

BOOK REVIEWS

Edmund Kee-Fook Chia. *World Christianity Encounters World Religions: A Summa of Interfaith Dialogue*. Foreword by Archbishop Michael L. Fitzgerald. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2018. xx + 252 pp. \$29.95. ISBN 978-0-8146-8422-1.

Divided into three parts and twelve chapters, this book intends to offer an introductory overview of the history, practice and challenges of interfaith dialogue. The author, who is of Malaysian origin, has significant experience of the Asian context, as he was head of the Interreligious and Ecumenical office of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences. Moreover, he has teaching experience in the US and Australia.

In the very basic first part, the author explains the perspective of 'global Christianity': a Church that has left behind the privileges typical of the era of Christendom, in which western patterns are no longer automatically dominant or universal, and for which engaging with religious plurality is normal. It offers an overview of the diversity within Christianity and the world religions. The book advocates both rootedness in one's own religious tradition and relatedness with others as the best position to engage in dialogue.

The second part looks into what scripture says about religious otherness and how Church tradition has dealt with it. It highlights the pivotal change taken by the Catholic Church after the Second Vatican Council, especially by the papacy. And it focuses on the unique experience of the 'tiny but vibrant' Church in Asia, marked by its triple form of dialogue with its 'many cultures', 'many religions' and 'many poor'. One chapter analyzes the relationship between intra-Christian ecumenism and the wider forms, including interfaith dialogue.

The third part focuses on theology and praxis, briefly highlights some major (especially Asian) theologians, and analyzes the hermeneutic and theological problems linked with comparative theology and interfaith worship. One chapter deals especially with the challenge of Christian-Muslim dialogue and the Muslim critique of Christian theology.

Such a chapter is surprisingly lacking in Hinduism and Buddhism, given that the author's approach in general privileges the Eastern over the Western experience. African experience is completely absent. That is why the subtitle of *Summa* overstretchers somewhat the expectations.

Despite these minor critiques, this overview generally fulfills the book's purpose well: that of being a useful tool for an introductory course in universities and seminaries. The suggestions for further reading at the end of each chapter invite readers to deepen their understanding of the issues, and the register makes the book's use easier.

Jan De Volder
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Rachel M. McCleary and Robert J. Barro. *The Wealth of Religions: The Political Economy of Believing and Belonging*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019. 199 pp. \$29.95, £25.00. ISBN 978-0-6911-7895-0.

In *The Wealth of Religions*, Rachel McCleary and Robert Barro draw on their long record of pioneering research to examine the dynamic interplay between religion, markets and economic transformation. This book answers the questions: how does believing in God or an afterlife affect productivity, economic growth, and the preservation of political institutions such as democracy? And how is religiosity shaped by socioeconomic circumstances and governmental regulations? (9). Engaging the thoughts of Max Weber, Adam Smith, Laurence Iannaccone and many other scholars, the authors convincingly argue that religious beliefs and practices are powerful incentives which motivate people to be productive through inculcated values such as diligence, integrity and thrift, and thereby enhance the economic growth of nations. Likewise, McCleary and Barro observe in their own quantitative analysis of research data of the 20th and the 21st centuries that religiosity is also influenced by economic and governmental regulatory systems.

The authors present their research in eight chapters, examining the different ways in which economic and political principles can be applied to the study of religions. In chapter 1, the authors give a general overview of the book, describing religion as a market with costs and benefits, one that functions like any other market does in the economy. McCleary and Barro further relate the internal organization of economics to religion in order to show how the principles of demand and supply function within organized religions, and then present such relationship as the basis for their economic approach to the study of religion.

In chapters 2 and 3, the authors introduce readers to the dual interaction between religion and economic growth, with significant attention to the ways in which secularization impacts religion today, as well as describing the influence of governmental regulations. While maintaining that people tend to participate less in formal religion as society grows richer, the authors suggest that many religious adherents keep their beliefs even when they fail to participate in formal religion. To discuss the influence of governmental policies on religion, McCleary and Barro inquire whether subsidies associated with state religions induce greater religious participation, and whether government regulations of religion suppress participation. They discovered that governmental laws, policies and actions that restrict religious activities reduce the level of competition among religious groups, thereby minimizing religious participation. Nevertheless, the authors affirm that religious participation increases when governments subsidise organized religions and prohibits secular activities such as attending sports on Sundays (43). Furthermore, McCleary and Barro build on Weber's thesis on the influence of Protestantism on economic growth. While Weber may be right in arguing that religious beliefs influence individual traits that enhance economic performance, McCleary and Barro find that Protestantism could influence economic growth precisely because the Protestant Reformation had a positive effect on education and human capital (45-66).

Chapter 4 deals with the implication of Weber's theory – the economic role of beliefs and religious practices – on non-Christian religions, namely, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Judaism. The chapter provides excellent

summaries of the current state of empirical research on why there is a relative economic decline in Muslim countries against the high level of religious beliefs in those countries. They discover that the suppression of economic growth in Muslim countries is due to restrictions on corporate legal forms, credit and insurance, and the enforcement of inheritance law that prevent a long-term acquisition of wealth. (87)

Chapters 5 to 7 examine the connection between religion and political economy. In Chapter 5, the authors deal with reasons why some countries have state religions and others do not. Drawing on a longitudinal international survey data conducted to measure religiosity, they note that countries with intermediate population sizes are more likely to have state religions than densely populated countries (113). Chapter 6 deals with Laurence Iannaccone's 'club model' which explains how religious groups use strict admission requirements to eliminate potential defectors, thereby fomenting commitment. The authors apply this model to terrorist organizations and argue that homogeneity in religion can foster terrorism. The club model also helps the researchers to explain how the Catholic practice of saint-making functions in the religion market. The authors find that saint-making has been used by the Catholic Church as a way of making Catholicism popular over and against Protestantism. Finally, Chapter 8 recapitulates the arguments developed in the previous chapters with significant stress on the importance of believing and belonging which are woven through the chapters.

With this study, McCleary and Barro show that it is worthwhile to broaden contemporary studies on the economic implications of religion to include other monotheistic religions besides Christianity. The style is quite accessible, and the extensive sources provided are illuminating. In an era when religion is commonly perceived as irrational, and as having no objective contribution to economic issues, the authors successfully illustrate how the economic concepts of cost and benefit can be gainfully deployed to expand our understanding of the role of religion in society. While the book does not concern itself with doctrinal issues such as grace and sin, the authors build a strong case for religious beliefs as grounds for economic transformation. There is little doubt, therefore, that theologians and students of interreligious studies will find this study on the important role that believing plays in society very helpful.

However, due to its wide scope, the authors give insufficient attention to surveys regarding the two-way causation in some religions, particularly Buddhism.

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Christopher B. Barnett. *Kierkegaard and the Question concerning Technology*. New York and London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019. xxiii + 237 pp. £13.50. ISBN 978-1-62892-666-8.

