

BOOK REVIEWS

WORDS OF THE LIVING GOD: PLACE AND FUNCTION OF HOLY SCRIPTURE IN THE THEOLOGY OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS. By Wilhelmus G. B. M. Valkenberg. New Series, vol. 6. Leuven: Peeters, 2000. Pp. viii + 253. \$38.

This study, a revision of Valkenberg's doctoral dissertation published in 1990, is the sixth volume issued by the Thomas Instituut te Utrecht in its New Series. Since the demise of manualism (and the corresponding rejection of neo-Thomism), theologians writing from a Thomist perspective have struggled to find an approach that engages an audience outside the boundaries of historical theology. The work of the Thomas Instituut te Utrecht marks a step toward reclaiming Thomist theology as a contemporary speculative "style" (to use Balthasar's phrase) rightfully in dialogue with contemporary theologians of Rahnerian, Balthasarian, liberationist, and other perspectives.

This background is fundamental to understanding the aims and structure of V.'s superb contribution to Catholic theology. The book, as is typical for monographs on Aquinas today, essentially comprises two books, a historical analysis and a speculative analysis. On the one hand, the lengthy historical analysis may mean that contemporary theologians writing from other perspectives will identify (and marginalize) this book as being for specialists on Aquinas. On the other hand, historical analysis has become a means by which Thomist theologians distinguish their project from the ahistorical reputation of neo-Thomism and attempt to draw attention, through historical discourse, to the speculative riches in Aquinas's texts.

V.'s Introduction makes clear that the aims of his historical analysis are primarily *speculative*. He challenges three contemporary misconceptions about Aquinas: "Is he really a Christian philosopher who sacrificed the Gospel to a rigid way of thinking, as theologians from the churches of the Reformation often think? Did he really stand aloof from worldly concerns and from the passionate God of the Bible, as progressive catholic theologians think? Or was he simply the champion of a metaphysical system that served as the backbone for catholic theology, as conservative theologians tend to assume?" (1) Suggesting that the answer to each of these questions is no, V. then indicates the contemporary concerns that his work intends to engage: the christological reading of Scripture (4-5); the meaning of "Scripture," "tradition," and "theology" within the framework of *sacra doctrina*, divine teaching (8-11); the interplay of hermeneutical freedom and theological authorities (11-18); the unity of theology despite its various treatises (19-20); the "theological" and "christological" centers of Aquinas's *Summa theologiae* (21); and the nature of "biblical theology" (21).

After these introductory points, to which he returns in a brief but evocative final chapter that juxtaposes medieval and modern functions of Scrip-

ture in theology, V. enters into the body of his work. Building on insights of M.-D. Chenu and Michel Corbin into the character and development of Aquinas's theology, V. compares representative passages of the *Summa* with the *Scriptum super IV Libros Sententiarum*, focusing on Resurrection texts and treating others more briefly, and also discusses the treatment of Christ's Resurrection in other works of Aquinas and his contemporaries.

V. makes a strong quantitative and qualitative case for two theses—quantitative in the number and placement of quotations, and qualitative in the function of direct quotations and allusions: (1) Aquinas's mature *Summa*, by comparison to the much earlier *Scriptum*, reveals that his biblical commentaries and *Catena aurea* gave him resources which deepened and extended the place and function of Scripture in his speculative theology; (2) his *Summa* should be understood as “biblical theology” (189) because of the “framework-function” that Scripture came to serve within his scientific ordering and within the *quaestiones* themselves.

V.'s position vis-à-vis Corbin's thesis that the mature Aquinas, aided by Aristotle's method, rediscovered Scripture as the necessary source of the principles for theological science is less clear. Early on, V. states that Aquinas “changes his theological approach as a result of his rediscovery of the Word of God written down in Scripture and fulfilled in Jesus Christ” (22), whereas later (more accurately, in my view) he refers to Corbin's thesis as “a partly convincing explanation” and concludes only that “comparative analysis of literary genres learns that Aquinas' *expositiones* on Scripture prove to be the main factor” (188) differentiating his treatment of the same subject matter in the *Scriptum* and the *Summa*.

V.'s work will be an important source in the ongoing reformulation of Thomist theology. In accord with the advances in Thomist theology being made by the Dominicans Servais Pinckaers and Jean-Pierre Torrell, V. shows that the freshness of Aquinas's thought (and thus the continuing value of a “Thomist” theology) results from its grounding in the newness of the gospel. The test of V.'s approach will be its ability to engage the non-specialist audience of contemporary theologians, apropos of which we might hope that V. will extend his final, speculative chapter into another book.

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MATTHEW LEVERING

FRANCIS: THE SAINT OF ASSISI. By Joan Mueller. Allen, Tex.: Thomas More, 2000. Pp. 296. \$21.95.

Novels about St. Francis of Assisi began to appear in the 13th century, not in the 20th century. The so-called “Franciscan Question” (Paul Sabatier's phrase) encapsulates the basic problem of distinguishing the hagiography from the biography of Francis. The well-known controversies between the rigorists and moderates within the order about how the Franciscan rule and life were to be lived generated slanted biographies of

Francis that favored one or other side of the question. The order's general chapter in 1260 commissioned Bonaventure to write an "official" definitive life of Francis. The result was his *Legenda maior*. Bonaventure seems to have done his task too well. The general chapters of 1263 and 1266 decreed that all other biographies of Francis were to be destroyed. The result was a historical catastrophe whose repercussions are felt even today. Thanks to the work of the 18th-century Bollandists, some of this historical material has been discovered, with more such discoveries possible. The temptation remains, however, to write about Francis in an uncontextualized way. This lack of context has recently prompted scholars to understand Francis's life within the Franciscan fraternity/order. No wonder, then, that Jacques Le Goff speaks of "the search for the true Saint Francis."

In brief, it is perhaps easier to be Giotto painting the life of Francis than a novelist trying to be faithful to the important historical elements of his life. Julien Green of the French Academy recently gave us one distinguished example of this literary genre (*God's Fool*, 1987). Earlier in the 20th century, Helen White, leading a double life as a respected academic and a widely read novelist, wrote two novels about the Franciscans, one of which dealt with the turbulent decades after the death of Francis. Her work is built on a surprisingly wide knowledge of Franciscan sources. A number of other recent literary examples could be cited as well.

Joan Mueller also brings impressive scholarly credentials to her task. She knows the Franciscan sources and the spate of historical research which has generated such fruitful discussion in the last 30 years. Like Le Goff, however, she still had to search for the true Francis. She had to make critical decisions about which sources to rely on and what liberty to exercise in assuming certain elements for which there is no direct historical evidence. She has largely succeeded.

M. writes well. Her prose is evocative and her narrative skill is seen in her use of convincing dialogue to lay out some of the historical and religious complexities of the time in an accessible way. When she has to fill in portions of Francis's life (e.g., just how "rowdy" was the young Francis before his conversion), she generally walks a very fine line that respects the cultural attitudes of the time as well as some of the generally accepted, psychological elements in his profile. Some readers may think that she takes too many such liberties, but I suspect that the truth is more on M.'s side.

For the novelist, as perhaps for the historian, the most difficult part of Francis's life to write about is the clericalization of the early fraternity with its first followers into the Order of Friars Minor. The practical result of this shift was a different concept of poverty than that which Francis espoused. While the historian can provide some of Francis's actions and thought about this shift, the novelist has to make some conjectures about how it played out in the last days of the founder's life. M. to a large extent avoids dealing with this conflict, a legitimate decision on her part. In so doing, however, she misses the opportunity of filling in some of the dark colors of Francis's final years.

M. has accomplished a difficult task with some distinction. Praise is also in order for the publisher, who has taken obvious pains with the layout and printing of this book.

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REGIS A. DUFFY, O.F.M.

THE POPE'S BODY. By Agostino Paravicini Bagliani. Translated from the Italian by David S. Peterson. Chicago: University of Chicago, 2000. \$28.

Representing the divine/human nature of Christ himself, the temporality of the pope's body seems at first glance to diminish the divine authority of the papal office. The problem was spotlighted with Peter Damian's insight concerning the historic brevity of papal reigns. Not until 1871, when Pius IX celebrated 25 years in the papal robes, was "Peter's years," the legendary 25 years of Peter's "papacy," equaled. For Peter Damian, the pope's life is historically shortened because of the apostolic intensity of the papal ministry.

Paravicini Bagliani begins by outlining various rituals that symbolized papal transience, including the ceremonial annual behest of a piece of papyrus to the pope that was to be stored, collected, and sewed into his burial pillow, the signing of ashes, and the burning of flax as a symbol of transience. The universality and supremacy of the papacy on the one hand needed to be balanced against papal corporal vulnerability on the other. Because the pope was believed to be the visible image of Christ on earth, the frailty of his body needed to be carefully distinguished from the institutional permanence of the papal office.

It is no wonder, therefore, that rituals regarding the papacy emphasized temporality while the pope was alive, and stability and eternity at the pope's death. By working out a kind of liturgical "*agere contra*," the Roman Church attempted to symbolize the seeming contradictions involved between the fragile corporality and the apostolic permanence of the papal office.

The regality of papal funeral rites as well as the sense that the riches of the papacy came from and by right belonged to the people invited desecration and pillaging. The well-known account of Jacques de Vitry on the pillaging of the body of Innocent III still resounds as a sad reminder of papal corporal vulnerability. From the Gregorian Reform onward, this rite of "*ius spoli*," which seems to be primarily centered in the city of Rome, was countered by an insistence upon honorary burial. Despite political pressures to insure succession, this evolving regard intentionally cushioned respectful time between the burial and the election process.

The corporality of the pope requires location not only in time but also in place. The mobility of the 13th-century papacy within the ten cities of the Papal States, a papacy that had spent nearly 40 years outside of the city of Rome, stretched the bounds of institutional theology. Of course, not only the pope was involved in these excursions and relocations but also the curia, the papal family, lawyers, proctors, scribes, merchants, etc.

In addition, a sense of the restoration and health of the pope's body to encourage the longevity of the papacy evolved into temporary papal leaves from Rome for the summer months as a respite from heat, the contagion of malaria, or simply for recreation. From the summer retreats of Innocent III, the French popes of the later 13th century avoided coming to Rome at all, preferring the superior comforts of other cities. To compensate theologically for this lack of corporal presence, jurists coined the maxim, "*ubi papa, ibi Roma.*"

The preoccupation with the physical well-being of the pope catalyzed the need for papal doctors and medical care for the curia. Specialties, especially in eye care and elixirs, were developed. Although critics of this seeming papal obsession for immortality existed, proponents encouraged the efforts proposing that papal health imaged most effectively the purity, innocence, and supremacy of the papacy. The uneasiness the Church's experiences with an empty papal chair is experienced less frequently when the pope takes care of his health, mitigates fasts and penance, and heeds the advice of his doctors.

P.'s study is a well-written and well-researched project. Although not a deconstructionist project, the book repeats the problem between the corporality of the pope's body and the permanence of the papal office so often that the theologian wonders whether the author will ever commit to a theological stance on the matter. In fact, the book ends without commitment, P. remaining faithful to the limits of his discipline. In a graduate course in ecclesiology, the book's value might lie in this persistent focus on history and its lack of theology, for its meticulous research could serve as an ideal for the graduate student to strive after, while its theological lacuna leaves plenty of space for discussion, development, and theological reflection.

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JOAN MUELLER

THE MAKING OF THE MAGDALEN: PREACHING AND POPULAR DEVOTION IN THE LATER MIDDLE AGES. By Katherine Ludwig Jansen. Princeton: Princeton University, 2000. Pp. xiii + 389. \$39.50.

Although currently popular, the study of medieval preaching is a difficult one. Manuscript documentation of medieval sermons often simply consists of content outlines meant to be freely expanded by preachers. Therefore, to discern what a particular culture or audience heard in a sermon and how it was affected requires research beyond a simple study of sermon manuscripts. In sermon study in particular, one must be acutely aware of the cultural, doctrinal, ecclesiastical, and political influences that affect how a hortatory message is conceived, formulated, and received.

To this end, Jansen's book is both a superb study of the character of Mary Magdalen as interpreted by later medievals as well as a paradigmatic methodological study for approaching the intriguing question of the recep-

tion of the medieval sermon. J. begins by exploring the foundations of the Magdalen tradition in early Christian, late antique, and early medieval texts. Sensitive to the fact that the circle of those interested in what perhaps had once been thought of as esoteric medieval studies now also includes educated readers, J. provides references to both primary texts as well as published English translations.

From the study of these foundations, J. next explores the friars' love and propensity for preaching sermons on the Magdalen. She cleverly calls part 1, "The Mendicant Magdalen." Once again, she studies the question of Magdalen interpretation with a wide-angle lens, considering Mary Magdalen as a symbol of the *vita apostolica*, as a symbol of the active and contemplative life, and as a mystic.

