian homeland. Massignon lived during a time when relations between the East and West were extremely fluid and volatile, and he himself, while a public figure, remained personally enigmatic.

This is a highly readable book about a fascinating and significant cultural figure, and the tumultuous time in which he lived.

L. MICHAEL SPATH
Saint Louis University
treated on belief in God; the projected third volume will "evaluate the Christian norm of faith and the nature of theology" (10). This second volume is devoted to "the meaning and grounds of our Christian faith in God through Jesus Christ" (7). Here Farrelly traces the history of the development of the key concepts of revelation, faith, and salvation from the New Testament (and the historical Jesus) to the present day, thereby fitting himself to offer a critical evaluation of Vatican II's teaching about them. The task is accomplished with the aid of a broad scholarship that is critically open to the new. F. surveys a wide field. In the process he gives more detail than some instructors may deem necessary for first-year theology students, the intended readership, but the book is clearly written and F. adheres to his essential project.

Different readers will doubtlessly glean different insights from this book. But for some, F.'s location in the ill-fated Joachim of Fiore of the dawning of a historical consciousness combined with a change of orientation from the past to the future—features that became characteristic of modern thought—will assume central importance. F.'s endorsement of the philosophical and theological contribution of Blondel will be welcomed by many as a viable alternative to some other hermeneutical systems currently in favor.

In the execution of so ambitious a task some criticism is to be expected. For this reader, the maximalist stance adopted toward the historicity of the words and actions of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels (e.g. the Son of Man sayings and the miracles) appear somewhat self-defeating in a work of foundational theology. Further, the persistent criticism of the early Rahner (e.g. 34, 187, 313) will strike some as ill founded. F. contrasts his view of the futurity of the apocalyptic kingdom with that of Rahner (280–81), but he runs the risk of remythologizing this important concept, whereas Rahner avoids this danger without compromising the value that F. seeks to preserve. However, these are relatively minor blemishes in a solid contribution to textbook literature for beginners in theology.

DAVID COFFEY
Catholic Institute of Sydney


Does it really make a difference whether we believe that, in some mysterious way, the future belongs to Christ? Arguing that it does indeed make a difference, Stackhouse first examines the biblical warrant for such a belief. After that he examines three distinct ways of interpreting the biblical material. His aim is to show that the Christian understanding of hope for the future is more than a mere psychological support system for people suffering under oppression.

In discussing the major theologians who have reflected on this over the centuries, S. argues that, while human beings might derive their will to press on in an agonizing history from other sources, in fact most people do not. He argues also that while this vision of a future can function to inspire believers to become involved in the transformation of the world even now, religion in other forms might lead to a more passive attitude in the believer. This, in fact, has been the case in some forms of Christianity. It seems to be the case also in other religious traditions. S. hopes to have shown that what one believes about the future does, indeed, make a difference for one's experience of life even in the present.

This is a remarkably clear, uncluttered presentation of an abundance of material from the history of Christianity down to the present. The book is very useful for college and seminary courses on eschatology as well as for a wider adult audience of people who may be interested in making their way through the millennial speculations of the present moment of history.

ZACHARY HAYES, O.F.M.
Catholic Theol. Union, Chicago

This continuation and sequel to Schreiter's *Constructing Local Theologies* shows the same emphasis on semiotic keys and social-science insights. In the pluralistic context of postcolonial, post-Cold War, Afro-Asian theological reactions to westernization, the “new” catholicity between local and global cultures is a universalizing “flow” across boundaries that is not “totalizing” (i.e. suppressing differences). Universalizing requires general cross-cultural attention to specific intercultural differences. Christianity proposes morally powerful holism attuned to particular cultures, not impersonal deconstructive critiques inhibiting action. S.’s preferred cultural flow is liberation theology.