When asked about philosophers that have contributed to the philosophy of technology, the Danish philosopher and religious author Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) may not immediately come to mind. This oversight is not a

surprise. As explained at the outset of *Kierkegaard and the Question concerning Technology*, Kierkegaard only occasionally used the term 'technology' in his writings, and he did not offer a systematic discussion of technology in any of his works. Moreover, the philosophy of technology only emerged as a separate and recognizable discipline after his death. Ignoring Kierkegaard completely when reflecting on technology from a philosophical perspective would be a mistake, however. He may not have been, for the reasons just mentioned, a philosopher of technology. Still, he nevertheless belongs to the background from which the philosophy of technology has emerged, and he was an essential source for a large number of influential philosophers and theologians that concerned themselves with the topic of technology. Furthermore, merely studying Kierkegaard as a precursor to the philosophy of technology would be a missed opportunity as well. For Kierkegaard is a thinker that can contribute to the contemporary debate and critical reflection on technology and how it influences the way people lead their lives. The aim of Barnett's *Kierkegaard and the Question concerning Technology* is therefore not only to study how Kierkegaard responded to the emergence of several technologies during his lifetime and how his reflections influenced thinkers whose work would turn out to be foundational for the philosophy of technology. Barnett also wishes to apply Kierkegaard's insights to contemporary developments and explores how what he wrote back then may stimulate new reflections today.

Barnett's *Kierkegaard and the Question concerning Technology* is composed of six chapters of unequal length, preceded by a preface and followed by a postscript. The first chapter offers a concise history of technology in Western culture with particular attention to the role of urbanization and the revolution wrought by the invention of the printing press. Chapter 2 focuses on the development of technology in Denmark in the time of Kierkegaard. In line with the particular attention to the invention of the printing press in chapter 1, chapter 2 pays specific attention to the expansion of print media experienced by Kierkegaard and it shows that he lived in an age of tremendous scientific, technological and societal change. After setting in this way the scene for Kierkegaard's reflections on technology in two relatively short chapters, the longer chapter 3 deals with the contents of these reflections by studying the texts in which Kierkegaard deals with technology. This happens in two steps. First, Barnett explores those passages in which Kierkegaard uses the term 'technology' and related words. He concludes that Kierkegaard uses the terminology under consideration only sporadically and unsystematically. Barnett therefore widens the scope of his study of Kierkegaard's texts. He now includes passages in which Kierkegaard responds to specific technologies (with a particular attention for modern transport) and sociopolitical issues related to modern life in general (with a focus on Kierkegaard's view on modern city life). Chapter 4, which has the same length as chapter 3, continues to study the contents of Kierkegaard's reflections, but focuses entirely on his analysis of information technology and his criticism of 'the press' and the culture connected to it. After having studied Kierkegaard's reflections as such, chapter 5, which is again a shorter chapter, offers an application of these reflections under the form of a Kierkegaardian critique of Google in line with Kierkegaard's criticism of Hegel's system. Barnett's book ends with its lengthiest chapter in which he traces the influence that Kierkegaard had on philosophers and theologians that

concerned themselves with the question of technology. Walter Benjamin and Martin Heidegger are the philosophers that receive the most attention. Barnett also discusses Herbert Marcuse, Gabriel Marcel and Jacques Ellul. The theologians discussed by Barnett are Romano Guardini, Paul Tillich and Thomas Merton. Chapter 6 ends with the observation that Kierkegaard was much more outspoken in his criticism of technology than these three theological inheritors, and that it is precisely this radically negative attitude that makes him relevant in our technological age.

According to Barnett, it is precisely Kierkegaard's radical distrust of modern technology that constitutes his most significant contribution to the philosophical debate on technology. Kierkegaard evidently shares his distrust of technology with many other philosophers and theologians. Like them, he sees technology resulting in 'one-dimensional men' (as Marcuse once famously put it) that live in a society dominated by what Heidegger called 'calculative thinking'. Such a society is dominated by utilitarian and instrumental thinking that approaches the world merely as a problem to be solved and to be managed. It treats even human beings as nothing more than objects that can be put to use for the realization of one's superficial goals. Technological society, Kierkegaard fears, with many other thinkers that followed in his footsteps, is a shallow mass society, a society that is without depth, contemplation and room for true individuality. This technological society confronts us with a dilemma: should we try to combat it or is any attempt to do so doomed from the start? It is Kierkegaard's answer to this question that makes him relevant today. Barnett defends that at least the three theologians that followed in Kierkegaard's footsteps that he discusses (Guardini, Tillich and Merton) have not followed him to the end because they shrank from the consequences of his analysis that modern technology cannot be resisted. Kierkegaard suggests that any attempt to 'solve' the question concerning technology only strengthens the technological mindset. Therefore, the only options that remain for the individual are, in Kierkegaard's view, resignation, irony and, ultimately, a leap into religion by heeding God's eschatological call. In this way, Kierkegaard's reflections on technology confront us with a dilemma that is not unlike the dilemma that is familiar for Christians since the Church was legalized in the Roman Empire. Should they attempt to integrate into 'normal' society or should they attempt to live 'in an "eschatological dimension"' by detaching themselves from society? Starting with the major church fathers, many Christians have opted for the first strategy, but the second strategy has always remained an influential counter current. A prominent example of this alternative view is constituted by the so-called 'Desert Fathers' who withdrew from the society of their times into the loneliness and solitude of the Egyptian desert to live a life of radical Christian discipleship. According to Barnett, the strategy of Kierkegaard towards technology is similar to that of these Desert Fathers. In their footsteps, Barnett concludes, Kierkegaard suggests that the best way to respond to the question concerning technology is in fact to abandon any attempt to solve it, but "to *wait* for God amid much anxiety and turmoil" instead (155). This suggestion is why Kierkegaard continues to offer a unique contribution to the reflection on the question concerning technology, even 165 years after his death and after having been followed by so many other philosophers and theologians that were critical of technology.

To conclude: the specific contribution of Barnett's *Kierkegaard and the Question concerning Technology* is that it suggests that the question concerning technology is in the end a *theological* issue and therefore requires a theological response. The strength of the book is that it offers a broad introduction to the question concerning technology that guides its readers to the discovery of technology as a theological issue. In this way, it lays a solid foundation for further reflections on this topic. The book may therefore be of interest not only to Kierkegaard scholars and philosophers of technology, but also to theologians and everybody interested in the place of technology in contemporary society. Barnett gives us much to think about because *Kierkegaard and the Question concerning Technology* confronts us with the possibility that the impact of technology on society is detrimental, but that there is no way to counter it while staying within its realm. The question this book raises is therefore the following one: Is it possible at all to repeat the gesture of the Desert Fathers? Is there any desert to be found into which contemporary people could withdraw? Or is the impact of technology in today's world so omnipresent that no such deserts are still in existence?