Part 2 demonstrates medieval preachers' and moralists' re-creation of the Magdalen. Using this re-creation as a symbol with which to preach on the evils of vanity, luxury, prostitution, and the frailties of women, medieval preachers compared society to the prostitute Magdalen in desperate need of repentance. Refreshing is J.'s realization that beneath the seeming belittlement of women was the medieval hope and assertion that the repentance of Magdalen produced a woman who would later be dubbed, "the apostle of apostles." J.'s study is therefore saved from being derailed by anachronistic feminist outbursts and results in a product that can elevate the field of women's studies to a new level.

The need for penance is the theme of part 3. Here J. brilliantly widens her lens further to study the issue of the penitent Magdalen in the context of the broader Church, especially within the deepening call to sacramental penance, the deliberations of Lateran IV, and the penitential spirituality of the laity. When reading her proposed agenda, I questioned whether any scholar could wander through such a maze of interesting and complex material without losing both focus and reader, but J. stays on task, using her image of the penitent Magdalen as a standard by which she competently guides her readers.

Switching the focus from the preaching of clerics to the reaction of their audiences, J. concludes by examining the reception of medieval preaching on the Magdalen. She identifies the audiences as including peasants and nobles, prostitutes and virgins, men and women. Chapter 10, "In the Shadow of the Virgin," makes a valuable contribution to the topic of medieval interpretations of virginity, the possibility for "reconstructed virginity," and the penitential lifestyle. Most refreshing is that she resists the modern temptation to see penitential practices of women and laity as manipulated by evil-intentioned men, usually clerics. Her interpretation stays within the medieval worldview, thus offering a coherent perspective that is fair and intelligent.

J.'s bibliography is exhaustive, including both primary and secondary references, and her index is extensive. Certainly these tools, along with her ample footnotes and well-developed text, will make this work a standard for both women's studies and the study of sermon literature.

The book is a revision of a dissertation, and in some respects has retained its “dissertation feel.” However, after reading many medieval studies in past years which confine themselves to narrow methodologies and perspectives, a work that attempts to study a question from a broad cultural viewpoint within the confines of a methodology designed specifically to fit a particular project is a welcome contribution to the field. The book should enjoy wide readership, not only by those interested in the Magdalen, but also by students and professionals alike who might look to this study for scholarly guidance—such is its intellectual scope and methodological competence.

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HISTORY OF VATICAN II, VOLUME 3. THE MATURE COUNCIL: SECOND PERIOD AND INTERSESSION. Edited by Giuseppe Alberigo and Joseph A. Komonchak. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 2000. Pp. xiii + 532. \$80.

This third volume of the lavishly-praised *History of Vatican II* covers the second period of the council and the active intercession between the second and third periods. Like its two predecessors, it reflects Alberigo’s conviction that history is in the unfolding detail, however meandering and tortuous that detail might be. This volume is as good in sources researched as its predecessors but, for this reader, not as good in its presentation. Substantial sections are not truly *ad rem*. It may, however, outlast the first two as a monument to the council, since it deals brilliantly with the controverted genesis of the document widely recognized as the council’s major contribution to the 20th-century reform of the Catholic Church, namely, the Constitution on the Church.

Two things were new about the second period of the council. There was a new pope and a new attitude among the bishops: Rome, civil and especially ecclesiastical, was no longer unknown to them. In his presentation of the debate on the Church, Melloni shows how these two factors combined to create a more mature council. John XXIII had removed himself from the council, placing the assembly and its freedom center stage. Paul VI, on the other hand, situated himself in a new papal relationship with assembly, curia, and moderators. From the beginning of his pontificate, Paul “clearly and forcefully demanded the Curia’s acceptance of the Council” (14). He appointed four moderators, Cardinals Agagianian (Curia), Döpfner (Munich), Lercaro (Bologna), and Suenens (Malines), to assure greater efficiency in the assembly with a view to ending the council at the conclusion of, at most, a third session. His intervention, in October 1963, on the side of the moderators in the crisis over straw votes on the schema on the Church marked an important transition for the council. Another intervention, lamenting the activities of powerful curial elements who “tried to cast a shadow over the Council’s work just as it was about to reach its goal” (425), opened the way for the debate about collegiality to be brought to a successful end. His “we have won” (106) comment to the moderators, who

had successfully resisted in the assembly reactionary curial elements led by Cicognani, his Secretary of State (77), leaves no doubt as to his personal leanings. What intentions lay behind his decisions remain unknown, as his personal papers from the council are not yet available to researchers.

The crucial debate in the second period was the debate on the Church. Melloni's treatment of this debate is the most interesting chapter in the book. He traces the tortured development of the schema, highlighting the struggle inside and outside the assembly between two factions, the juridicizing faction, which had produced the preparatory, discredited document, and the communion faction. The former's power was outside the assembly, in the commissions, particularly the Doctrinal Commission; the latter's was in the assembly and the wish of the Council Fathers. It took the direct intervention of Paul VI himself to keep the debate on track and to get straw votes on October 30 on several hotly debated issues. These included overwhelmingly positive votes on the episcopacy as the highest level of the sacrament of orders and on the succession of the episcopal college to the college of Apostles, which refocused the debate on collegiality and permitted the conclusion of the overall debate on the schema on the Church. The debate on the Church, of course, and particularly its tilting toward an ecclesiology of communion, influenced other debates before the assembly, namely, the debates about bishops, liturgy, and the ecumenical approach of the Catholic Church.

A long chapter on the intersession between the second and third periods of the council is fascinating reading. It makes an important point. While the council lasted an overall 38 months, it was in session for only eight of those months. The remaining 30 months were intervals, albeit active intervals. This was particularly true of the second intersession which had six important schemas to prepare for the third session: Church, bishops, revelation, apostolate of the laity, ecumenism (with its two controverted "chapters" on Jews and religious freedom), and presence of the Church in the world, which became *Gaudium et spes*. Both the second period and the intersession were "marked by increasing pressure on Paul VI to oppose or at least rein in the trends of the majority" (498). The actions of the conservative group and the power it held in the commissions led Dossetti, a Lercaro *peritus*, to complain that the original sin of Vatican II was the parallelism between the commissions and the Roman congregations (305). Never before in the history of councils had the heads of Roman congregations also been heads of conciliar commissions. Vilanova traces the varied and tortuous journeys of these documents in the intersession, and unflatteringly details the efforts of the commissions, particularly Ottaviani's Doctrinal Commission, to exercise damage control over the outcomes.

I have complained that some sections of the book are not truly *ad rem*. I might also complain about a chapter, "The Ecumenical Commitment of the Catholic Church," which devotes only 32 pages to the crucial and hotly debated question of ecumenism and 44 pages to the unrelated questions of organization and ending of the second period. But these are only quibbles. This volume is, again, a splendid monument to both historical scholarship

and the great Catholic revolutionary event of the 20th century. For those of us who were there, it revives memories and excitement. For those not so privileged, it should be in every theological library so that they, too, can share the memory and the excitement.

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MICHAEL G. LAWLER

TRADITION AND IMAGINATION: REVELATION AND CHANGE. By David Brown. New York: Oxford University, 1999. Pp. viii + 402. \$45;

DISCIPLESHIP AND IMAGINATION: CHRISTIAN TRADITION AND TRUTH. By David Brown. New York: Oxford University, 2000. Pp. viii + 438. \$45.

John Henry Newman once likened unbelief to an epidemic—“wonderfully catching,” he put it—not because of secularizing reason, as so many others had diagnosed, but because of the allure of imagination. Newman took his jaundiced view because he knew that imagination had a clever way of initially presenting a “possible, plausible view of things which first *haunts* and at length *overcomes* the mind.” It is not “reason that is against us,” he said, “but imagination” [*The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, ed. Charles Stephen Dessain et al., vol. 30 (1977) 102; emphasis added].

Readers trained in Ignatian spirituality might wonder if Newman is not exaggerating. With its stress on the “application of the senses” and with its vividly sensate approach to prayer, Ignatian spirituality seems to imply the opposite. Is imagination only the *devil's* tool? Cannot room be made for a specifically *Christian* use of the imagination? Newman would no doubt concede the Ignatian point. Nonetheless, a tension lurks within Christian theology between reason and imagination, each in turn blamed by various authors for secularism, materialism, atheism, and the rest of the catalogue of ills.

In effect, David Brown addresses this very tension and, in so doing, has not only brought Anglican theology to a whole new level of achievement but also proposed a new role for imagination in a way that will mark a turning point in Christian esthetics.

The two volumes, although published separately, are a set. That they were conceived together is evident from anticipatory remarks in the first volume to the second and references in the second to the first. Each, however, is “free-standing”: the first volume broadly addresses the tensions in the tradition between reason and imagination—exemplified above by Newman (in one of his moods) and Ignatius Loyola; the second addresses more direct and contemporary concerns of pastoral apologetics.

It must be stressed, however, that the first volume is no essay in pure historical theology, nor is the second “merely” a pastoral guide to retreat directors. Both are passionately theological and passionately evangelical in the generic sense of being missionary-driven. They are also highly layered books. As if in imitation of Paul’s line, “I capture every thought and make

it obedient to Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5), B. enlists a vast array of conversation partners, which affects his method. For example, in a passage that largely salutes the hermeneutical work of Hans-Georg Gadamer, B. registers a legitimate demur against what has almost become a rote obeisance to Gadamer's over-invoked slogan *Horizontverschmelzung* (fusion of horizons): "But one looks in vain [in Gadamer] for adequate recognition of the fact that there are in fact potentially (and certainly legitimately) far more than just two dialogue partners, the present community and its prejudices, and the past text. For, in so far as we are aware of its history, each stage of the transmission of the tradition, including those aspects that were jettisoned, has the potential to act as a critique of our own present concerns and obsessions" (1.51).

B.'s own method he intriguingly calls "the hermeneutics between Pentecost and crib," meaning that he is trying to work between the positivity of the revelation of the Incarnation (the crib) and the ongoing interpretative task of the believing community inspired by the Spirit (Pentecost). In a purely Gadamerian setting, these two terms, *crib* and *Pentecost*, would merely serve as biblical shorthand for the two horizons, past and present, that the interpreter is supposed to "fuse." But B. chooses a more supple approach and calls Pentecost a critique of all hermeneutics, ancient and modern, precisely because the event of Pentecost describes a miracle of languages. Sensitivity to the layered nature both of the biblical texts themselves as well as of the whole gamut of interpretations subsequent to the canonization of those texts is evident in B.'s evocation of the Abraham/Isaac pericope: one must see not only how the presence of child-sacrifice in Near Eastern cultures during the second millennium before Christ governs the story at one level, but also how the hold on the imagination of Jews, Christians, and Muslims down through the ages has become part of the perceived text.

B.'s second volume deals with a different, though related, problematic: the direct and committed engagement with the text/tradition through active and appropriating discipleship. The suppleness of B.'s previous reflections stand him in good stead here, for he is able to approach some of the most neuralgic issues of contemporary theology and praxis with a nuance all too rare among those who know only the simple polarities of Gadamer's two horizons (although, *pace* B., I think Gadamer himself was more subtle in his hermeneutics than were some of his disciples).

B. is especially helpful on issues relating to feminism and the discipleship of women, as he deftly avoids a host of common pitfalls: condescension, ideologization, over-generalization, murky rhetoric, and automatic dismissal of the tradition. The following quotation captures his basic program: "On the one hand, I shall reject the view that Scripture offers in itself an adequate treatment of how the question of the equality of the two sexes should nowadays be appropriated. On the other, I shall contend that the much maligned treatment of Mary Magdalene in later tradition, so far from denigrating women, actually offers an indispensable model for human discipleship, both male and female" (2.11).

I have no quarrel with this approach. In fact, I found B.'s treatment of Mary Magdalene not just brilliant but also evocative of his earlier treatment of Isaac in the first volume—but I feel certain hesitations whenever any theologian seems to be taking his or her program too far. B. admits that his method entails a doctrine of ongoing revelation, such as the revelation to Muhammad. He also posits a stronger dichotomy between Peter and Paul than the texts of Galatians and Acts perhaps allow. In other words, in B.'s tension between crib and Pentecost, the latter too often seems to trump the former.

My only other reservation about the books centers on their accessibility. No one can doubt that B's admirable erudition and pleasing style will gain them a hearing among professional theologians, but their heft will deter the non-professional and perhaps even the graduate student. The importance of B.'s work urges a subsequent summary volume geared to a general audience; for these two volumes under review are, even with their great erudition, eminently pastoral works.

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WARRANTED CHRISTIAN BELIEF. By Alvin Plantinga. New York: Oxford University, 2000. Pp. xx + 508. \$24.95.