A strong first chapter explores the nuances of these and related ideas. Chapter 2 addresses their hermeneutic presuppositions in the tradition of Ricoeur. To communicate, speakers must be satisfied that their message is the same while aware that differing codes leave hearers feeling violated (33). Through dialogue we discern the integrity of a message which transforms both parties. The truth is in the narratives of living communities seeking reconciliation through catholicity (43). S. defends syncretism when reconfiguring cultural signifiers, but his theological criteria remain vague. Faith “is about conversion,” yet “many involved in inculturation would hold that Christ is already somehow present” in other cultures (34). S. rightly stresses that conversion is of both speakers and hearers (43-4). Acknowledging “the relative incommensurability of cultures” (45), he still declares that “one must posit a certain commensurability” for communication to be possible (128). How these conclusions translate into middle axioms for postmodern missionaries remains unclear.

Most rules are negative, e.g. “don’t dominate or homogenize.” Reconciliation comes through the paschal mystery. Christianity offers a master narrative to end master narratives, since resurrection entails judgment and the end of the status quo ante (59-60). Strong when describing the contemporary situation, S.’s work leaves such seminal ideas undeveloped.

PETER SLATER
General Theol. Seminary, N.Y.C.


This workmanlike study of the understanding of labor and employee relations in the leading magisterial documents since *Rerum novarum* comes into its own only with the three social encyclicals of Pope John Paul II. *Laborem exercens* (1981) is the only papal encyclical devoted entirely to the issue. Knorn, as an “East German,” perhaps understands John Paul II better in some respects than the West Germans who are his scholarly authorities. His procedure is to delineate the specific character of each encyclical; in regard to the question of labor, he then compares it with previous papal and conciliar teaching (neglecting however *Octogesima adveniens* of 1971).

The clever reader can be spared a good deal of repetition by starting with the detailed concluding summary. For those interested in a careful commentary on the encyclicals’ approaches to the anthropologically central phenomenon of the work human beings engage in, this book provides a reliable and not uncritical guide. Its broader significance, however, may lie in its treatment of John Paul’s personal development of Catholic social teaching. From K.’s detailed observations one can assess with greater clarity this pope’s own way of emphasizing personalist perspectives that combine the subjective and the social, for instance, and his peculiar conflation of biblical-theological with philosoph-
ical reflection. The work is rounded off with brief hints that Catholic social teaching should now be ready to approach the problems of world-wide competition and its effects on workers at the level of the kind of economic policies that the World Trade Organization is trying to establish.

Paul Misner
Marquette University, Milwaukee


Vatican II reasserted a biblical vision of Christian matrimony: it is a covenant that is the symbol of the relationship of Yahweh with his people, or that of Christ with his Church. Such an approach, traditional and new, called for changes in canon law, especially in matters concerning the validity of marriages. Fifteen years have passed since the new norms were promulgated; the time is ripe for a balanced evaluation of their effectiveness. Such a critical work has its own stringent demands: a thorough knowledge of sacramental theology, expertise in canon law, and of course, a capacity for alert and detached investigation into the application of the norms. It is not a mean task, hardly possible for one person.

This is the task, however, that Vasoli, retired associate professor of sociology at Notre Dame University, has undertaken single handed for the U.S. His “study” (from the point of view of behavioral sciences, he states) can be described only as a failure by any scientific criteria. Its literary form is that of an indictment. He focuses on the tribunals and their work, but he makes no effort to gather all the data, good and bad, so that a fair judgment can be formed. Much of his evidence from cases and conversations is anecdotal and not referenced; he pays attention to facts and figures only as far as they bolster his accusations. His style is repetitious and full of sarcasm. He demonstrates a steady lack of sympathy toward the post-Vatican II Church. Ultimately, he pronounces a sweeping indictment: “Just as Henry Ford’s genius led to mass manufacture of the Model-T, America’s theologians and canonists fashioned an assembly line of their own to mass-produce decrees of nullity” (109). If V. is right, there must be a group of unnamed co-conspirators, namely the local bishops; every single tribunal works under their direct supervision.

Yes, the new matrimonial law and the operation of the courts the world over (not only in the U.S.) ought to be evaluated; Vatican II mandated an ongoing reformation of all human institutions in the Church. No, V.’s way is not the correct and responsible way of doing it. The present reviewer, a graduate of Oxford University, is embarrassed to report that this book—so deprived of scholarly and literary qualities—was published by Oxford University Press.