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Peter C. Phan and Young-chan Ro, eds. *Raimon Panikkar: A Companion to His Life and Thought*. Foreword by Dr Rowan Williams. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2018. xxvi +293 pp. £75.00, \$150.00, €112.50. ISBN 978-0-227-17633-7.

Raimon Panikkar is not only a ground-breaking Christian-Hindu-Buddhist philosopher and theologian, but, according to Rowan Williams "one of our era's most distinctive and brilliant voices," whose "contribution to Christian (and non-Christian) thought is exceptional in depth and subtlety" (xvi-xvii). Panikkar's thought is, however, difficult to interpret in so far as it is a groping articulation of an experience of being, which is beyond words. Understanding his journey into mystery requires guidance and in this regard this volume fulfills its role as 'companion' quite well, not least thanks to the outstanding scholars who have contributed to it.

Part I focuses on Panikkar's biography, "from his youth to his later multiple and interconnected religious identities" (Francis Clooney, 259). His life story is not limited to objective biographical data (*'identification'*), because, as Milena Carrara Pavan argues, one must take into account the deeper layers of Panikkar's *identity*: "what he has become in freedom and love throughout his entire life" (1).

Part II presents Panikkar's writings under thematic categories that introduce several areas of theology and spirituality. Throughout the different chapters the reader is introduced to his particular approach and vocabulary, such as his distinction between Christianness, Christendom and Christianity, as well as his interpretation of Christianness as "the personal, but not individual encounter with Christ at the center of one's deepest self (the Atman), at the center of

the human community, and at the center of cosmic reality” (Prabhu, 24). The reader gets acquainted with Panikkar’s ‘cosmotheandric’ vision, his shift from Christology to Christophany, and his ‘diatopial’ hermeneutics (“the art of interpreting texts and persons from a different cultural and religious location,” J. Abraham Velez de Cea, 107).

Others explain Panikkar’s reinterpretation of the communion of the saints; his eschatological thinking; his spiritual vision of liberation (“how to free all living beings,” Milena Carrara Pavan, 12); his image of God; his interpretation of the secular, his theology of the trinity and his vision of sexuality and gender. One even learns about his definition of sin as a refusal of being “co-creators with the divine in the ongoing construction of reality” (Prabhu, 36), or, about time as the becoming of the very flow of being itself (Francis X. D’Sa, 174). One author sketches an interesting parallel with Pope Francis’ encyclical *Laudato si’* (Ranstrom, 39).

The companion contains an excellent bibliography as well as an overview of the content of his *Opera Omnia* edited by Milena Carrara Pavan.

Although most contributors wrote their texts in a spirit of reverence for Panikkar, critical voices are not absent. Jyri Komulainen observes that Panikkar’s approach is “highly selective” favoring a vision of reality “characterized by plurality, relationality and interconnectedness” (p. 91). This vision discards the theist idea of God as creator and remains too silent about the cross. In his epilogue Francis Clooney criticizes the companion itself in so far as it rarely compares or contrasts Panikkar “to other theologians who were also thinking through Catholicism in the post-conciliar church and context of the late twentieth century” (262). But Clooney admits that there are exceptions: Peter Phan refers to Balthasar and Rahner. Gerard Hall pays attention to links with ‘nouvelle théologie’ or, the mystical and religious thinking of Augustine, Anselm, Bernard, Pascal, Newton and Blondel. Clooney’s point is, however, that the lack of reference to Catholic theologians or official Church texts in some contributions, is due to Panikkar himself, being “a cosmic loner” who “stayed outside the great middle range of Catholic theology” (Clooney, 263).

In short, this companion is an outstanding introduction and guide to Panikkar’s life and thought. It is mandatory reading, not only for everyone who is interested in interreligious dialogue, who search for meaning, or who wish to understand the deeper meaning of secularity.

In addition to providing biographical information and theological insights, the companion elucidates how Panikkar’s unique approach is the result of his wrestling with the discovery that words are ultimately not capable of expressing the mystic experience of life. Indeed, as Clooney rightly notes, the final ‘word’ of Panikkar was his entering into silence. That was the ultimate consequence of his deep encounter with mystery (269).

In this perspective, the greatest merit of this indispensable ‘companion’, is perhaps that it inspires its readers to embark, beyond (but not without) their own religious tradition on a journey towards the mystery of being itself. As much as Panikkar himself, this captivating volume does not leave its readers untouched.

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Massimo Faggioli. *Catholicism and Citizenship: Political Cultures of the Church in the Twenty-First Century*. A Michael Glazier Book. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2017. xxii + 165 pp. \$19.95. ISBN 978-0-8146-8423-8.

Massimo Faggioli is an Italian theologian, Church historian and a scholar with great expertise on the Second Vatican Council, the post-conciliar era and contemporary Church issues, who has lived and taught in the United States for over a decade. This book offers a reflection on and an overview of the effects of *Gaudium et Spes* (1965), the Council's constitution on the relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and the world, and especially Western, pluralistic and secular democracies, over the past five decades until the pontificate of Pope Francis. In this volume, Faggioli succeeds in convincingly showing two things: (1) that the gaze *ad extra* and the outbound relationships of the Church are profoundly intertwined with questions of internal functioning and issues of the self-understanding of the Church, i.e. its ecclesiology; (2) that the world has fundamentally changed since the 1960's, so that *Gaudium et Spes*, while still being a critical text for the interaction between Church, Christian faith and polis, needs to be rethought and developed if it is still to be the compass for the Church in the 21st century. According to the author, Francis' pontificate is gradually making this 'ecclesiological shift'.

How did the world and Church change during these decades? The author defines two epoch-changing ruptures for Western society and the Church: first, 9/11 and its religiously inspired terrorism, which has made the wider society suspicious of religions and, with the coming of political Islam, has called into question the Council's rather benign regard toward Islam; and second, the sexual abuse crisis, which has further undermined the credibility of the Church and its clergy. Other major evolutions, unforeseen in 1965, are the overall secularization in the Western world and the eroding role of the Church in society, the disappearance or abatement of Christian democracy, the crisis of the nation-state, the limits of democratization and the return of autocracy.

In the first two chapters, the author's perspective is mainly intra-ecclesial: how has the crisis of the religious orders after Vatican II changed the power balance in the Church? What is the role of the New Ecclesial Movements, some of which used to be the spearhead of the pontificates of Pope John Paul II and Benedict XVI? As the author points out, the focus on the authority of the bishop and on a parish-based Church model cannot be sustainable for the future Church. Pope Francis' focus on an 'outgoing Church' and on the 'theology of the People' can give a new impetus to the Church as an outbound, missionary movement, in its transition from a Tridentine ecclesial, mainly European self-understanding to a postmodern, post-institutional, less clerical global Catholicism.