This volume completes the 1020-page trilogy based on Plantinga's Gifford Lectures of 1987 and Wilde Lectures of 1988. In *Warrant: The Current Debate* (1993), P. argued that the property that turns a true belief into knowledge for an individual is not that the individual is *justified* in holding that belief, but rather that the belief has "warrant" for that individual. A belief has warrant for someone, roughly, if it is formed by properly functioning cognitive faculties in an appropriate environment. This view, a form of epistemological "naturalism," has been denominated "proper function externalism." Epistemological externalists argue against epistemological internalists. The latter claim that one must have or be able to give justification for one's belief, and that one is able to know if one knows. The externalist claims that justification or knowing that one knows are unnecessary for having knowledge. P. proceeds by showing anomalies in various internalist views that do not plague proper function externalism. In *Warrant and Proper Function* (1992) he argued that proper functioning cognitive faculties can be explained cogently if and only if they have a design plan that aims at producing true beliefs. It is more likely, however, that our cognitive faculties were designed to be effective than that they arose by evolutionary chance or selection. Thus, naturalism in epistemology makes most sense if one is a supernaturalist in metaphysics.

In the present volume, P. argues that a *de facto* assumption that Christianity (at least in its great central theistic doctrines) is false is necessary to defeat a claim that Christian belief is warranted. He surveys Kantian, Freudian, Marxian, and other theories about the production of religious belief and argues that none of them defeat a belief in God formed in an

individual by properly functioning faculties in an appropriate environment. Such a belief is “basic,” i.e., not based on evidence or other beliefs, but formed “properly” by appropriately functioning faculties in response to environmental stimuli, e.g., the starry skies above. He presents an Aquinas/Calvin model of religious belief (a model either theologian might not recognize) which finds that we have a *sensus divinitatis* as part of our natural, properly functioning, epistemic equipment. Of course, sin damages such equipment, so it takes grace to repair it. P. extends this model to argue that there is no reason, in fact or theory, to doubt that the great beliefs of Christianity come to individuals “by way of the work of the Holy Spirit, who gets us to accept, causes us to believe, these great truths of the gospel. These beliefs don’t come just by way of the normal operation of our natural faculties; they are a supernatural gift” (245). He surveys alternative accounts of warrant and justification, potential defeaters from critical historians, religious pluralists, and proponents of the logical and evidential problems of evil, to show his approach undefeated by objections.

P. has essayed a *tour de force majeure*. He has established that his is a possible account of knowing in general and religious knowing in particular, and shows that devout Christian theists do not have to succumb to the bullying of atheistic philosophers because their position is as warranted, and in some parts even more warranted, than that of the bullies.

All the while, however, P. presumes so much and ignores so much that the argument of the present book is simply not credible. His epistemic subject is the isolated, natural, unsocialized, individual of the Enlightenment. He neglects to differentiate cognitive mechanisms, processes, and methods, treating them all as “natural.” He has his fellow analytic philosophers and religious liberals so squarely in his sights that he ignores the social construction of our selves and our beliefs: I may espy the heavens and be brought to belief in God—I live in a theistic tradition; a Buddhist may be brought by such stimuli to believe in Buddha-dharma. This is not necessarily an argument from pluralism against the warrantedness of Christianity, but a claim that on his model almost any serious religious tradition can be found to have as much warrant as Western monotheisms. P. dismisses these objections as “great pumpkin objections,” and fails to see their force *not* against Christianity, but against the credibility of his Aquinas/Calvin model. His radically individualist assumptions make his project less compelling than William P. Alston’s approach [*Perceiving God* (1991)] with which P. is in frequent dialogue in the present text.

Despite these criticisms (and other nits too numerous to pick here), this book—and the trilogy as a whole—is an impressive and important piece of work from a brilliant philosopher who has done what few philosophers ever have done: he has *solved* a philosophical problem, the logical problem of evil. And ably defending believers’ rights to believe from unwarranted philosophical attacks is no shabby achievement, either. Even if so much of importance seems so absent from so long a work, the trilogy has spawned and will continue to evoke substantial philosophical discussion. It is a work

of major importance in epistemology in general and religious epistemology in particular.

University of Dayton

TERRENCE W. TILLEY

BEYOND RESURRECTION. By A. J. M. Wedderburn. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999. Pp. xiv + 306. \$19.95.

Wedderburn, formerly of the University of Durham and now at the University of Munich, illustrates the extent to which the “ugly ditch” excavated by modern historical consciousness continues to challenge Christian belief and theology. He illustrates as well, less wittingly, how inadequate to meeting that challenge are the philosophical assumptions of modernity. For W., because Christian faith is faith in a person and not simply in a text, historical criticism enjoys priority among the motley of available exegetical methods. Yet historical criticism can never arrive at judgments of greater or lesser probability, and this fact, he avers, bears discomfiting ramifications for traditional Christian belief. Ultimately, he proposes, historical criticism requires radical revision of Christian self-understanding.

The neuralgic point on which W. focuses is the Resurrection of Jesus. He opens with a bracing argument that the rise of the disciples’ belief constitutes a historical datum requiring a historical explanation, among the possibilities for which is resurrection itself. Dogmatic solutions, appeals to some different sort of historicity (Barth), and efforts to collapse the Resurrection into the continuance of Jesus’ cause (Marxsen) all dodge the question of what happened to engender the belief that Jesus was raised. Indeed, despite the intractable differences among the New Testament accounts and the incoherences within them taken singly, the disciples’ initial disarray and their subsequent, unprecedented claim that a single individual had been raised join other factors to render it plausible that something happened “on the third day” that first involved Jesus’ female followers.

Further probing of that something, however, proves inconclusive. The empty tomb tradition may simply point to the women’s search for Jesus’ body, a search rendered fruitless by their ignorance of how it had been disposed of or their inability to distinguish it from other corpses in a common grave. Paul, of course, offers firsthand evidence on an appearance of the risen Lord; but while W. finds implausible G. Lüdemann’s Jungian appeal to a suppressed Christ-complex against which Paul would have reacted initially with fanatic violence, he also recognizes that psychological explanations of visionary experience cannot be excluded a priori. The upshot is a historical impasse, a dead end to which the appropriate response is reverent agnosticism. The New Testament evidence for Jesus’ Resurrection proves historically inadequate, and neither past nor present religious experience warrants a leap over the resulting epistemological gap.

Given this disappointment of what seems a Cartesian quest for certainty, W. adjusts. Resurrection is firmly embedded in the Christian creed, but as

corporeal resurrection it differs sharply from Paul's notion (to which the Gnostics could claim greater fidelity than their opponents), and it is simply unintelligible today. Theologically the notion of resurrection of the body is dispensable for belief in the God of mercy and justice whom the history of Israel and then Jesus revealed, while philosophically survival after death, embodied or not, proves impossible to conceptualize coherently.

How, then, is God to be understood? W. finds the traditional attribute of divine omnipotence, forged by the marriage of the image of an Oriental despot with Hellenistic Stoicism, a stumbling block. While God's rationality can be posited as the foundation of the evolutionary order of the universe, the experience of Israel and Jesus adds a paradoxical element. This same creator God also inspires protest against the natural and cultural suffering involved in evolution's promotion of the strongest. From this perspective God's power is solely moral, the persuasive power of a God who suffers the pain and groaning of creation. Both elements must be maintained as complementary, and W. suggests that their paradox can be reduced by appeal to an analogy with the human, simultaneously ordered through its physical constitution and yet indubitably purposive and volitional and so not reducible to that order. Yet all this pertains only to our groping to understand God; whether our understanding actually corresponds to the divine reality lies beyond human ken.

In the end W. commends a vulnerable, purely this-worldly faith in the God of Jesus that can appeal solely to the intrinsic worth of Jesus' life and message. He closes with pastoral suggestions for ministering to the dying and the bereaved, a ministry no longer burdened with the need to explain how an omnipotent God can allow suffering.

W.'s foray into historical exegesis and systematic reflection can serve profitably as a sign of the times. For all its rationalism and positivism, it cautions against any lazily triumphalistic fideism. It exposes the perduring gap between historical exegesis and contemporary catechesis and preaching. It draws into question the ongoing Enlightenment project of theodicy. It dispels any naively materialistic conceptions of the unimaginable reality of what God did in raising Jesus. In all this it deserves not easy dismissal but measured response from a faithful reason capable of vindicating itself in face of modernity's diminution of reason's scope and power.

Catholic University of America

WILLIAM P. LOEWE

THE GIFT OF THE CHURCH: A TEXTBOOK ON ECCLESIOLOGY IN HONOR OF PATRICK GRANFIELD, O.S.B. Edited by Peter C. Phan. Collegeville: Liturgical, 2000. Pp. xiv + 530. \$39.95.

Patrick Granfield has devoted his scholarly life to the Church's theological and spiritual renewal. For this reason, these 22 essays treat Catholic ecclesiology. They implicitly cluster around six themes.

One theme concerns the Second Vatican Council's theological significance. Joseph A. Komonchak's study of the council's four sessions displays how this historic event involved a radical breakthrough in the Church's self-understanding. This shift was so far-reaching that it had, as Thomas Green shows, a direct impact on the 1983 Code of Canon Law.

A second theme, the Church as mystery, surfaces in Frank Matera's analysis of the New Testament's diverse views of the Church. This diversity was not an accident, for as Pedro Rodriguez explains, talk about the Church must rely on diverse images and models in order to respect the Church's complexity. The Church as mystery is also conveyed in Michael Fahey's study on ecumenism, which recounts how the Catholic Church came to its current respect for the churches of the East as well as of the West. The Church depends on new ideas. According to Michael Scanlon, Christians can enrich their views of the Church by means of contemporary insights into human existence as interpersonal, temporal, and embodied. Moreover, the intricacies of ecclesial authority also attest to the Church as mystery. John Boyle explains aspects of the magisterium, in particular, the bishops as teachers, the degrees of authoritative teachings, the importance of reception in the Church, and the notions of assent and dissent. Finally, essays by David Granfield and Peter Phan show that a personal acknowledgment of the Church as mystery pervades the work of Patrick Granfield. The book concludes with a bibliography of Patrick Granfield's writings.

A third point of convergence among these essays is the notion of the episcopacy. Eric Plumer's history of the Church from the patristic era to the Counter Reformation illumines the emergence of differing views of papal primacy. Michael Himes's study of the Church from the 16th century to the mid-20th century highlights how Vatican II addressed the basic issues concerning the Church's nature and mission that had emerged since the Council of Trent. These two historical studies lay a foundation for more systematic reflections on the episcopacy. Susan Wood argues that the universal Church is a communion of local churches, a communion that is marked by "diversity, inculturation, and decentralization" (159). Complementing this presentation, Hermann Pottmeyer clarifies that a bishop is a sacrament of unity in a diocese; a bishop should not merely serve as a pope's spokesman. These two discussions are filled out as Richard McBrien elucidates the relation of the Petrine office to St. Peter and Rome, the tension between monarchical and collegial views of the Church, and the Church's teachings on papal primacy and infallibility.

The laity and ministry comprise a fourth topic. John Ford calls attention to today's urgent theological issues in pastoral leadership. One of these questions concerns "the differences in the way that a priest and a layperson participate in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly role of Christ" (311). Speaking to this question, Jon Nilson contends that the theological distinction between clergy and laity is not adequate for comprehending what is unfolding in Catholic ministry. For example, dioceses now depend on the pastoral leadership of lay women. Sara Butler sheds light on the situation

of women in the Catholic Church as she compares types of feminism and the magisterium's teachings on women.

The Church's mission, a fifth theme, is explicitly treated in three essays. Francis Sullivan explains that God calls the Church not to preach itself, but "to promote the reign of Christ in this world" (247). This mission includes reverence for the Spirit's activities outside the Church. In this vein, John Galvin examines how the Church has come to an awareness both of "the universality of God's salvific will" and simultaneously of the Church's "necessary role" in God's plan of salvation. But salvation is not a private matter. As Howland Sanks argues, the Church has the right and duty to address social, political, and economic issues.

A sixth topic is the Church as sacrament. According to Avery Dulles, the models of Church as sacrament, communion, and institution play primary roles in Pope John Paul II's ecclesiology. Yet the Church as sacrament cannot be taken for granted. Gerard Austin clarifies that the Eucharist must stand at "the apex" of the Church's life. At the same time, as George Tavard explains, the Church's spiritual life makes it "the locus of the divine Presence" (216). Delving further into this mystery, Frederick Jelly reflects on the intimate relationship between Mary and the Church.

The book is an excellent resource for undergraduate and graduate students, pastoral leaders, and teachers. Its essays—short, readable, well organized with headings, helpful footnotes, and selected bibliographies—provide clear, balanced orientations for further research in ecclesiology. They clarify and promote the theological and spiritual renewal that Vatican II envisioned—the renewal to which Patrick Granfield's fine work has contributed.

University of Notre Dame

ROBERT A. KRIEG

HAS GOD ONLY ONE BLESSING? JUDAISM AS A SOURCE OF CHRISTIAN SELF-UNDERSTANDING. By Mary C. Boys. New York: Paulist, 2000. Pp. viii + 393. \$29.95.