Ladislaus Orsy, S.J.
Georgetown Univ. Law Ctr., D.C.


Martin here gathers 14 lucid essays, some written for professional sociologists, some for lay audiences. He insists that sociology, since it studies the human, must as a matter of scientific integrity include the moral vocabularies and intentions of its subjects and their collectivities—importantly their churches. His complementary approach is spectacularly displayed in his analysis of the doctrine of the Virgin Birth as a crystallization of Christianity’s aspiration toward universalism and its need for celibates who can evocatively “carry” a nontribal, human-family discourse.

M. views the religious resources of Christianity as potentially but permanently culturally “explosive” in their “cross and common meal” imagery which, when authentically retrieved and applied, must always relativize and sometimes conflict with the tribal, an analogous term for M. Much in M.’s analyses stem from this clash between Christianity’s univer-
salistic "theo-logic" and its enveloping tribal "socio-logics." This clash of logics is related to M.'s highly favorable analyses of "sects," which he characterizes as experiments in the equality and interiority that show the continuing vitality of the originating Christian experience. Correspondingly, M.'s analysis of ecumenism is bleak and without enthusiasm. His sympathies are with the dilemmas of adaptation and resistance faced by the historic confessional churches.

M. offers a plausible, indeed persuasive, sociological sketch of incremental (but reversible) reform as a process whereby fragments from the "explosive" repertoire of Christian themes—such as nonviolence—find their way into the social mix of politics and social movements. But in this sacred-secular mix the religious fragments are inevitably distorted and detached from the larger discipline and eschatological hope characteristic of Christianity. M. vigorously displays this broad thesis in his analysis of the 1960s peace movements. More generally, he finds the churches' social impact in secularized Europe and England only weakly reinforces a "social work, welfare state" mentality, while in the U.S., because of its more competitive religious pluralism, he finds a more lively presence and more direct effects through religious lobbying and even mentions the "consistent life ethic" associated with the late Cardinal Bernardin.

JAMES R. KELLY
Fordham University, New York


Employing the image of a house, Haughton explores how we might re-imagine the possibilities of the structures of our lives and the ways they can and cannot be altered without great harm to the inhabitants. Drawing on the work of Lucien Kroll, the Belgian architect, she reflects on successful efforts to rebuild old buildings for very different purposes, efforts in which both continuity and change receive their due. This is not a practical book, but a work of the engaged imagination. It explores the roles of real and symbolic foundations, the function of windows, of entrances and exits, of returns to the dark, chthonic places (the "downstairs") whence life emerges. The overarching theme is hospitality as spiritual stance and moral criterion of very particular choices about how to live responsible lives on a threatened planet.

Tracking the complexities of hospitality does not lead H. down sentimental paths. She shows a keen sense of its perils and the need for boundaries, but insists that hospitality, thought through with care and alertness in myriad situations, can serve as an essential norm for human choice, in resistance to the exploitative ways of a world fashioned by modernity. H.'s keen sacramental sensibility and theological imagination serve her well, when, e.g., she notes the many ways in which those who start off being hosts become guests, and vice-versa. How can it be otherwise in a universe in which the divine host of the universe becomes, in the Incarnation of the Word, the guest of humankind?

While the use of fiction is intriguing, the argument would have been strengthened by a larger number of examples from real life.

BRIAN O. MCDERMOTT, S.J.
Weston Jesuit School of Theology


Few public debates today are as muddled and as vapid as the one over "family values," a situation both Stackhouse and the general editors of this series aim to remedy. For S., the proper and fundamental question is whether a "viable ethic for family life" can be constructed within and for a "globalizing [i.e. pluralistic] civil society," marked as it currently is by deep ideological division and a bewildering range of political, economic, and social transformations. Such an account
is at hand, S. argues, in the Christian, and more specifically Reformed understanding of the family as a "covenanted" institution, bound together and to God by ties of mutual fidelity.