The third and fourth chapters focus on the relationship of the Church with the wider, secular and pluralistic world, starting from the assumption that the Church is still learning how to live in the regime of freedom and pluralism in this post-Constantinian age. This learning phase, in the view of the author, is profoundly linked with the situation of a Church that needs to learn how to deal with its inner diversity and pluralism. The author looks at the ideas of 'graduality' (process), 'synodality' and 'spiritual discernment' as Pope Francis' major contributions in facing both challenges.

The fifth chapter takes a closer look at the American situation, where the reception of *Gaudium et Spes* was thoroughly different from that in Europe. This has to do with the delayed process of secularization, the fact that *Gaudium et Spes* reflects a world-view which was profoundly influenced by the conclusions that European Church leadership and theology had drawn from the two world wars, with the increasing and overtly politicized polarization of American Catholicism, the divide between Catholic academia and the education of priests in the seminaries and Church institutions, and especially by the fact that Vatican II went beyond 'political Augustinianism', which subordinates the temporal order to the supernatural and which is deeply influential in more conservative parts of the Church in the US. This also explains partly why Pope Francis' pontificate has turned out to be so divisive in the United States.

The last chapter focuses on the novelty brought about by Pope Francis' emphasis on mercy and its possible impact on the ecclesiology of the Church. According to Faggioli's analysis, the Church has a problem with 'culture' today (cf. 'culture wars' fought by conservatives) and with freedom. Pope Francis' preferred image of the 'polyhedron' seems an essential part of his ecclesiology, based on a mystic vision of the people, on discernment as an antidote to ideology, and on the idea of change as a process dealing with conflicts, contradictions, and tensions (p. 135). In this sense, the apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* represents a genuine ecclesiological update after Vatican II.

Faggioli's book offers important insights into the reception of *Gaudium et Spes* and into the challenges of the Church in the 21st century, both *ad extra* and *ad intra*, a reflection which has just begun and needs further input and analysis. Many questions remain unsolved, such as how to be a prophetic, missionary and only partly disestablished Church and how to redefine the role of the Church in the public square. Moreover, while Pope Francis certainly has unleashed new dynamics in a genuine and idiosyncratic interpretation of the Second Vatican Council, it is too early for an assessment of the legacy of his pontificate in this field, since it is still an unfolding story. In any event, this book, of great interest especially for those interested and engaged in public theology, is a valuable first analysis and a call for an updated commitment to Vatican II ecclesiology and for renewed civil engagement of Catholics in Western pluralistic societies, linked also with a renewed position of the laity within the Church.

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Marie-Jo Thiel and Marc Feix, eds. *Le défi de la fraternité. The Challenge of Fraternity. Die Herausforderung der Geschwisterlichkeit*. Theologie Ost-West: Europäische Perspektiven. Zürich: LIT, 2018. 632 pp. €39.90, CHF 39.90. ISBN 978-3-643-91018-9.

This thick volume is the published proceedings of a major conference organized jointly by the European Society for Catholic Theology (ESCT) and the University of Strasbourg in 2017. It consists of a helpful introduction in French

and English, followed by two messages of support from the Council of Europe, then the main body of 38 essays (22 in French, 11 in English and five in German), and finally abstracts of all the essays in English, French and German. The essays are divided into four sections: part 1 on politics, part 2 on biblical and patristic sources, part 3 on theology and part 4 on ethics and anthropology. The whole book is in itself a considerable achievement and a fine tribute to the breadth and multilingualism of European theology. A photograph of the president of the ESCT, Marie-Jo Thiel, giving a copy of this book to Pope Francis could be found on the homepage of ESCT's website in 2020.

As a reviewer I need to declare certain interests. First, I have no German, so five of the essays remain unread by me, even the 'star' essay in the collection by Jürgen Moltmann. Second, the secretary-general of the ESCT in 2017 was my colleague in Leuven Pierre Van Hecke. Third, I wrote my PhD in Strasbourg on the Christian influences on Robespierre's religious policy – Robespierre being the author of the revolutionary motto *Liberté–Égalité–Fraternité* – so the union of religious and secular (or 'secular') categories in ethics is of interest to me, and this is the precise area which this collection explores.

It is therefore no surprise that, along with the Pope, I rate this book highly and recommend it warmly. All the essays are good and some are heavyweight. British theology is very well represented by two academic giants, Tom Wright on Pauline communities of fraternity and Janet Martin Soskice on the self-subverting nature of patriarchal biblical narratives. Essays which caught my eye above the generality were Antonio Maria Baggio on the religious roots of the political use of the term *fraternité* (the essay by Marc Feix *et al.* picked up this theme); Daniel Coriu on the definition of the word *adelphos*; Jean-Michel Dau-riac on a Tolstoyan doctrine of *fraternité* as the supreme Christian category (seconded by Michel Dujarier on the advantages for Christianity of the availability of a theology of 'Christ-frère' rather than just of 'Dieu-père'); Teresa Forcades i Vila raised the essential contemporary point of the dangers of patriarchy in any defense of such male terms as 'fraternity'. John Bosco Kamoga raised similarly essential points about the dangers of a Western appropriation of doctrines of fraternity in African contexts. None of the essays is a dud and the entire collection is worth reading.

The special character and importance of the collection lies in its combination of biblical, historical, theological and political sources and comment. This crucial point is best made by Paolo Rudelli (the Vatican's observer to the Council of Europe) in his commendation: this book brings theology into the purview of the debates of the Council of Europe and therefore of secular discussion, and the implied role of the collective and the societal in the religious concept of fraternity is a counterweight to the preoccupations on the individual and perhaps of the individualistic in much secular human rights theory. This is an essential point in contemporary theological ethics and social theology, and should not be lost.

One issue across the collection is the proper definition of *fraternité* (notwithstanding its potential sexist and colonialist undertones). Gusztáv Kovács in his "Fraternity, Friendship and Solidarity" has a good stab at differentiating between *brotherhood* (defined as involving blood-relation), *friendship* (defined as limited by personal experience of fellow-feeling) and *fraternity* (defined as friendship propelled to a more universal plane via the application of *solidarity*,

enabling us to replicate friendship even towards people we have never encountered). Jean-Michel Dauriac in his “L’exigence de fraternité chez Léon Tolstoï” – apart from offering an absorbing insight into Tolstoy’s radical Christianity – suggests a different typology: fraternity is instantiated in non-resistance to evil, in a species of Christian anarchism and in advocacy for a socio-political utopia: central to Tolstoy’s grasp of fraternity was the French Revolution’s failure to go far enough in Christian terms, that fraternity went far beyond the timidity of the motto *Liberté–Égalité–Fraternité*, advocating a total solidarity among men and women; indeed a State could not be fully fraternal almost on principle, since true fraternity involved an anarchist dissolving of structure in total commitment to others. There is at least a natural overlap between Kovács and Dauriac in seeing friendship as familiar and fraternity as socio-political. But turning to Tom Wright’s essay “The Challenge of Fraternity in Paul,” we see a different interpretation of fraternity again, a religious category rooted in the New Testament in the widening through Jesus Christ of God’s promises to Israel, where the new family which is the embodiment of fraternity is created by a divine victory on the Cross, which overflows into a requirement of fraternal table-fellowship transcending dietary laws. Wright explicitly distances himself (261) from Enlightenment borrowings of the term fraternity. So we are presented in this collection with a smorgasbord of overlapping and contrasting descriptions of the issue in hand.