During the medieval era, when literacy was the preserve of elites, images were among the most important teaching tools of the Church. One image in particular spoke to the Christian understanding of Jews and Judaism: *Ecclesia* (symbol of the Church) standing next to *Synagoga* (symbol of Judaism). Reproduced in many places, this image always expresses the same understanding: *Ecclesia* stands tall and proud, while *Synagoga* stands dejected, often holding a broken staff. The inference is clear: The Church had replaced Israel in the affections of God, for, like Isaac in Genesis 25:19–34 and 27:1–45, God had only one blessing; it could not rest upon two peoples. Though the Christian tradition has learned to regret much in its relationship to Jews and Judaism over the past decades, Boys is adamant that this ancient reading of supersessionism still drives much of the Church's understanding of Jesus' extended family. B.'s goals in this volume are to summon the Christian Church to a radical revisioning of this foun-

dational relationship, and to offer the Jewish-Christian relationship as a case study for Christians involved in dialogue within our multifaith society.

B. has structured her text in five parts. In part 1, she offers an interpretive framework by using two stories (or “parables” understood à la Walter Wink as “condensed metaphors”): (1) the sea change that occurred in the Sisters of Our Lady of Sion when their mission shifted away from seeking the conversion of the Jews to countering anti-Semitism; and (2) encounters around problematic passages in Matthew and John between Christians and Jews. The first “parable” indicates that change for the Christian tradition is possible, if difficult; the second, that change for the Christian tradition is difficult, but possible. There we have the interpretative framework in capsule: B. argues masterfully and passionately for the “conversion” of the tradition while pointing with great cogency to the many complexities of such a call.

Part 2 is a straightforward walk through the Jewish-Christian relationship in historical perspective. Although brief, it lays an excellent foundation for subsequent chapters. Particularly impressive is B.’s contention that even after the Shoah, even after Christians have been made inescapably aware of the horrendous heritage brought about by supersessionism, the tradition struggles to move from the “conventional account of Christian origins”—within which it is not possible to avoid casting Jews and Judaism in a negative light—to an “alternative account” which builds upon new understandings of Christian origins.

The historic and theological complexities of the Jewish-Christian relationship are carefully delineated in part 3. In just under 90 pages, B. moves deftly through a dense thicket of historical data on Christian origins, e.g., those of Gerd Theissen, Raymond Brown, John Maier, and Bruce Chilton. Nevertheless, B. keeps the reader engaged and intent on continuing to seek out the glints of “something ultimate” (Wink).

Part 4 carries these insights from history and theology into the realm of worship and liturgical symbol. If in the previous section we find a skilled scholar communicating from the wealth of her insight, this section shows B. at her most pastoral, as one who cares deeply that the lessons of the first three parts of her book move into the life of the Christian community. On the Christian reading of Scripture, B. is unequivocal: “In light of all that Christianity has visited upon the Jewish people, a refusal to reinterpret our sacred scripture would be a sinful disregard of tradition” (194). On liturgy, she is adamant: the history of the Jewish people has meaning in and of itself, and not, as Christians have understood for too long, only insofar as that history points to Christ. In an even more challenging chapter on the symbolism of the Cross, B. calls those involved in Jewish-Christian dialogue to collaborate on works that nurture Christian spiritual and liturgical life without leading to the denigration of “the Other.”

The book concludes with musings about what an authentic conversion of the Church might look like. Church teaching, states B., must undergo a transformation. The ancient charge of deicide and anti-Semitism must be utterly repudiated. Repentance is the only appropriate Christian response

to the Shoah. Jews are the beloved of God, Christian proselytism must cease, the Jewish State must be recognized. To many Christians, these issues will be very difficult to address, but B. has a singular gift for raising them in such a way as to make conversation inevitable.

This is perhaps the best one-volume educational tool for exploring the Jewish-Christian relationship. In it, B. has brought together and synthesized key insights, writing effectively and clearly, with a heart for both dialogue and the Church. Copious endnotes and a fine bibliography ensure that this text will be an important addition to seminary and synagogue libraries, as well as to the bookshelves of all committed to further understanding.

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GARY A. GAUDIN

TEOLOGIA ECUMENICA: LA RICERCA DELL'UNITÀ TRA LE CHIESE CRISTIANE. By Peter Neuner. Translated from the German by Gianluca Montaldi. Biblioteca di teologia contemporanea, vol. 110. Brescia: Queriniana, 2000. Pp. 339. Lire 55,000.

The book under review is the Italian translation of Neuner's *Ökumenische Theologie* (1997). The German original was not available to me for purposes of comparison, but it is to the translator's credit that the book can be read through without one's being aware that it is a translation. In five chapters, N. presents a comprehensive survey of the contemporary ecumenical movement. Chapter 1 sets the stage by tracing the history of the concept of and motivation for ecumenism, and chapter 2 fills this out by relating the history of the ecumenical movement as such. Here N. calls attention to the diverse reasons for involvement and the multiple goals of ecumenical dialogue. This is particularly helpful, since the ecumenical movement is characterized by a welter of frequently incompatible ideals, and it is useful to have a sense right from the beginning of what some of these ideals are.

Chapter 3 lists the contributions to the ecumenical movement made by the various confessions (Orthodox, Reformed, Free, Old Catholic and Roman Catholic). Chapter 4, notably one of the book's shortest, describes some of the breakthroughs resulting from ecumenical dialogue. Chapter 5, by far the longest, details the problems that continue to face those involved in ecumenical discussions—ranging from Marian devotion and mixed marriages to sacraments and the papacy. N. not only lists these subjects, but he also presents the positions on either side of the debate. A brief appendix follows this, in which N. discusses some development in the ecumenical movement from 1997 to the present. This material, which brings the book up-to-date from the time the German original went to press, has been added for the Italian edition.

A few critical observations are in order. First, N.'s history of the division of Christendom depicts the process as a series of defections from unity with the Roman Catholic Church. This may well be the case with the Reformed

tradition, but it is not at all evidently true of the Christian East. (Interestingly, many of N.'s remarks about the role of the Roman Catholic Church in the WCC are reminiscent of Aesop's "sour grapes"—which perhaps is connected with the implicit priority assigned to the Roman Catholic Church.) Throughout the book, even when N. notes that the Orthodox have been better represented than any other demographic, Eastern Christians and their concerns are presented only marginally. In most cases, as with the number of sacraments, the importance of the episcopacy, or the propriety of infant baptism, the Orthodox position is simply assimilated to the Anglican or Catholic position.

So when N. relates the cooling of Orthodox enthusiasm for the WCC, especially after the 1991 conference in Canberra and unmistakably evident in the truncated representation at the 1998 conference in Harare, he regularly connects this to the collapse of Communism and attendant difficulties in Eastern Europe. No doubt, there is something to this. But many of the developments that were proximal causes for the withdrawal of the Orthodox were denounced decades ago, for instance, by Fr. Georges Florovsky, the well-known Orthodox ecumenist whose name is surprisingly never mentioned in the book.

One event in Canberra that significantly estranged the Orthodox participants was the secretary general's impassioned cry that this conference should be the last with a separated Eucharist (68). On N.'s presentation, it is considerably easier to understand the secretary general's motivation than the Orthodox participants' discomfort—evidence that, as the book progresses, N. quietly but decisively opts for one vision of ecumenism over the rest. Quoting a variety of sources, N. endorses the view that what requires justification is not reunion but continued separation. This is certainly a legitimate perspective, but it is not universally shared. All this gives the odd impression that, while a multiplicity of ideals and goals is an enriching characteristic of the movement in theory, only some ideals and goals are in fact acceptable. In other words, N.'s assessment of the contemporary state of affairs is often one-sided. This is disappointing, especially in the light of his remarkable ability to set out the varied streams that have fed into the WCC and to explain vexed problems in their full complexity.

On the whole, the book is an exceptionally lucid and useful introduction to the current ecumenical situation, full of insightful remarks and important suggestions. While an Italian translation might not be universally helpful in the English-speaking world, the success of this translation, it may be hoped, will prompt an English translation.

University of Durham

A. M. CASIDAY

LES DIMENSIONS SOCIALES DE LA FOI: POUR UNE THÉOLOGIE SOCIALE. By René Coste. Paris: Cerf, 2000. Pp. 555. Fr. 240.

In his introduction Coste says he is attempting "une synthèse nouvelle" (27) in the field of social theology. Indeed, the volume is the fruit of a

lifetime's research, matured in C.'s more than 30 books on all the major themes touching this topic. It is a genuinely theological inquiry, skillfully articulated with the appropriate theological instruments. The latter sets off his synthesis from the familiar treatises on social ethics that focus primarily on the social sciences and are only later to be assimilated and judged from a believing perspective. C.'s starting point is the Christian faith, and his whole effort is to show how the gospel is inherently and unavoidably social, just as de Lubac had done earlier.

Talk of social theology immediately raises difficulties in English. First of all "notre choix épistémologique" (21) in no way involves a faith ethic that downgrades ethical reason as secondary. Reason is needed to concretize the gospel message in right choices that can become social practices. And so faith comes to understand society in terms of the Kingdom values of love, justice, peace, and the reconciliation proclaimed by Jesus. Second, C. distinguishes his intent from the Social Gospel movement in America early last century and from Metz's political theology. He believes that the political should fall under the category of the social.

In many ways, C. has consciously carried forward and deepened Vatican II's project in *Gaudium et spes*. The present task is to stimulate faith into giving fresh answers to the challenges raised by the contemporary world. C. is convinced that faith and reason cooperating together can discover the fullness of the *humanum*. It is no accident that his work is divided into two parts, foundations and axes of Christian social thought, accurately reflecting the Pastoral Constitution's structure. The chapter headings clearly formulate his guiding principles. Scripture's social dimensions undergird a hermeneutical grasp of Old Testament teachings on the human person created in God's image, on liberation, justice, peace, and on the Decalogue. Charity is the first and basic criterion of a New Testament ethic of the Kingdom. C. analyzes extensively both the World Council of Churches' and the Catholic Church's contribution to social thought. He demonstrates how theological reasoning arises from attentively listening to God's Word and putting it into practice as "une éthique interhumaine universelle" (182–98). He treats every person as a global citizen so that global problems now demand a dialogue engaging the whole of humanity. Theology can come to the service of moral decisions affecting humanity's future by employing an interdisciplinary method. Part 1's final chapter incorporates the above principles into the Church's evangelizing mission and pastoral practice.

Part 2 argues that the great axes of Christian involvement in the world are culture, politics, peace, human rights, the economy, and ecology. This part has two impressive features. The chapters build logically and smoothly from one to the next, and they integrate themes familiar to moral theologians, such as life issues and family affairs, into social theology. In other words, C. envisages the whole of moral theology from the angle of the social. This perspective reinforces his point that the investigation into social teaching rightfully belongs to moral theology.

Readers will find the footnotes helpful, especially those giving bibliographies. C. cites sources on globalization, mass media, the use of science and technology, styles of governance etc., not only from the social sciences but also from history and philosophy for the development of human rights. His study of church and United Nations' documents is both astute and informative. His constant attention to ecumenism makes the book a truly ecumenical social theology. Allied to his ecumenical concern is a concern for a universal dialogue among the world's peoples, cultures, and religions. He does not hesitate to suggest concrete strategies for achieving international peace. When discussing faith and culture, politics and morality, economics and human development, C. bases his arguments on scriptural insights that result in practical decisions and strategies in the present circumstances.

Perhaps the book would be better had C. given notice to the revival of practical philosophy. He does not avoid philosophy, but some neo-Aristotelians' ideas on *phronesis* would harmonize with his synthesis and strengthen his position. This accord confirms how fruitful and correct his method is. The book, particularly in the craft of its exposition, its simplicity, and sense of Christian hope, can serve as a model to seekers of a new shape for social theology.

Accademia Alfonsiana, Rome

TERENCE KENNEDY, C.Ss.R.

THEOLOGY WITHOUT WEAPONS: THE BARTHIAN REVOLT IN MODERN THEOLOGY. By Gary Dorrien. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000. Pp. x + 239. \$29.95.

This erudite narrative, centering on a reinterpretation of the very essence of the theological enterprise of Karl Barth (1886–1968), is meant to inform and to assist contemporary Protestant readers who are seeking a viable path between liberalism and neo-orthodoxy. Dorrien recounts the arduous struggle of Barth to base Christian theology solely on the self-authenticating Word of God as preached in the Church, with sovereign disdain for the comparable tenets of world religions, the culturally relevant insights of philosophy, the scrutinizing canons of the historical-critical method, and the mystical and moral repercussions of personal experience.

Although D. is admittedly not a Barthian, he appreciates the actual relevance of the major principles underlying the unprecedented revolt that the Swiss Reformed theologian initiated after World War I against the then prevailing liberal Protestant thought. This is evident when D. writes: "One symptom of the moral confusion and disorder that pervades our culture is the utter fragmentation of contemporary theology" (12). Yet, D. patently defends the principal concerns of the Christian feminist movement, and strongly urges that a revised form of Protestant neo-orthodoxy be more amenable to addressing postmodern objections to Christian faith.