Covenant, S. contends, is but theological shorthand for that "normative, onto-theological notion of a right order of things" (42), an idea he employs at the outset in deflecting various Christian critics (e.g., certain feminists, advocates of same-sex marriage) of mainstream church teaching about sex and marriage, and, in the bulk of his essay, against two modern theories of political economy ("liberationist" and "libertarian") whose influence on contemporary accounts of the family he finds equally reductionistic. Though it is an economic reality, and cannot adequately be understood apart from the historical forms of social and political life of which it is both a part and an expression, the family nevertheless manifests (in such everyday activities as gift-giving and sacrifice for future generations) an irreducibly transcendent dimension. Thus, S. concludes, any social theory that attempts to comprehend family life in this context must necessarily be theological.

Unfortunately, that the covenant theology of the Reformed tradition answers to this need is less argued for than asserted. Among other things, such an argument would need to attend, in ways S. does not, to the historical modification, development, and even devolution of the covenant concept itself.

Paul J. Wojda
Univ. of St. Thomas, St. Paul


The link between religion and environment is not one readily made by the average parishioner. However, an increasing number of Protestant and Catholic theologians have taken up the task, and Scharper provides us with a good map of their insights so that we can "chart a course through this swelling literature" (15). He examines theological insights from the Gaia theory, process theology, the new cosmology, ecofeminism, and new developments in liberation theology. From his examination, S. raises tough questions: "What is the proper role of the human, from a Christian vantage, in light of the ecological crisis? How has Christianity colluded with destructive Western approaches to nature? Is Christianity itself antithetical to the environment? Are there aspects of the Christian tradition that nurture a responsible environmental ethic? What is the "vocation" of the Christian in light of ecological despoliation?

While S.'s topological survey is very useful, his own frame of reference is especially valuable. He places human agency at the center of responsibility for environmental devastation and reclamation and links this with the insights of liberation theology with its stress on solidarity and a preferential option for the poor. It is this nexus of a dual concern for the environment and the poor that occasions the "possibility of a political theology of the environment" (18). It also serves as his lens for viewing the typologies.

Poetically, the task for a political theology of the environment is to "encompass the awe inspiring grandeur of a star-strewn sky" and "embrace asthma-ridden children of the South Bronx as fundamental members of the same universe" (191). While S. has given us a useful map for understanding the growing body of theological commentary on the environment, the questions raised are far from resolution. Looming 21st-century ecological challenges invite further theological and moral insight.

Walter E. Grazer
U.S. Catholic Conference, D.C.


Williams masterfully outlines a
complex subject-matter, the built-environment of religion in the 50 states, in a novel way, by geographical-cultural region. His first chapter exemplifies the meeting house and church types in extant historic New England churches. With discerning eye and deft characterizations he then evokes the appearance of the ecclesiastical built landscape of America, paralleling it with telling examples of secular architecture. In a few strokes, he both characterizes a structure as a member of a sub-species and highlights its unique features. Each chapter treats social and religious history, the crucible of regional culture, synchronically and diachronically. W. comments on a representative variety of faith traditions in terms of built environment large or small, complex or simple, expression of folk religiosity or high liturgy. He draws attention to the exotic example that no curious wayfayer would want to miss and values the vernacular expression in its most primitive form as material cultural witness.

We are introduced to most of these buildings as passers-by to whom the door is closed, not as worshippers, and made conscious of the silhouettes which symbolize publicly the external face of a faith community. We do not have as much opportunity to read the more intimate material ecclesiology: the way communities configure themselves in assembly in order to relate to one another and to their God. Although little space is given to liturgical disposition, W. notes enough that the discerning reader can fill in or hunt further. Occasionally descriptions, such as those of examples of the built religious environment of southern California (269–74), lead into pointed humorous commentary on a religious mentality.

An extensive bibliography completes each chapter and directs the reader to further illustration and information. There are indexes of personal names, and of structures and sites grouped according to faith or communion and then state. The majority of the illustrations show exterior views from archival or famous-photographer sources.

Reading a chapter prior to a conference or a holiday is certain to make one more perceptive and more inquisitive with respect to both urban and rural settings. The book will not prove as helpful to students of liturgical configuration or to those seeking out the latest styles in houses of worship.

MARY M. SCHAEFER
Atlantic School of Theol., Halifax

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