I do feel that this discussion of the category of fraternity is a furrow which academic theology should plough with enthusiasm. We have now experienced over four centuries of natural rights theory from Moltmann-level colossi like Richard Hooker, Hugo Grotius and John Locke (as it happens, all of them Christians). The particular evolutionary branch of natural rights theory which is human rights has settled into three distinct phases: civil and political rights in the 18th century, health and economic rights in the 20th century and peace and environmental rights in our century. I find this historical evolution incontestable, but it does imply that human rights are not universal and indivisible, but acquired and realized over time. Theology and the French revolutionary category of *fraternité* as conceived religiously bring universal considerations to this evolution in ways which are helpful to contemporary political and social debates. This book is an important contribution to these and, with the sole reserve of its sheer size and expense, I commend it warmly to all readers.

Jack McDonald
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Kevin W. Irwin. *Context and Text: A Method for Liturgical Theology*. Revised Edition. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2018. lxx + 646 pp. \$49.95. ISBN 978-0-8146-8037-7.

This book is a revision of the original, published in 1994. Since the nineties, the importance of and reflection on liturgical theology in the field of liturgical studies has only been increasing, which makes this revision very welcome for any scholar or student in theology with an interest in the field. However, the

value of this book easily transcends the area of liturgical studies and has an important message for every theologian interested in the relationship between theology, liturgy and Christian life. In his introduction, Irwin clearly states why and on which points a revision of the first edition was needed. This book is divided into three parts: part one is mainly methodological. This is an area in which liturgical theology was (and still is) strongly critiqued, something Irwin takes into account and is one of the main motivations to review his book, as he readily admits. In the chapter on methodology (chapter 2), Irwin describes what he calls 'the ongoing dialectical relationship' between theology and liturgy, which is crucial to understand the rest of the book and Irwin's triptych: *lex orandi*, *lex credendi*, and *lex vivendi*. It also explains his title: "On the one hand, the ecclesial and cultural settings in which the liturgy takes place – *context* – influence the way we experience and interpret the liturgy – *text*. On the other hand, and just as *context* influences how the *text* of the liturgy is interpreted, that data we call *text* necessarily influence the church's theology, spirituality, and life – *context*" (92). In part two, Irwin discusses five key elements of the liturgy: sacramentality (the reworked 'Symbol' chapter of the first edition), Word, euchology, time (a new chapter), and arts (greatly expanded). In these chapters (3-7), he develops a theology of the liturgy with great depth, and in more than double the amount of pages in comparison to the other two parts. Irwin mainly argues from the structured liturgy (*lex orandi*) to indicate the theological value of the liturgy, in particular the relationship between liturgy and ecclesiology, in all its varied contexts. Masterly, Irwin shows how the liturgy articulates many things theologically about God, the Trinity, Christology, mediation, salvation, redemption, sanctification and so forth. Part three then is entitled "Ongoing Texts and Contexts," since Irwin considers these as 'works in progress'. In chapter 8, "Doxology," Irwin wants to show how the method he advocates can be used for engaging in ecumenical sacramental conversations. First, he shows how liturgical theology can shape doxological orthodox theology. Next, he shows how this can influence the ecumenical dialogue, and the shape and content of theology and theology curricula. After developing a liturgical theology of the sacraments, he presents the evolution of efforts towards multilateral considerations about sacraments, mainly using 'Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry', the Faith and Order report in the last part of this chapter. Although there is no separate chapter on ecumenism, it is clear that Irwin pays a lot of attention to the painful divisions between the churches, which is obvious in view of the liturgy and the sacraments. In the last chapter (9), he moves to the *lex vivendi*, and shows how the act of liturgy, on the one hand, derives from and, on the other hand, – always dialectically – affects all of human life. In this chapter, entitled "Spirituality," there is not only a focus on Christian ethics, but Irwin clearly shows how liturgy indeed functions as the source and summit of Christian life. As we are used to in Irwin's writings, almost every chapter starts with a thorough clarification of concepts. The conclusion of the book "Liturgy is always a new event," is very short and has five invitations, which sound a little bit preachy, nevertheless, it presents a good summary of the book's main points. This large work has a very elaborate and complete footnote system, and a twenty-page index, but there is no bibliography in the book itself, which has already 646 pages. However, one can access the bibliography online in a pdf-document, which makes it even easier to perform searches.

In sum, this book and the author deserve the highest praise, both for the in-depth case study of numerous liturgical aspects as well as for the theological width and depth that are presented. If people ask, ‘what was first, liturgy or theology?’ you should definitely give them this book.

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Jill Y. Crainshaw. *When I in Awesome Wonder: Liturgy Distilled from Daily Life*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2017. xv + 171 pp. \$19.95. ISBN 978-0-8146-4557-4.

Jill Y. Crainshaw is a professor of Worship and Liturgical Theology at the Wake Forest University School of Divinity in North Carolina, USA. She is a writer and poet, whose poems have been published in several magazines. As an educator, Crainshaw’s aim is to equip her students to be agents of justice and transformation in their everyday lives. A similar motive can be seen in her book, *When I in Awesome Wonder: Liturgy Distilled from Daily Life*.

This monograph describes the vitality of liturgies derived from everyday life. Crainshaw tries to demonstrate that a worshiper’s entire life is a liturgy: not just the Sunday Eucharistic celebration or weekday prayer services. She opines that the liturgy is a combination of day-to-day life experiences, events, things, and places that are intertwined with the past, present, and future. This book explores how dimensions of everyday life are vitalized through God’s grace and presence. The author uses a poetic style of writing in order to lead the readers into the wonder and majesty of the divine presence which is part of ordinary life. Throughout the book, Crainshaw maintains the argument that liturgical rituals and worship lead us to a place of meeting, where the mystery of God, our self and the world around us become personified once again. She tries to prove that worship takes place in concrete places where people live, die, work and play. Elements in worship such as bread, wine, water and oil arise from and return to the earth. At times these gifts are sandy, and on other occasions soily. Thus, God’s sacramental gifts arise from and return to everyday human experiences that unfold in particular and peculiar everyday places.