These convictions lead him to the guiding idea of his reinterpretation of the Barthian return to the sound tenets of Luther and Calvin: despite his

forceful negations, Barth was in fact subtly influenced by the anti-dogmatic premises of the progressive Protestantism he combated, and especially by its articulation in the thought of his initially esteemed professors in Berlin and Marburg at the turn of the century. These factors were far more determinative of the salutary aspects of his theology than Barth ever could acknowledge. Although differing from other scholars, such as Eberhard Meichels and Bruce McCormack, D. joins them in reassessing the *Church Dogmatics* by taking up the thesis first proposed by Wilhelm Pauck in *Karl Barth: Prophet of a New Christianity?* (1931) concerning neo-orthodoxy as the “child of theological liberalism” (10).

The other protagonist in D.’s narrative is the charismatic and genial figure of Wilhelm Herrmann (1846–1922), intellectual disciple of Immanuel Kant and of the young Friedrich Schleiermacher. Herrmann taught Barth to distinguish between the catholicizing tendency of Luther’s dogmatics and the evangelical power of his Christianity, a “creed-subverting possibility of living by faith alone through grace” (24). And if Herrmann himself was less committed to strict adherence to dogma and tradition, he adamantly maintained that Christ’s witness to faith was the basis of Christian confession. Thus, D. states the following about the forceful undertow exerted by Herrmann on Barth: “Though he replaced Herrmann’s anthropocentric hand pump with the giant waterfall of the biblical Word and orthodox dogma, it was precisely the Herrmannian elements in Barth’s theology that saved it from degenerating into a sterile orthodox dogmatism” (174–75).

How will this audacious rereading of the Barthian revolt be accepted by Protestants? Will it fall between the chairs, since it well might infuriate the loyal followers of Barth, on the one hand, and those of Paul Tillich, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Langdon Gilkey on the other? Classical Protestants could balk at the thesis that the admirable achievement of Barth be regarded as “saved,” and thus palatable, only by means of his cryptic allegiance to the “creed-subverting” evangelism of Herrmann. And revisionist Protestants could regard D. as being merely sophistic in affirming that Barth’s sincere neo-orthodox veneer over his basic liberalism is clearly more prudent and effective than the confusion and fragmentation caused by their blatant advocacy of disparate liberation theologies which drive most American Protestants from the pews of their churches.

I would tend to side with the potential revisionist Protestant critics of this learned yet cautious book, in that D.’s support of Christian feminism seems incongruous with his disregard for other forms of liberation theology on behalf of suffering people in the United States and abroad, who are unjustly and even violently treated not only by secularized but also by confessing Christians. I suspect the viable path which many Protestants, and Catholics as well, are seeking between rigid fundamentalism and superficial prophetism is personified by such figures as Desmond Tutu and Helder Camara. Both are faith-filled archbishops who neither lament that many members of their dioceses no longer come to church nor become doctri-

nally unbending in chiding them. Rather they provide them examples of civil reconciliation and of preferential option for the poor which, as Paul attests in Roman 12:1–2, are for Christians ever actual means of confessing their faith by rendering their life itself a spiritual worship pleasing to God.

Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome

PHILIP J. ROSATO, S.J.

NEW COMMENTARY ON THE CODE OF CANON LAW. Edited by John P. Beal, James A. Coriden, and Thomas J. Green. New York: Paulist, 2000. Pp. xxxvii + 1952. \$89.95.

In 1985, only two years after the promulgation of the revised Latin Code of Canon Law, *The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary* was published under the auspices of the Canon Law Society of America. The work was recognized immediately as a scholarly and reliable guide to the revised law, firmly rooted in the teaching of the Second Vatican Council. Now, 15 years later, following the recently published revised English translation of the Code, the Canon Law Society of America has commissioned an entirely new and comprehensive commentary by canonists from North America and Europe. It is a timely publication. The Code is now almost 20 years old, and there have been numerous authentic interpretations of the canons as well as many new legislative documents that call for comment and application.

It is important to remember that this is a *new* commentary, not simply a revised edition of the 1985 volume: there are 36 contributors, most of whom did not contribute to the earlier commentary. Familiar names, of course, reappear and there are magisterial commentaries by L. Wrenn (on processes), J. Provost (on ecclesiastical offices), J. Coriden (on the ministry of the Word), F. McManus and J. Huels (on the sanctifying function of the Church). T. Green provides an updated commentary on penalties, but he also has a commentary on the reorganization of the Roman Curia (canons 360–361) and a detailed and well-documented commentary on the apostolic constitution *Pastor Bonus* (1988). Many new contributors, however, including seven women, have brought fresh insights to the commentary.

Another difference between the new commentary and the earlier volume lies in its purpose. The 1985 commentary was concerned with comparing and contrasting the 1983 Code and the 1917 Code, which it replaced. The new commentary “focuses on the lived experience of the canons in use since 1983. It emphasises the contemporary understanding and application of the canons based on that experience” (xix). It would be a mistake, however, to think of the new commentary as a replacement of the 1985 volume. It is complementary to the earlier volume, which still retains its usefulness.

After a short preface by the editors, the *New Commentary* opens with a clear and well argued discussion on theology and canon law by L. Orsy,

presented with all the clarity, theological acumen, and common sense to which we are long accustomed in his writings. Then comes a detailed presentation by F. McManus of legislation promulgated since 1983. He gives an account and critical appraisal of a number of key documents: *Pastor Bonus* (1988), on the reform of the Roman Curia; *Ex corde ecclesiae* (1990) on Catholic higher education; the revised Ecumenical Directory (1993); the interdicasterial instruction on “Certain Questions Regarding the Collaboration of the Non-Ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priests” (1997); *Ad tuendam fidem* (1998), on the profession of faith; and the *motu proprio Apostolos suos* (1998) on the theological and juridical nature of episcopal conferences. McManus also draws attention to the significance of the encyclicals of Paul VI and John Paul II in interpreting and applying canon law, rightly highlighting the encyclical *Ut unum sint* (1995) “as opening the way to all kinds of disciplinary development and institutional change” (25). The two essays by Orsy and McManus form a distinguished contribution to the current discussions concerning the role of law in the Church.

Another welcome feature of the new commentary is the attention given throughout to the canonical legislation of the Eastern Catholic churches. There are frequent references to the *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches* (1990), but there is also a well-documented “overview” by John Faris of Eastern Church legislation along with quite a comprehensive bibliography. Unfortunately the table of corresponding canons between the Code of Canon Law and the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches has been omitted. It can be found in the 1999 *Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition* (637–57).

The *New Commentary* provides the text of each of the 1752 canons of the Code with a commentary on each canon. Space does not permit a detailed description of this feature, but some outstanding characteristics of this work can be noted: the attention paid to the history and development of the laws, the care taken to link the commentary to the teaching of Vatican II, and the provision of sound documentation within the commentary and of well-selected bibliographies. A particularly good example is the commentary by J. Beal and L. Robitaille on marriage canons 1055–1165. The discussion of the nature of the marriage covenant and matrimonial consent is firmly grounded in the teaching of *Gaudium et spes* and the jurisprudence of the Church’s tribunals. The canons on the Pauline Privilege and the dissolution of valid non-sacramental marriages are explained with admirable precision and clarity. This is canonical commentary at its best: clear, balanced, and informed. Similar comments could be made of the other parts of the commentary. A high standard has been maintained throughout.

The commentary has a comprehensive index of more than 90 pages. It is well-bound, beautifully produced, and easy to consult. The Canon Law Society of America is to be congratulated. The *Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition* (1999) and this *New Commentary* together constitute an

invaluable instrument for all teachers and students of canon law and all who are interested in the Church's life and discipline.

Campion Hall, Oxford

CLARENCE GALLAGHER, S.J.

BEYOND UNIVERSAL REASON: THE RELATION BETWEEN RELIGION AND ETHICS IN THE WORK OF STANLEY HAUERWAS. By Emmanuel Katongole. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 2000. Pp. xvi + 345. \$30.

Read as a philosophical argument in its own right or as an interpretive essay on Stanley Hauerwas, Katongole's well-written book is a significant contribution. In the former case, K.'s central goal is "to defend a historical conception of the moral life in general, and of moral reason in particular" (252). His central contention that moral reflection is inherently historical and always stands within a particular social/cultural-linguistic tradition is straightforward and is not a new argument. Extremely helpful, however, is his unembarrassed insistence on moral particularity without the assumption that the only alternative to the search for a transcendent or neutral moral vantage point is moral relativism or a will to power.

Read along these lines as an argument for a historicist view of the moral life, K. successfully uses his discussion of Hauerwas as an organizational tool. That is, his exposition of Hauerwas allows him to draw together (in a surprisingly linear and coherent manner) numerous topics and authors: critiques of "quandary ethics," Kantian approaches to ethics, and the "fundamental option"; discussions of character, agency, emotions, and human finitude; summaries of Aristotle's *phronesis*, Iris Murdoch's conception of morality as vision, and Alasdair MacIntyre's notion of "practices"; development of the category of "narrative" to describe both the nature of human existence and a pattern of moral rationality; arguments drawing on Sabina Lovibond, Wittgenstein, MacIntyre, George Lindbeck, and John Milbank against charges of subjectivism and relativism.

What emerges from this synthesis of various authors and strains of thought is a historical conception of the moral life that is among the most coherent and comprehensive to date. At a minimum, K. challenges the ahistorical character of modern philosophy's assumptions about moral agency and rationality while also providing a plausible historicist account that locates notions of truth, rational justification, and objectivity within and between social/cultural-linguistic traditions (not above them). This is no small accomplishment!

Despite this achievement, K.'s argument would be stronger if it were less abstract. For example, K. argues that in certain situations the creative tension within traditions and the dynamic dialectic between traditions pulls against exclusiveness and self-deception and pulls toward a type of objectivity. While he makes a good conceptual point here, his argument would be more persuasive if he narrated examples of these dynamics at work within and between specific traditions. The lack of such concrete narratives plagues most of this work.

This lack is in contrast to K.'s first chapter, which provides a "genealogical survey" of how "we came to talk of religion and ethics as distinct spheres" (6). Consisting of three overlapping narratives, this survey looks at the shifting relationship between Christianity and culture within post-Reformation Europe, at the quest for moral autonomy from the influence of the Church, and at Kant's philosophical justification of morality. This helpful survey shows that the distinction between religion and ethics is the result of a particular history and is not a perennial problem or conceptual necessity. Unfortunately, K. does not show a similar interest in narration throughout the rest of the book.

When read as an interpretive essay, K. is slightly less successful in expounding Hauerwas's work than in making his own argument. On the positive side, he provides a theoretical account of moral rationality that is compatible with Hauerwas's work and that enables the reader to decipher many of Hauerwas's cryptic remarks on rationality, moral justification, narrative, and so on. For example, by highlighting the parallel between Aristotle's *phronesis* and aspects of Hauerwas's interest in narrative, K. clarifies the often slippery and imprecise notion of story. Similarly, his discussions of Lovibond, Wittgenstein, Lindbeck, and Milbank provide plausible accounts of what Hauerwas means to suggest when he gestures toward these authors without extensive explanation.

Still, there is something distorting about providing a philosophical reading of Hauerwas's "theological politics"—a designation developed by Arne Rasmusson and affirmed by Hauerwas. This distortion is visible at one level in K.'s insistent distancing of Hauerwas from Karl Barth, despite Hauerwas's affirming an affinity for Barth more often than for Lovibond. More significantly, K. seldom mentions the work of John Howard Yoder; yet, Hauerwas's work, at least since *The Peaceable Kingdom*, is unintelligible apart from his interaction with Yoder.

At another level, the problem is that K.'s philosophical reading misplaces the emphasis in Hauerwas's work. At least since the mid-1980s, Hauerwas's attention to historical particularity, narrative, virtue, etc., follows from, and is in the service of, his focus on the Church living in fidelity to the story of God's dealing with us in Israel and Jesus. With K.'s exposition, one too easily assumes that Hauerwas attends to the latter as a byproduct of the former.

These reservations aside, this fine work deserves to be read widely.

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JOSEPH J. KOTVA, JR.

CATHOLIC ETHICISTS ON HIV/AIDS PREVENTION. Edited by James F. Keenan, S.J., with Jon D. Fuller, S.J., M.D., Lisa Sowle Cahill, and Kevin Kelly. New York: Continuum, 2000. Pp. 351. \$24.95.

This is a significant book not only because of the importance of the issue of the HIV/AIDS pandemic but also because of how the authors address

the issue. Over 50 million persons on our globe have been HIV infected, two-thirds of them in Africa. In some African countries 25% of adults may be affected. No part of the world escapes this plague.

To address the issue, the editors have brought together Catholic moral theologians from all over the world. To my knowledge, such an approach has never been attempted before on a single issue. In fact, in the U.S. the present generation of moral theologians has not been in contact with other Catholic moral theologians throughout the world as the past generations had been. There is a danger of Catholic moral theology in the U.S. losing its catholicity. Today it is much harder to read and to be in dialogue with moral theologians throughout the world: Many more authors are writing in the field; the literature in the field itself and in cognate disciplines in English alone is so huge that no one can claim to be familiar with all of it; and many today do not have the language skills as well as the time or opportunity to read theologians in other languages.