The book invites readers to pay attention to the sacramental dimensions present in the concrete realities of everyday life – in daily activities such as working, cooking, eating, drinking, playing, giving birth, rearing children, and caring for the sick and dying. It considers daily life realities such as food, water, birth, death, work, and play, and how these elements are vibrant with God’s grace and presence even as they are affected by experiences of injustice. The book explores connections between everyday realities and communal worship. The seven chapters are developed using simple stories from human experiences. For example, the chapter on food includes a conversation with a bread baker, and it deals with the aspects of ‘taste and savor both in the daily food and everyday prayer at home’. Daily prayer reminds the person that God is with his people in the bread on the Eucharistic table and in the bread on the supper table. The chapter entitled “Tables in Wilderness Places” deals with the elements of body

present in the Holy Communion such as sight, smell and taste. Furthermore, it describes the fellowship dimension and relational aspect of the daily table sharing. Moreover, it calls for social commitment as well: “from communion tables to kitchen tables to wilderness tables” (55). The chapter on water includes insights from country water and wastewater treatment plant managers. The chapter “Bearing Witness, Birthing Hope” elaborates that life’s pauses, which are like the pause between Ascension and Pentecost, are sources of uncertainty but they are also sources of grace. The stories in each chapter are vital because a primary emphasis of the book is on place-rooted nature, both of wonder and worship. In other words, this book is about the wonder and awe that arises from and returns to human lives and stories. The book concludes by imagining what ‘grounded liturgies’ look and sound like, and how such liturgies cultivate Gospel justice, hope, and grace. The liturgical or lyrical interludes that accompany each chapter enhance the reading experience.

In conclusion, *When I in Awesome Wonder* is a special work which is distinct from other liturgico-theological works as it puts more emphasis on a phenomenological approach than on the traditionally favored dogmatic one. The work takes a deep interest in everyday human life. Drawing from the domain of Sacramental Theology, Crainshaw discloses to us the profound relationship between our sacred rituals and our daily lives, that we may love more mindfully, passionately, and faithfully. At the same time, it provokes and challenges us to be more practical, drawing us close to our environment, our neighbors, our liturgical prayers, worship, and most importantly to God. It would appear that this work is more pastoral and spiritual than dogmatic and liturgico-theological. Since the author treats liturgy as a solely phenomenological reality, she tends to undermine the centrality of theology in the development of worship and liturgy through the centuries. Without the rich theological underpinnings of liturgy, liturgy would lose its capacity to illuminate people and inspire them to properly worship the divine implicit in the liturgy.

However, this is a good work for understanding Christian worship and liturgical prayers within its postmodern pastoral, liturgical context. As a product of immense research, this work is highly recommended to preachers, liturgists, and all those who seek to understand the pastoral implications of liturgy and worship in our daily lives.

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Kerstin Lammer. *Wie Seelsorge wirkt*. Praktische Theologie heute 165. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2019. 432 pp. €49.00. ISBN 978-3-17-036424-0.

Outcome and satisfaction research in chaplaincy is a highly relevant and needed research topic in a world in which more and more organizations are expected to be evidence-based. This book addresses several research questions that fit within this framework: ‘How is pastoral work perceived by careseekers?’, ‘Why do they think that “it works”?’ and ‘How do pastoral workers experience their own contribution?’ In this book, Kerstin Lammer, Lutheran pastor and professor of practical theology in Münster, evaluates four diaconia projects within the

Protestant churches in Germany by using a mixed-method design. The first chapter discusses the following diverse projects in detail: (1) military chaplaincy support to people suffering physical or mental pain, (2) a pilgrimage for those who are in a crisis situation or stand at a crossroads in life, and (3) support for people who feel depressed, in order to include them in the parish. A fourth project tried to reach out to people in rural areas that had to leave their former hometown and felt uprooted as a result. The last project did not have sufficient participants to be evaluated by the researchers. In all projects, a clear link with chaplaincy was established, but participants were never obliged to participate in any specifically religious aspects.

The second chapter guides us through a significant part of the existing qualitative and quantitative research relevant for satisfaction and outcome research. The start of the contact (the reason for (self-)referrals to the chaplain, expectations), the actual practice (how important chaplaincy is for the caretaker) as well as the actual outcomes are discussed. Every aspect is analyzed for both hospital chaplaincy and for pastoral work in the parish – although research findings for the latter are scarce. Interestingly, the elements that possibly stimulate psychotherapy effectiveness are also discussed, as they potentially give us insight into the working factors of chaplaincy.

Chapter three elaborately describes the research methods for the evaluation. Project experts were interviewed and group interviews were conducted. The chaplain handed care seekers a questionnaire at the completion of the contact about the themes mentioned above (reason for admission, satisfaction, subjectively experienced working factors, quality of care and some background variables). The questions were based on well thought-out hypotheses. Care seekers could indicate whether or not they were willing to participate in an in-depth interview about the chaplaincy service.

The following and last chapter shows the results of the evaluation research by quoting the interviewed pastors and care seekers and presenting the data resulting from the questionnaires. In the presented projects, those groups that are not often reached by the church were addressed more than usual (middle-aged, male, working, non-members of the church). In most cases (90%), these care seekers were contacted by the pastor or referred to them by recommendation. They sought mostly psychosocial support rather than religious/spiritual help – which confirms findings in earlier research. More than 93% of the care seekers were very satisfied with the meetings. Interviews showed that the relationship between care giver and care seeker (feeling accepted and understood) was the most important predictor of care seekers' overall appraisal of the pastoral care. The pastoral caregivers, in turn, reported feeling increased professional competence, satisfaction and significance. Other professional groups said they valued the ecclesiastic and pastoral competences more than they used to do. The qualitative research revealed that, although, or because, the pastoral care was non-persuasive and non-obtrusive, interest in religious ideas and offers was often evoked.

The research questions are very broad and the collected data are rich, which is a strength as well as a weakness of this book – as the authors assert themselves. If one wants to set up a similar research project, it is possible to find here in-depth information for setting up similar projects, and a thick description of methodology used. On the other hand, the elaborate descriptions of the

participants' and caregivers' experiences can make the reader disoriented. Yet, conveniently, the authors provided clear and dense summaries of these at the end of each chapter.

Although the book is elaborate, some elements are missing. For those not familiar with the German church context and the way diaconia is usually perceived, an extra chapter providing a general introduction to pastoral care in Germany would have been welcome. In their overview of the current state of scholarship, the authors do not mention a couple of recent studies (for example the work of Baker, Iler and the Scottish PROM) that have a good methodological quality and have influenced the outcome-research in chaplaincy. Some suggestions for good care practices in the parishes based on the research outcomes would have been a desirable completion of the picture. A section about the limitations of the research would have made the book even more valuable, as findings could thus be nuanced and put in perspective. It could stress, for example, the fact that the research design was focused on subjective feelings rather than measurable outcomes – which is perfectly fine for doing evaluation research.

Notwithstanding these shortcomings, this book can inspire and give an impetus for religious communities to cherish diaconia by setting up projects for vulnerable groups. It is a valuable contribution to the research field, and can serve as a guide to recent empirical satisfaction and outcome research of pastoral work.

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Peter J. Cataldo and Dan O'Brien, eds. *Palliative Care and Catholic Health Care: Two Millennia of Caring for the Whole Person*. Foreword by Ira Byock. New York: Springer International Publishing, 2019. xvi + 282 pp. €105.99. ISBN 978-3-030-05004-7.

The relationship between palliative care and Catholic health care is a topic not often discussed extensively in academic literature. This fascinating book however, edited by Peter Cataldo and Dan O'Brien, offers us fifteen contributions by authors with diverse backgrounds at the crossroads between palliative care and Catholicism. The chapters are grouped into three main parts, namely the relationship between Catholic theological and moral tradition and teaching on palliative care; the relationship between body, mind and soul in palliative care; and finally, Catholic social thinking and societal issues in relation to palliative care.

The first part of the book examines, among other things, the rich history that the Catholic Church has built up in the field of (health) care in general. The reader is taken along a path that finds its starting point in an innovative exegesis of the parable of the Good Samaritan. Further, Dan O'Brien describes the role that Christianity played in classical antiquity, the Middle Ages, and all the way through Modernity in the care for the sick and people on the margins of society in general. Charles Bouchard develops an interesting presentation (including illustrations) of the *ars moriendi* or 'art of dying' model. This model, originating in the late Middle Ages, offers advice on the protocols and procedures of a good

death, explaining how to 'die well' according to Christian precepts. In one movement, the readers of this book are included in an important critique of our current society, in which suffering and death no longer seem to have any place. The art of dying seems to have been lost in our society, in which autonomy is so key. Palliative care and Catholic values are thus presented in this chapter as an antidote. The author makes a plea for the development of (often forgotten or neglected) virtues such as acceptance of loss and tolerance regarding vulnerability.

The relationship and essential distinction between palliative care and various forms of Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID), such as Physician assisted suicide and euthanasia, are also discussed extensively in this part of the book. As Ron Hamel relates, the Catholic tradition strongly rejects the increasingly common use of MAID in some countries, especially the United States. In the past, this sometimes gave the impression that the magisterium was targeting palliative care as well, and palliative care was regarded by some as "stealth euthanasia" (59). A number of abuses within the palliative care sector have reinforced this perception. However, loving, accessible and quality palliative care in which human dignity is central must be distinguished from the practice of euthanasia or medical assisted suicide. The Catholic magisterium does not expect people to endure unnecessary and disproportionate suffering. Catholic care facilities, therefore, have a great responsibility to clarify the distinction between palliative care and MAID conceptually and to develop and strengthen the development of good palliative care.

In the second part of this book, the reader is introduced into 'the body, the spirit and the soul' of palliative care. Here insight is gained into how the Catholic Church thinks about pain and symptom control and how palliative care can be integrated into the treatment of serious diseases. David Lichter explains and examines the role of spiritual/pastoral care in palliative care. His chapter lists many studies and good practices which can be of value to care professionals. The roles of the family and the community, as well as the psychological aspects of palliative care, are discussed in the light of the Catholic tradition. The chapter by Christopher W. Lawton and Diane E. Meier on the role of palliative care in the treatment of serious (chronic) conditions introduces the key concept 'palliative philosophy' (141). This concept makes it possible to distinguish between 'hospice care' or 'terminal care' and the much broader care-movement or approach that is called 'palliative care'. All too often, people are deterred by the term palliative care because of the connotation that the term has with suffering and, above all, death. Dissociating the central values of palliative care – namely the emphasis on the holistic approach and, first and foremost, putting quality of life first – from the actual (relatively short-term) dying process can bring many advantages, suggest the authors. For example, the integration of the palliative approach in chronic care can make this care more bearable for the patient and his or her relatives, while at the same time making issues such as loss and personal values more discussible between patient and care providers.

In the final part of this work, issues such as the relationship between palliative care and 'the common good', concrete examples of excellent care in which Catholic care facilities take the lead and the attitude of the Catholic magisterium towards advance care planning are discussed. A valuable contribution with regard to church-policy-makers is the chapter written by MC Sullivan, a nurse-bioethicist-attorney, in which the concrete steps taken by the diocese of

Boston to integrate palliative care into its daily work are set out. The chapter written by Elliott Louis Bedford deals extensively and in-depth with the theme of 'grace' and how this concept (properly and improperly) plays a role in the discussion on palliative care and medical assistance in dying and can therefore be warmly recommended for care ethicists who work on this theme.

Overall, this book presents innovative insights into the relationship between palliative care and Catholic thought. The book offers a critical contribution in a modern society in which there seems to be little attention or space for the dying process. Several important episcopal and papal texts have been added as appendix to this book, testifying to the great interest and attention that palliative care and related topics received in the past decennia by the magisterium. Some critical notes could be made about the rather specific focus this book lays on the context of the United States of America and the overlaps that sometimes occur between the different contributions. It can also sometimes seem surprising to the modern reader that, despite the great emphasis placed by the magisterium and the authors on developing accessible, quality and humane palliative care on the one hand and the value of proportionality (that is: overall mild stance) in dealing with pain and suffering on the other, a form of martyrdom is nevertheless presented in some passages as the higher good. A good example of such a passage is the following: "while praise may be due to the person who voluntarily accepts suffering by foregoing treatment with painkillers (...) to share consciously in the Lord's passion, such 'heroic behavior' cannot be considered the duty of everyone" (34).

Together with Ira Byock, who provided the introduction to this book, I also asked myself in advance what exactly the difference is between the Catholic approach to palliative care and what would – in general – simply be called 'good care'. Throughout reading this book, however, I have gained different insights into the unique relationship and history that these two rich traditions, namely palliative care and Catholicism, have in common. The emphasis on values such as faith, hope and love and the pivotal place of human dignity are the essence. I can therefore warmly recommend this book, which was compiled with contributions from theologians, physicians, ethicists, ecclesiastical policy-makers and many other disciplines, to anyone interested in palliative care in the broadest sense of the word.

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Anthony Isacco and Jay C. Wade. *Religion, Spirituality, and Masculinity: New Insights for Counselors*. The Routledge Series on Counseling and Psychotherapy with Boys and Men. New York and London: Routledge, 2019. 218 pp. £29.00. ISBN 978-1-1382-8077-9.

Religion, Spirituality, and Masculinity is published in the *Routledge Series on Counseling and Psychotherapy with Boys and Men* and is aimed at mental-health professionals. The authors' argument is straight forward: Because religion, spirituality, and gender are important factors in the lives and health of many men,

therapists must pay attention to them when counseling men. Yet rather than considering them as separate issues, the authors set out to examine how they intersect. Religion and spirituality shape men's understanding and performance of their masculinity, for example in their roles as partners and fathers. At the same time, their male socialization influences how men engage with religion and spirituality. The authors are certainly not the first to suggest using religion and spirituality as resources for improving health and well-being. The particular value of their work lies in pointing out that masculinity can be a complicating factor when trying to utilize these resources. Based on this insight, they suggest gender-sensitive clinical-counseling strategies for men.