This volume makes an important step in recognizing the universality of Catholic moral theology, since the authors come from all over the globe. However, as the primary editor notes, despite many efforts, the convenors were unable to enlist more female authors and more contributors from Central Europe and Asia.

The book is divided into two parts. Part 1 contains 26 case studies from around the world; part 2 contains seven essays addressing issues in moral theology, with some repetition and overlapping. At first I thought the reader would be better off just sampling some of the 26 case studies. But reading the whole book convinced me that all these essays together help to make one aware both of the magnitude of the problem and of the concrete face of HIV/AIDS and its prevention in particular cultures and countries.

The volume presents not only the depth and breadth of the problem but also its complexity. The case studies well illustrate the need for broad approaches to the pandemic that include both individual and societal aspects. Some of the articles strongly support needle exchange programs and condoms to prevent the spread of the virus but realize that these means are only a part of a much bigger project. The two primary social problems (or viruses, in the words of Kevin Kelly) contributing to the pandemic are the inferior status of women in many parts of the world and poverty. Many of the articles rightly emphasize how important these two factors are. Women are often the victims because of their gender and their poverty. Problems of homophobia, prejudice, testing and the availability of drugs, and the reluctance of some people in the Church to accept the need for condoms and needle exchange programs also come to the fore. Education and counseling receive attention in some chapters. Two authors in different situations (Odozor, on the one hand, and Gleeson and Leary, on the other hand) disagree about a professional breaking confidentiality to help an innocent partner.

The authors generally come from the progressive or liberal approach to moral theology. No one defends the position denying needle exchange programs or the use of condoms to prevent the spread of the virus. How-

ever, many chapters call to mind the reluctance of church authorities and individual clerics to accept such approaches. A chapter or two discussing this reluctance would have been most helpful. I am afraid that the editors are too optimistic in asserting that “we should expect to see Catholic leadership loosening its resistance and returning to its traditional ways of addressing cases while upholding existing teachings” (28).

There is a danger at times that the editors want to have it both ways. They staunchly maintain that the Catholic moral tradition can and should contribute very positively to alleviating the plague of HIV/AIDS. On the other hand, they argue (correctly, in my view) that the tradition has to change its own sexual teaching. The last seven chapters definitely promote this change with the first two dealing with progress and change in Catholic moral teaching in general. Robert Burggraeve explicitly argues for an ethics of growth with the existing teaching providing an “ethical optimum” or a “goal to strive for.” Many other authors frequently refer to the existing Catholic teaching on sexuality as “an ideal.”

In sum, this is an important book because of both the topic and the depth and breadth of its discussion.

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CHARLES E. CURRAN

ESPERANZA Y SOLIDARIDAD: UNA FUNDAMENTACIÓN ANTHROPOLÓGICO-TEOLÓGICA DE LA MORAL CRISTIANA EN LA OBRA DE JUAN ALFARO. By Humberto Miguel Yáñez. Estudios, vol. 71. Madrid: Comillas, 1999. Pp. 414.

The dialogue between moral theology and biblical studies has been a common and indispensable theme since the Second Vatican Council. As a result, moral argument has surpassed the naive citation of Scripture found in the manuals of theology before the council. Moral theologians have recognized the insufficiency of Scripture in terms of methodology and content.

Recognizing the insufficiency of Scripture, however, does not diminish the theological character of the moral enterprise. Rather, as Yáñez’s remarkable work demonstrates, it highlights the need of moral theology to take account of its place within theology as a whole. As a theological science, moral theology needs to be nurtured by the other theological specializations, in particular fundamental and dogmatic theology. The conversation with fundamental and dogmatic theology is an emerging one in the literature of moral theology, a literature still too often dominated by normative discussions. Contact with fundamental and dogmatic theology will introduce the categories of revelation, grace, Christology, and ecclesiology into moral discourse. Consequently, moral theologians will become aware of the underlying theological anthropology operative in their work.

As a partner in this important conversation, Y. has chosen the work of the late Spanish theologian Juan Alfaro, longtime professor at the Grego-

rian University and one of the most influential theologians in Europe and Latin America since the Council. In addition to his many entries in *Sacramentum mundi*, he is perhaps best known in the English-speaking world for his contribution to the 1971 synodal document, *Justice in the World*. As a moral theologian, Y.'s aim is not to critique Alfaro, but to use his work to expose and nurture the theological roots of moral discourse.

Y. identifies an anthropological and a christological component to Alfaro's work. For Alfaro, reflection on human experience reveals an openness (*apertura*) to transcendence in a way that revelation is interpreted in an anthropological key. God's revelation is not propositional but resonates with the deepest aspirations and hopes of the human spirit. Second, God's offer of God's self reaches its climax in the person of Jesus Christ in a way that anthropology is interpreted in a christological key; Jesus Christ is the fullest and most alluring example of what it means to be human. As the fullness of humanity, Jesus' salvific and liberating action on the cross becomes the paradigm for all Christian praxis. Ultimately, our action in the world is grounded in God's action toward us.

Y. finds in Alfaro's theological anthropology a foundation for moral reflection that successfully goes beyond the overly abstract and objective conception of human nature found in the manuals before the Council. In Alfaro's theological anthropology there is a deep interpenetration of the transcendental and immanent dimensions of our lives. The acceptance of God's offer of salvation and liberation in Jesus Christ impacts how we dwell in the world; it affects our attitudes toward life, death, history, and others in the human community; it determines the actions that constitute our unique and unrepeatable histories. In this way, faith illuminates our reason and grace animates our freedom.

Central to Alfaro's theological anthropology is that the experience of God draws us into solidarity with others in the human community. This insight allows Y. to reintegrate theological reflection and moral action. Here Y. goes beyond the traditional themes of the fundamental option and the *proprium* of Christian ethics and, like Alfaro, construes moral action from the perspective of liberation theology. Though the liberation referred to by Alfaro and Y. goes beyond any political liberation to include the liberation from sin and death, it is important not to limit liberation to a spiritualized conception of salvation that is divorced from actual human experience and suffering.

The integration of both conceptions of liberation means that the vocation of the Christian embodies a project that works for a better humanity: actions on behalf of justice embody the Christian's love of neighbor; they continue the effective history of Jesus' liberating action found in the cross; they witness to the Christian's salvific experience of grace. For the Christian, then, solidarity with the poor becomes an urgent moral imperative; creating a more just world becomes the practical side of faith.

FINDING THE TREASURE: LOCATING CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS LIFE IN A NEW ECCLESIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT. By Sandra M. Schneiders, I.H.M. *Religious Life in the New Millennium*, vol. 1. New York: Paulist, 2000. Pp. xxx + 450. \$22.95.

This first volume of a two-volume work is a magnificent achievement for which Schneiders deserves the gratitude and plaudits not only of her main intended audience, North American Roman Catholic women religious, but also of all religious and all who care deeply about the Church. This volume, and, I presume, its successor, will become the standard text for understanding religious life for years to come. It is a superb example of the kind of careful, scholarly, forthright, honest, and passionately committed theological reflection so needed in our time. "Finding the Treasure" is an apt title for this first volume, as it aims to locate Catholic religious life "in the vastly expanded context in which it now finds itself" (xxvi). S.'s thesis is that Catholic religious life is an organic life form whose unifying and defining principle is "the exclusive, lifelong God-quest centered in a particular kind of love of Jesus which calls some people to a life of consecrated celibacy lived in community and mission. The meaning of the life which provides the principle of self-identity . . . is the love of Jesus in the unique form of total and irrevocable self-gift to the exclusion of any other primary relationship, life project, or cause" (364).

In part 1 S. locates religious life in its human context. First, because analogous life forms exist in all religious cultures, S. uses the notion of archetype developed by social scientists to argue that religious life is not alien to human being. Second, careful analysis of the concept of life form enables her to face the difficult issues of the exclusivity and the future of particular congregations in a very helpful, honest, and hopeful way. Third, she situates present-day religious life in the context of postmodernity, showing how religious have had to move culturally from the Middle Ages to modernity to postmodernity in the space of just 30 years.

Part 2 aims to locate religious life in its ecclesial context. First, S. gives the theological argument for her central thesis which leads to the conclusion that religious life has a prophetic function within the Church. Then in two insightful and moving chapters she uses John of the Cross's concept of the dark night to illuminate the struggles of religious over the past 30 years. The next two chapters "address the confusion around the 'ecclesiastical location' of religious in the Church that has been precipitated by the otherwise very positive theological developments of Vatican II in regard to vocations and states of life in the Church" (280-81). Again S. makes careful and insightful distinctions and addresses several neuralgic issues honestly and helpfully, among them the effect on religious of mandatory celibacy for priests, the question of canonical status and its effect on the prophetic role of religious in the Church, and the sexualization of power relations in the Church. An intriguing and thought-provoking section argues that women religious should not seek ordination even if it were possible because of "the

fundamental tension, if not contradiction, between an intrinsically hierarchical vocation and a prophetic one" (269).

The final two chapters offer a careful analysis of the concept of charism in relation to the form of religious life which has evolved among women religious, a form S. calls "mobile ministerial religious life, a form that is simultaneously ministerial without being ordained and religious without being cloistered" (311). This form of life, she argues, has a prophetic function in the Church, a function that flows from its very nature. She then discusses three arenas for prophetic presence by religious of North America at this time: interreligious encounter, the dialectic between religion and spirituality, and feminism in the ecclesial context. In these arenas religious have much to contribute to the Church's development even though they will suffer in the Church itself for their prophetic stance. "No one (at least no one in her right mind) undertakes this prophetic vocation on her own initiative. It is a response to a call, mysterious in its origin and in its manifestation. It is finally a response of love to Love, and that is more than sufficient to account for its totality and its permanence, even in a world of fragmented commitments and hedged bets" (358).

This book is itself an example of the prophetic charism of religious in the Church. It is courageous, challenging, thought-provoking, and hopeful—in a word, prophetic. I hope that it will be read and studied by all who care about the future of religious life.

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WILLIAM A. BARRY, S.J.

THOMAS MERTON'S PARADISE JOURNEY: WRITINGS ON CONTEMPLATION. By William H. Shannon. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger, 2000. Pp. 307. \$12.95.

Shannon's contributions to Merton studies include general editorship of five volumes of selected Merton letters and the earlier edition of this work, *Thomas Merton's Dark Path: The Inner Experience of a Contemplative* (1981). S. claims this book to be "an extensive revision . . . (with numerous changes and additions)" (3); chapters 4 and 9 do indeed comprise new material. Identifying contemplation as central to Merton's identity and monastic vocation, S. assesses Merton's publications over a 20-year period and analyzes the development in Merton's understanding of the apophatic tradition to which he was most attracted.

S. proves a reliable guide. Merton's early elitism about contemplative experience, his contempt for the world, and what S. identifies as a persistent dualism are critiqued vis-à-vis *Seeds of Contemplation*. The attention S. gives to Merton's *The Ascent to Truth*, a study of John of the Cross interpreted in Thomas Aquinas's Scholastic categories, is problematic because that volume is a literary (and theological) failure. This raises the overarching question about S.'s choice of texts. He ignores Merton's *Bread in the Wilderness*, which was written during the same period and arguably offers a richer theology of the Psalms and contemplation. For the greater

part of the 1950s, Merton worked on *The New Man*, a book rich in patristic and Pauline theology—also passed over by S.

S. makes a compelling case for the importance of Merton's essay, "Notes for a Philosophy of Solitude," to examine, along with solitude, the related issues of diversion, poverty, and social witness in contemplative life. The book's longest chapter (on *The Inner Experience*) repeats S.'s earlier conviction that this 1959 text is pivotal for understanding Merton's writings on contemplation. (Unfortunately, S. misleads readers by referring only to an archival typescript of *The Inner Experience* and by claiming, on the book jacket, that only scholars have access to it through the original manuscript, whereas in fact the entire work was serialized in *Cistercian Studies*.) S. offers a lucid interpretation of Merton's spirituality of the "true self" as the key to contemplation in both this work and in *New Seeds of Contemplation*, and offers a helpful account of the variations in tone, content, and voice between the 1949 edition of *New Seeds* and its 1962 revision. S.'s debt to the textual studies undertaken by Donald Grayston is evident and acknowledged.

Similarly, S. analyzes textual variations between Merton's posthumously published *The Climate of Monastic Prayer* and *Contemplative Prayer*, ably interpreting the Kierkegaardian sense of anxiety or "dread" in the light of Isaac of Stella's "a hell of mercy and not of wrath" (202). Scrutiny of Merton's use of "meditation" rather than "contemplation" throughout these texts offers plausible evidence of the influence of Eastern contemplative traditions on his vocabulary and passion for interreligious dialogue. Turning to *Zen and the Birds of Appetite*, written in 1968 (the year of Merton's death), S. enables readers to understand Merton's attraction to Zen as apophatic, an "awakening" experience of contemplation.

The question S. leaves unanswered is, Why arbitrarily confine oneself to an exclusive "canon within the Merton canon"? The virtual absence of Merton's poetry from the study of his contemplative experience vexes, if one remembers the importance of poetry to John of the Cross, among others. Is this why S. avoids mention of Merton's lengthy essay for *Commonweal*, "Poetry and Contemplation: A Reappraisal" (1958)? Merton claims that poetry is a form of knowledge that cannot be gained in any other way. S. neglects to examine the relationship between this poetic, or evaluative, form of knowledge and contemplation. This omission could explain his narrow selection of Merton's writings on contemplation. While S. includes occasional excerpts from the recently published seven volumes of Merton's journals, he does not do justice to this enormous primary source that offers continuous cameos of Merton's contemplative experience.

S. fails to give evidence that this revised book expands either his methodology or the fuller range of Merton texts that contribute to our understanding of contemplation. A new chapter on Merton's more visible social responsibility explores how such action flows from contemplation, but it does not consider how there is a genuine dialectic in the exchange. S. offers an interpretation of the role of modern technology but neglects to incor-

porate the more balanced views on this topic offered by Merton scholars such as Phillip M. Thompson and John Wu, Jr. Finally, the claim that, "Merton's writings seem to show no acquaintance with contemporary Christological thought" (151) ignores Merton studies in the past decade and should give readers pause. S.'s "extensive revision" does not meet the expectations he has raised.

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GEORGE A. KILCOURSE, JR.

BEARING FRUIT IN DUE SEASON: FEMINIST HERMENEUTICS AND THE BIBLE IN WORSHIP. By Elizabeth J. Smith. Collegeville: Liturgical, 1999. Pp. viii + 248. \$29.95.

Smith describes herself as "a theologically-trained, ordained, white, first-world, middle-class Anglican woman" (3). The "first-world" of her self-description is Australia. The book opens with a glimpse into her tenure as curate of a suburban parish in Melbourne. She left Australia to study liturgy in the doctoral program at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley and eventually returned to work as a parish priest. Arguing that the words "Bible," "feminist," and "liturgy" can all be accommodated in the same phrase, her stated goal is "to provide an infrastructure for contemporary feminist liturgical creativity in Church traditions where the Bible is part of the fabric of worshipping life."

The book contains seven chapters, an appendix of five sermons that use feminist biblical hermeneutics, a select bibliography, and an index. S.'s pastoral concerns are evident throughout. Chapter 1, "Christians at Worship, and What They Seek," provides vignettes of four members of the Anglican Church of Australia. S. describes the worship needs and expectations of Shirley, a grandmother who is a mainstay of the Mothers' Union; Margaret, a divorced professional with grown-up children who avails herself of the educational possibilities in her parish; Kathy, a recent college graduate with a life-long, active involvement with her church; and Sophie, a seven-year-old girl who is eager to church but reluctant to Sunday School. These four figures recur at various points in the book, reminding the reader of the flesh-and-blood participants in worshipping communities.

As I read the descriptions of these four lives, I found myself wondering about other possible vignettes, sketches of other members of the Church whose worship needs and expectations might not be served by "feminist liturgical creativity." S. admits that her loyalties are with Shirley, Margaret, Kathy, Sophie, and their female relatives, who worship weekly in the midst of a patriarchal religion. Elsewhere, however, she speaks of a diverse, wide-ranging community of worship and correctly notes that "the community's worship benefits when there is good communication and trusting exchange of ideas between scholars and worshipers, between mystics and researchers, between poets and exegetes, between the oldest professor of Bible or liturgy and the youngest child who hears Scripture read in church

or echoes the congregation's responses in the liturgical assembly" (33). Her book could have benefited from some "hands on" insights into how this communication is sustained and nurtured in the course of implementing feminist liturgy: How does one keep a diverse community, such as the one described in the quote above, vibrant and alive? How can splits and factions in congregations be avoided?

Chapter 2, "The Bible and Feminist Hermeneutics: A Survey of Some Approaches," is devoted to the proposals of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Sandra Schneiders, which S. plumbs for their liturgical ramifications. She examines through a liturgical lens the four parts to Schüssler Fiorenza's model of feminist interpretation: a hermeneutics of suspicion, of proclamation, of remembrance, and of creative actualization. For S., the implications of this model for the use of Scripture in liturgy are wide-ranging. The Bible will continue to be read and honored in worship, but its proclamation will be amplified and nuanced with feminist reconstructions; the public reading of Scripture will probably not be announced as "the word of the Lord" except where it can be demonstrated as liberating to women.

Some of S.'s suggestions for divesting the Bible of its "quasi-magical status," however, do not seem consistent with her new lectionary project outlined in chapter 3, "Bible Readings and the Lectionary in Worship." Here, S. emphasizes that a lectionary must provide ample Scripture for the worshiping community and confront worshipers with the scope and diversity of biblical material. In the previous chapter, however, as well as here, S. argues for a tighter control of texts for the lectionary. She wants to omit the epistle reading during the Sundays of Advent on the grounds that this "traditional" Advent-related material tends to be highly apocalyptic; she wants to downplay the reversal-oriented, waiting mode. She also objects to the important place of the Psalter in liturgy—she finds it highly androcentric, with its God-talk weighted toward kingship and other images of transcendent power. Again, this dismissal of a large portion of biblical material seems to contradict S.'s belief that ample and diverse Scripture should be provided for the worshiping community.

The book, although well written, well researched, and well documented, has a "preaching to the choir" feel to it. This could have been avoided had S. addressed the need for liturgical reform along feminist lines while taking account of the impact of such reform on the broader worshiping community.

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DEIRDRE DEMPSEY

THE CULTIC ORIGINS OF CHRISTIANITY: THE DYNAMICS OF RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT. By W. W. Meissner. Collegeville: Liturgical, 2000. Pp. xxxiv + 261. \$27.95.

In recent years theological and psychological literatures have been steadily accumulating information on the nature of cults. While archeological findings and anthropological understandings have enriched theological in-

vestigations of ancient cults, psychological research has often focused upon examining the present-day rise of cults that have accompanied the end of one and the beginning of another millennium. At the start of a new millennium, then, how fortunate it is that Meissner, a Jesuit psychoanalyst, offers an analysis of the dynamics of cults and then explores how such dynamics influenced early Christian movements.

Ever since publishing in 1961 a comprehensive annotated bibliography of psychology and religion, M. has provided a wealth of works that demonstrate the relevance of psychology for theology. His latest book builds upon earlier examinations of cults, most especially *Thy Kingdom Come* (1995), a work on the dynamics of millenarianism. In the present work M., as in many of his other writings, seeks to make applicable the Thomistic axiom that "grace builds on nature." His present study suggests that the axiom may be applicable to groups.

Throughout the five sections and 14 chapters of the book, M. offers refined considerations of the seemingly disparate early Christian communities. He finds that some of these communities exhibited cult-like tendencies, manifested in the formation of subgroups and even opposing factions. He considers these behaviors as having emerged from psychodynamic processes. Chief among such dynamics are paranoid processes, which, he cautiously suggests, runs the spectrum from normal to pathological. He emphasizes his intention not to focus on the pathology of paranoia, but to speak to the pervasive psychodynamics of introjections, projections, and paranoid construction. While advising against psychological reductionism, M. does want his readers to come to a greater appreciation of the intrapsychic and interpersonal forces involved in the establishment and survival of the early Church.

In introducing the reader to the mechanisms of the paranoid process, M. offers an overview of Freud's classic case of Judge Paul Daniel Schreber. Theological readers may not be well acquainted with the psychoanalytic constructs discussed, but they will be familiar with the biblical scholarship from which M. draws in his analysis of early Christianity. He refers to the writings of a host of biblical scholars, among them Fitzmyer, Harrington, Horsley, Meeks, and Theissen. Such authors assist M. in examining the influence that Gnosticism had on pre-Christian, Jewish, and Christian cults. At the same time, in addition to Freud, M. refers to such psychoanalytic theorists as Kernberg, Klein, Kohut, and Volkan.

M.'s psychotheological task is daunting, as it requires him to maneuver between the Scylla of theological technicalities and the Charybdis of psychoanalytic formulations. Some passages, however, seem verbose and tend to lead the reader's attention astray. Despite this qualification, a careful reading rewards, as M.'s presentation helps one more clearly to recognize the prodigious tasks that faced the early Christian movements who found themselves marginalized from both the structures of imperial Rome and the systems of a threatened Judaism. Their outcast status carried with it occasional hostilities so that, when faced with persecutions and prejudices, early believers in Christ felt collectively victimized.

M.'s analysis makes an important contribution in that he leads the reader toward a keener knowledge of the possible conscious and unconscious motivations that propelled the early Christians and the defense mechanisms that protected them. His study invites one to wonder, how did these early believers in Christ survive socially as individuals and as groups? What were the defense mechanisms that enabled them to cope with the oppressions? In entertaining such questions the reader is invited to imagine more readily the challenges and consequences of being a member of the early Christian movements.

M. admits that, given the limited data, he can speak only generically about the discontent and frustration experienced within and among the early Christian movements. He nevertheless argues that they were forced to contend with social pressures that promoted a highly sectarian character that in turn resulted in such cultic characteristics as strong group adherence, enforced ideology, a dependence upon charismatic leaders, reactive and self-deceptive narcissism, and tendencies toward paranoid processes. At the same time, the values offered by the Christian groups allowed individuals to assimilate values and develop a profound sense of belonging, whereby they had a sense of participating in something larger than themselves.

In sum, the unique approach which M. brings to this study represents an authoritative contribution to both theological and psychological literatures of the ancient as well as the contemporary world.

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RELIGION AND SCIENTIFIC NATURALISM: OVERCOMING THE CONFLICTS. By David Ray Griffin. Albany: State University, 2000. Pp. xvii + 345. \$29.95.

Is it really possible to achieve harmony between science and religion? Yes, answers Griffin, but to do so requires uniting scientists and religious people in a philosophical worldview that supports both a scientific naturalism and a robust theism. Scientists must adopt a "minimal" scientific naturalism that allows for no supernatural divine interference with the laws of cause and effect in the universe, but withholds incorporation of the philosophical presuppositions of materialism, sensationism (no perception except sensory perception), and atheism. Religions must give up supernaturalism. But they need a robust theism to survive, one that supports the traditional idea of God as personal, purposive, providential creator, supreme in power, perfect in goodness, and experienced by human beings. This God must also be guarantor of the meaningfulness of life, provider of hope for the ultimate overcoming of evil, the source of moral norms and religious experiences, and alone worthy of worship. Such a naturalistic theism is available, based upon the process philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead and Charles Hartshorne; although some of these divine attributes require reinterpretation, based principally upon an understanding of divine power as persuasive.

Some theologians have found Whitehead's thought difficult to understand and his theology sketchy. But as G. points out, the findings of science are demonstrating that the world itself is difficult to understand. Can an adequate theology be less so? To assist in this understanding, G. provides an excellent tool, the best short overview of Whitehead's scientific and religious naturalism I have seen (chap. 4). This up-to-date version of process theism deserves a fresh look.

In his early chapters, G. explores the history of the interactions between science and religion in the last few hundred years. He shows how the "maximal" view of scientific naturalism commonly held by scientists—with its materialism, sensationism, and atheism—developed. The sources were more social and theological than scientific. G. then challenges three alternate proposals for the relationship between science and religion: those of Alvin Plantinga and Phillip Johnson, who would have science return to supernaturalism; the views of William Hasker, Ernan McMullin, Howard Van Till, and Rudolph Otto, who would achieve harmony by viewing science as a limited enterprise using a methodological naturalism; and the position of William Drees, who wants religion to accept the maximal form of scientific naturalism, and is left with minimal religion.

Rejecting these alternatives as incapable of achieving harmony, G. demonstrates how his model can deal with three troublesome areas for science, philosophy, and religion: the mind-body problem, parapsychology, and evolution and creation. The most widely held scientific view is that mind and brain are really identical. This solution reveals the inadequacy of materialism in science, because it rejects hard-core commonsense notions about reality, such as the efficacy and freedom of consciousness, which we inevitably presuppose in practice. G.'s chapter on parapsychology discusses the history and rationale for the frequent labeling of parapsychology as pseudo-science, and finds the prejudices against it unwarranted. Some results are presented from his earlier volume, *Parapsychology, Philosophy, and Spirituality* (1997), which documented an exhaustive review of the data and found them compelling for some forms of psychic activity, a conclusion that supports both nonsensory perception and the possibility of life after death.

One of the strengths of this volume is G.'s review and analysis of the relationship between evolution and religion. In a clear and compelling chapter, G. dissects the recent literature, defining and clarifying 14 "dimensions" of neo-Darwinism. In conversation with its supporters and its critics, he demonstrates its strengths and its weaknesses. Scientifically, neo-Darwinism struggles with the clash between gradualism and the fossil record, and evidence for need-induced inheritable variations. Philosophically it suffers from its maximal construal of scientific naturalism. G. then demonstrates how application of Whitehead's naturalism can overcome these difficulties, providing a rationale for, and an understanding of, the emergence of higher-level actualities and the theory of punctuated equilibrium. Even the apparent fine-tuning of the physical universe is sus-

ceptible to G.'s process argument, which notes that at a moment approaching absolute chaos (such as the Big Bang), persuasive divine power could have coercive-like effects.