The individual chapters deal with nine different aspects at the intersections of masculinity, spirituality and wellbeing. The first chapter discusses the benefits and potentially negative effects men can expect from the 'use' of religion and spirituality. Among the benefits, the authors list religious coping, religious support, and meaning in life, among the negative effects what they call "negative religious coping" (18), spiritual struggle, and forms of "extreme religious adherence" (19). Counseling interventions in this domain can serve to address spiritual struggles, to reframe God images, and to make meaning out of spiritual struggles. Chapter Two looks at how gender performances, both in adherence and in non-conformity to socially operant masculinity norms, can impact men's functioning and wellbeing. While a small strand of psychological literature highlights aspects of traditional masculinity norms that can have positive effects on men and others, the authors underline that "adaptability and flexibility in one's sense of masculinity and enacting male role norms is what is psychologically healthy" (41). Counseling interventions help the client to develop his own male identity. Chapter Three examines men and their relationship with God. They find that god concepts and images may be shaped by men's experience with primary caregivers in early childhood. Relationships with God can entail negative emotions like anger and isolation. Strength-based counseling can help men to utilize the divine relationship as a coping resource, while remedial counseling aims at positive changes to the relationship, especially through narrative and imagery approaches. Chapter Four discusses prayer and church attendance. The authors quote many recent studies that show the positive health effects of both practices, including better coping skills, broader access to social support, and resolution of spiritual struggles. Other studies show how male socialization and social norms for male behavior make these practices less prevalent among men than among women. The authors suggest various counseling interventions to stimulate the interest of male clients in such practices. Chapter Five deals with shame: Both norms of masculinity and religious ideals can be a source of shame for men when they fail to live up to them. Shaming is also a social-control tool used by groups to force men into compliance with group norms. If internalized, chronic feelings of shame can lead to depression; if externalized into anger and blame, they can result in aggression and violence. Counseling aims to stimulate self-compassion as a means to neutralize shame. While scholarship on forgiveness (Chapter Six) shows how forgiveness reduces stress and thereby increases wellbeing, popular culture actively promotes revenge as a performance of masculinity. Also, a gender socialization that makes it difficult for men to identify, describe, and express feelings ('alexithymia') deprives them of the emotional skills needed for the process of forgiving. The authors also point to less

researched dimensions of forgiveness, namely self-forgiveness, feeling forgiven by God, and seeking forgiveness. Chapter Seven deals with the psychological and interpersonal issues arising from "Problematic Pornography Consumption" (142). Chapter Eight describes the potential identity conflicts suffered by religious gay men. These often suffer a "double stigma" (173): they encounter homonegativity among many religious groups and prejudice against religion in the gay community. In addition, some have internalized the homonegativity of their religious communities and suffer from feelings of worthlessness, shame, and depression. Chapter Nine discusses psychological issues of religiously unaffiliated 'drifters', including spiritual struggle and deconversion.

In their tenth and concluding chapter, the authors conceptualize different counseling 'pathways' linking spirituality, masculinity and men's health. They suggest that the more common one will start from redefining masculinity towards one that is more open to religion and spirituality, which in turn leads to behaviors that improve health and well-being. Alternatively, counselling may lead from changing religious beliefs to a masculine identity that fosters more prosocial behavior and results in improved health and well-being. Common to the two pathways is the authors' 'can-do' optimism that both socialized masculinity codes and deep-seated religious beliefs can be changed through the counseling process.

One particular strength of the book are the detailed and vivid case studies, which serve to clarify many of the issues, concepts, and counseling approaches discussed in the theoretical sections. The assessment and intervention methods suggested by the authors show a certain bias towards the cognitive. Throughout the book, they suggest administering psychometric scales, questionnaires and other standardized self-reporting instruments for client assessments. Their recommended counseling interventions often include educating the client, collaborative psychoeducation, and bibliotherapy (which means asking the client to read a specific book). Greater attention to the affective dimension and, accordingly, to more holistic intervention methods might have been a welcome completion of the picture.

The book is clearly a product of its U.S.-American context. Many of the quoted empirical studies take their samples from U.S. college students. Concepts like 'masculinity ideology' or 'traditional masculinity' imply a single, monolithic set of norms. Such homogeneity and rigidity may reflect the reality in the U.S. or in rural areas, but in multicultural metropolitan places like London, Shanghai, or Brussels, this is no longer the case. There, many men may construct their patchwork identities by picking and choosing elements from a variety of possible masculinities, just as they eclectically serve themselves from a marketplace of different religious and spiritual affiliations.

The authors refrain from defining or distinguishing the terms religion and spirituality. Mostly, they use the two in conjunction, sometimes they revert to the equally undefined notion of 'religiosity'. This leaves a central subject matter of the book uncomfortably vague. This categorical vagueness is indicative of the whole body of research under discussion, where a consensus on precise definitions of these terms have remained elusive. One of the authors self-identifies as "practicing Catholic" (114), and the case studies are populated by 'devout Christians' of either Catholic or Evangelical affiliation. Although the authors encourage their readers to enhance their cultural competence, refer to a number

of studies with Muslims, and offer a tabulated “Overview of Prayer, Religious Attendance and Sacred Reading in World Religions” (98ff.), the transferability of Isacco and Wade’s insights from the world of U.S.-American ‘devout Christians’ to other cultures and religious traditions still needs to be established. The practical-theological literature on intercultural and interreligious pastoral care could provide some guidance.

The authors report with some enthusiasm how the congruence between religiosity and masculinity results in marital satisfactions among Javanese and life satisfaction among Balinese men. Yet while they suggest that such congruence should be the objective of counselling, they do not address the broader socio-historical context of their clients’ lives. In Javanese and Balinese society, religion may have retained its monopoly over cultural values. In the West, it has not. The process of secularization that started in early modern Europe has ended religion’s hegemony over culture in the West and allowed religious values and social norms – e.g. for gender performance – to become incongruent. Recognizing the incongruence – or even diametric opposition – of many dominant values of a late-capitalist consumer societies with the values modeled by Jesus of Nazareth may be a critical step on a pathway towards greater wellbeing.

The book serves as an important guide to a significant body of recent empirical research describing both the links between religion/spirituality and health, and between masculinity and health. It has been written for mental-health professionals, for who it is undoubtedly a valuable resource that encourages them to integrate both masculinity and spirituality into their counseling practice, especially when working with ‘devout’ men. The book’s subject matter, however, deserves to become the subject of a broader conversation. Anyone engaged in pastoral care and counseling will benefit from the gender-sensitive conceptualizations and empirical findings around such central theological themes as one’s relationship with God, shame, and forgiveness. Beyond the obvious value for practical theology, one would wish that the empirical insights from psychology also stimulated some dialogue with other branches of theology. In such conversations, theologians would have an opportunity to explain that they do not conceive of spirituality merely as an opiate that buffers individuals against the stressors of life, but as a holistic, collectively shared lifestyle committed to changing the conditions in the world that are at the root of many such adversities.

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