The theological problem for the more conservative will be G.'s rejection of supernaturalism, which means miracles as interruptions of the natural causal order, including the overriding of normal human thought processes to produce infallible revelations and inerrant scriptures. But any theologian concerned with the place of reason and philosophy in theology, and anyone involved in the science and religion debate, should read this book, because the explanatory power of the proposed worldview is enormous.

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JERRY D. KORSMEYER

THE POEM AS SACRAMENT: THE THEOLOGICAL AESTHETIC OF GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS. By Philip A. Ballinger. Louvain Theological and Pastoral Monographs, vol. 26. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000. Pp. ix + 260. \$30.

In this closely-packed, closely-reasoned study, Ballinger looks carefully at one of the most vital and complex poets of the last 200 years, the Victorian Jesuit, Gerard Manley Hopkins, to tease out the fuller implications of the poet's implied theological esthetic and what it might mean for us. B. does so by fully exploring two terms made famous by Hopkins, *inscape* and *instress*, showing how they evolved from their origins in the esthetics of John Ruskin into the full-scale theological reading of creation Hopkins arrived at during his formation as a Jesuit. Having stared long and hard into the heart of God's creation, Hopkins attempted to imitate the world's multi-foliate creation in his own revolutionary poetry. Just the attempt to create such a metaphysics for one's poetry sets Hopkins off from most poets.

B.'s book is divided into four sections, bracketed by an introduction and a conclusion. Chapter 1 deals with Hopkins's debt to Ruskin, whose esthetic and scientific method was to look closely at things—flowers, trees, waves, landscapes, people—and then make them uniquely his own through his drawings or through his rich word hoard. Chapter 2 focuses on Hopkins's debt to Ignatius Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*, which profoundly affected his life as a Jesuit, down to his habitual way of seeing and acting. B. stresses Ignatius's focus on the Incarnation—the fleshing of the Word—as the central act of human history and indeed of creation itself.

The long third chapter covers Hopkins's discovery of the work of the medieval English Franciscan, Duns Scotus, while studying philosophy at Stonyhurst, England, in 1872. The discovery was crucial to Hopkins, because his philosophical and theological studies were primarily shaped by the scholastic thought of Thomas Aquinas, via the commentaries of the Jesuit, Suárez, who saw things not in their specific individuality, but as representatives of a more general class of things. Scotus taught Hopkins to

see this particular oak, whose inscape or inner shape, once glimpsed, might reveal (i.e., instress) its inner essence in all its radical uniqueness, and—even more—something of the Being which upheld the tree's unique being. In his poetry, Hopkins found a way to imitate this same progression of the Godhead behind nature by revealing, via the particulars he described (or, better, instressed) in his poems. This energy B. calls the Christic stem that shaped Hopkins's deepest response to the world.

In his final chapter, B. turns for support of his thesis to the theological esthetic constructed by Hans Urs von Balthasar 40 years ago in his brilliant reading of Hopkins's esthetic. One of Balthasar's aims was to return the Beautiful to its coequal status with the Good and the True. B. attempts to derive from Hopkins's unsystematic notes a vision of the "poem as sacrament," the great mystery that underlies all of creation, and which Hopkins attempted to recreate in his own poetry. When we in turn attempt to grasp the meaning of Hopkins's poems, B. argues, something of the underlying reality of Christ is also given in a manner analogous to the way Christ is given to us in the Eucharist.

B. is careful to point out that Ruskin's influence was primarily pre-theological, its mark on Hopkins coming before he became a Jesuit, that Ignatius's influence was practical (a way of living) rather than theoretical, and that Scotus was the major influence on Hopkins's theological development. Indeed Hopkins *was* viewed by his fellow Jesuits as an eccentric Scotist. In particular, he followed Scotus by pursuing the idea of a double Incarnation: the first being aeonic and stemming from the Word of the Creator emptying Himself temporally throughout the material universe and so giving rise at every moment to fresh inscapes and a billion-fueled beauty. The second Incarnation—equally important to Hopkins, though not equally stressed by B.—was the radical kenosis (emptying) of Jesus in his passion and death.

Much of B.'s explication and summary is lucid and convincing. In two areas, however, he seems to fall short. So, while I am willing to see Hopkins's inaugural poem, *The Wreck of the Deutschland*, as one of our great Franciscan poems, I think B. gives short shrift to the influence of the *Spiritual Exercises* on Hopkins. With Ruskin and Scotus you have an esthetic the mind can follow unassisted by a radical change of life. But in undergoing the *Spiritual Exercises*, one comes up against something capable of transforming and shaping one's deepest spiritual awareness in one's own flesh. My own sense is that Hopkins's understanding of the Incarnation was shaped as much by Ignatian meditation as by studying Scotus. But these are small caveats. Finally, B. is worth reading and mulling over, for he leaves the mind quivering with a renewed sense of what Hopkins was after, and what a theologian of Balthasar's magnitude saw in this Victorian Jesuit. B. shows us what we might retrieve if we would allow ourselves to become aware of what beauty, and especially poetry, can add to the theological discourse of our moment.

HEIDEGGER ET L'HYMNE DU SACRÉ. By Emilio Brito, S.J. Leuven: Leuven University, 1999. Pp. xv + 800. Fr. 89.24.

This is Brito's fourth volume treating major figures of modern German philosophy. After large studies on Hegel, Schelling, and Schleiermacher, B. turns to Heidegger (and in a sense to Hölderlin, comrade of Schelling and Hegel in Tübingen), particularly to his thought on "the Holy." We know that Heidegger lectured on the philosophy of religion in 1920 only to give up with skepticism that enterprise; then in 1927 not Church or theology but poetry drew him back to the general field of religion, religion pondered no longer in the language of Paul or Augustine but as the Holy.

This work is not so much a book as a tetralogy of related studies centered on Heidegger and the Holy. Of the four sections, the first, "The Poems of the Sacred," treats directly the theme of the Holy as it appears in Heidegger's works; his thought appears also in the second part as "The Words of the Enigma," Heideggerian verbal places like *abyss*, *hiddenness*, *disclosure*, *the divine* (but rarely *the religious*, *the revealed*, or *God*): these words, encounters of consciousness with Being, treat the tonality of the world Hölderlin depicted as holy. A third part, "Discernments," engages imaginatively and critically for over 200 pages the points of view of others who have treated this topic in Heidegger: poets, Catholic and Protestant theologians, thinkers within and after the world of Heidegger like Hermann Cohen, Paul Tillich, Max Scheler, Paul Ricoeur, Karl Rahner, Jean-Luc Marion, and others. The fourth part, "The Opening and the Name," employs Heideggerian material as stimulus rather than subject matter. Based generally on Christian faith, it unfolds in 300 pages a constructive conversation with thinkers on the Holy and develops a symphonic (if not systematic) enterprise which "joins the 'Openness' to which Heidegger wishes to be docile to the name that God reveals and prayer invokes" (385). Dozens of themes and figures are summoned to offer ideas for the broad sections of "The Saint," "The Father (God)," "The Witness," and "The Believer." The conclusion speaks of Heidegger's thought succeeding in going beyond the old Kantianism where religion was inevitably a mental category, beyond the division of anything religious or ecclesial into a disdained objectivity and an esthetic or ecstatic subjectivity.

B.'s many-sided critique is particularly concerned with the relationship of the Holy to Being. Being for Heidegger includes the realm of the sacred; similarly, the Holy is a trace, which points to the godhead. For Christianity and religions, however, the Holy is more than creation and is a distinct gift, the free grace of the divine. Ultimately when the Holy is too much a facet of being it has no freedom, and religions and revelation make sense only within freedom. In an elegant conclusion, Heidegger's hiddenness and revelation, the light and shadow of Being find a kind of coda in Levinas and ultimately in the poet of the holiness in the dark night, John of the Cross.

Though vast and weighted down with many figures, the book is aided by its introduction, concluding résumé, and by "Thresholds" placed before each of the four sections to elucidate the book's plan. One can ask whether

the attempt at totality in three areas—the presentation of Heidegger, his commentators, and countless theologians and philosophers—will not discourage the reader from tackling the entire book. Moreover, with so many figures to examine, the summaries are inevitably based upon few and not always prominent secondary sources. A reader from outside the linguistic worlds of French and German will become aware that Heidegger's "*Das Heilige*" is in some ways different from *le Sacré*. The reflections of B. remain within the world and time of Heidegger or just reach into the sterile late modernity of Richard Rorty, and so it is not clear how they would be applied, for instance, to the inculturation of liturgy or the ecological sacredness of nature.

In short, this is a study of the Holy in Heidegger, of philosophers and theologians influenced by him, and of philosophers and theologians who have considered that philosopher and topic. B. fashions with effort and inspiration an array of material into a book that is both factual resource and religious work of art.

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REDISCOVERING GOD WITH TRANSCENDENTAL ARGUMENT: A CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATION OF MONISTIC KASHMIRI SAIVA PHILOSOPHY. By David P. Lawrence. *Toward a Comparative Philosophy of Religions*. Albany: State University, 1999. Pp. xvii + 306. \$65.50.

Some comparative studies arise extrinsically from a determination to connect some Christian idea or image or practice with a counterpart from another religious tradition, either to highlight similarities or to defend differences. Other studies are largely showcases for methodology, illustrating how comparisons can be done properly. More rarely, an author recognizes that an idea in one theological tradition invites and may even compel an inquiry that crosses religious boundaries, simply for the sake of thinking the idea through in another context. In this case religious truth is at stake, and comparison serves a constructive theological purpose. Lawrence's study exemplifies this last point of departure, since it engages Western and Christian epistemology and theology in order to clarify certain complex issues that arise within a specific Hindu theological system but that pertain to the very nature of human knowing and knowledge of God.

L.'s topic is the Shaiva Pratyabhijna ("recognition") theology, a nondualist theology developed in the Hindu community devoted to the deity Shiva in 10th- and 11th-century Kashmir, most notably by Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta. This system is known for its intellectual rigor, theological comprehensiveness, and epistemological, hermeneutical, and mystical subtlety. Along with other Hindu theological traditions, the Pratyabhijna integrates religious experience and (individual and communal) ritual practice with a cognizance of authoritative scriptural traditions and arguable truth claims. It is theistic, indeed monotheistic, and sides with other theistic

schools in interpreting the world in the light of claims about God. The Kashmiri Shaiva community to which Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta belong is dedicated particularly to Shiva as the supreme God and source of all reality, the deepest ground of human identity, and the bestower of salvation.

While Lawrence stresses philosophical and theological issues, he correctly reminds us of the practical religious undertones and implications of the positions held by the Pratyabhijna school. Distinctive to the Pratyabhijna is the conviction that at the deepest level humans stand in a nondualist relationship to Shiva, as distinct yet inseparably one. The school's premier strategy is to explain this identity by drawing an analogy between ordinary epistemological realism and the highest unitive mystical knowledge: what is known, and the act of knowing, are ultimately one. In practice, each act of knowing always implies transcendent dimensions which ultimately open into the supreme act of knowing that is God. Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta vigorously argue this Pratyabhijna theology in public debate with proponents of competing Buddhist and Hindu positions. In their view, it is epistemologically self-contradictory to deny that reality can be known or that empirical knowledge opens into an affirmation of the transcendent.

In his major chapters L. explains the overall religious goals of the Pratyabhijna (chap. 3), the Buddhist skeptical position which denied that human knowing could signal knowledge of a transcendent divine reality or even of any objective reality (chap. 4), the Pratyabhijna rejoinder and defense of transcendent realism (chaps. 5 and 6), and the concomitant realist ontology (chap. 7). Throughout, he helpfully highlights similarities and differences with Western conceptions, drawing aptly on the works of philosophers (from Aristotle to Donald Davison and Karl-Otto Apel) and theologians (from Anselm and Aquinas to David Tracy). In his concluding chapter L. introduces Jacques Derrida and Bernard Lonergan, S.J., to clarify the contemporary relevance of the Pratyabhijna in the light of the contrast between postmodern denials of the objective dimensions of knowing and speaking on the one hand, and traditional theological defenses of the informative significance and real reference of the epistemological and linguistic structures on the other.

Since Shaiva recognition theory is dense and L. does not shy away from the necessary technicalities, this is a demanding book. But L. explains the technical Indian terms he employs and always provides necessary context, so even theologians unfamiliar with Indian thought will now be able to engage one of the most important yet (to the Western audience) unfamiliar Hindu theological systems in a very substantial manner. The book should be of particular interest to Lonergan scholars, since it offers an excellent opportunity to test the power of Lonergan's system in a genuinely comparative manner, in relation to a hitherto entirely unrelated theological system.

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