



**DOES GOD EXIST? AN ANSWER FOR TODAY**, by Hans Küng. Translated by Edward Quinn. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday, 1980. Pp. 839. \$17.50.

Hans Küng may be most widely known as a critic of papal leadership. This book makes clear that he deserves to be known as a defender of the faith of the church. To speak for the church is not to speak against the “world.” More specifically, Küng recognizes that the faith is to be winsomely defended and commended precisely by comprehending humankind’s historical experience so that the human capacity to know is accepted, honored, and deepened. Indeed this is faith’s claim upon him. Faith’s logic is conjunctive rather than disjunctive. Küng will not suppose that to curse the human is to praise the divine. God not only exists, but may be known to be unambiguously good (671). So it is in faithfulness to the logic of faith that Küng follows his widely cited *On Being a Christian* with this work aimed at a presumably even larger audience: believers for whom the Yes to God is not obvious and unbelievers for whom the No to God also fails to be obvious (xxi).

The book begins with epistemological questions, considering Descartes and Pascal respectively as representatives of kinds of reason and faith. Küng pleads for a critical-dialogic cooperation between theology and natural science, “in the face of the one world and the one humanity” (115). Theology needs to recognize that natural science “is an appropriate foundation for the modern world picture” (121), though science must be seen to be a partial and provisional perspective. Küng asks from the scientist “open-mindedness toward reality as a whole” (123). Thus Küng understands himself to be “pleading with Descartes...for *critical rationality*, but with Pascal...*against an ideological rationalism*” (124).

Having thus dealt with the modern preoccupation with method, Küng turns to “the new understanding of God.” Hegel, Teilhard de Chardin and Whitehead are among the figures treated here and Hegel seems to be the one who dominates the discussion. While Küng resists any effort to equate God and the human, he does plead for a “uniform understanding of reality” in which the divine and the human may both be recognized and identified. He is very clear about rejecting concepts of a supramundane or extramundane being, pleading instead for an Absolute “at once sustaining the world, maintaining the world and escorting the world: at once depth, center and height of world and man” (185).

With his epistemological and theological starting places clear, Küng turns to the challenges at hand. He lets the challenge of modern atheism (Feuerbach, Marx and Freud) lead him to a consideration of the post-modern challenge of nihilism, the “consequence of atheism.” Nietzsche challenges both Descartes and Pascal: “he passionately rejected the credo of Christian faith and buried in skepticism the *cogito* of human reason. His conclusion was that there is no fundamental certainty” (417). Küng finds this conclusion irrefutable, but also unprovable. It might appear that the match between faith and unfaith ends here in a stalemate, but Küng takes it to be a turning point.

Küng's turn toward faith seems to amount to following William James in his appeal to the appropriateness of the act of trust in a living option within the context of an unfinished universe. Küng writes:

...to anyone who regards reality merely with mistrust, its identity, meaning and value will not be revealed. An *essential* rationality can be made possible only by reality itself as it is revealed—this, too, we have seen—in fundamental trust. If someone regards reality trustfully in principle, it will reveal to him identity, meaning and value. That is why an *essential* rationality belongs to fundamental trust (447).

An atheist can manage this fundamental “Yes to Reality” and so live a truly hu-

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man, moral life. But the principal question remains: What *founds* the reality so trusted, and indeed the trust itself? In probing this question Küng develops his understanding of faith as the gift and task whose “Yes to God” provides an alternative to atheism: The way has been prepared in the discussion of the yes to reality:

...there is a reflection on the reality of God emerging from human experience and calling for man's free decision. Belief in God can be justified in the face of a rational critique. It has a basis in the experience of uncertain reality itself, which raises the first and last questions about the condition of its possibility (574).

The book closes quickly in just over another hundred pages in which the “Yes to the Christian God” is developed through the rubrics “The God of the non-Christian religions,” “The God of the Bible,” and “The God of Jesus Christ.” In the first section Küng resists both domination and syncretism (594), aligns Buddhism and Western negative theology (601) and proposes a distinction between questions of truth and salvation (627). His discussion of specifically Christian material avoids disjunctive tendencies (e.g., God operates not from above or outside, but from within [649]) and so can plead that the God of Jesus is precisely *not* the God against whom atheists and nihilists cry out (676).

This is an impressive and appealing work. The central figures in Küng's story come to life in the rich particularity of historical detail. In more than a hundred pages of notes and indices Küng demonstrates and delivers his grasp of the scholarly discussion pertinent to his argument. One may differ with him on a point or two (Did Kierkegaard hold that revelation was the “sole source” of truth and certainty, [87], or Whitehead posit a “complete reciprocity” between God and world [180]?), but one senses that the argument of the book is not at stake in the differences.

That argument is appealing precisely in its refusal to accept a disjunctive set of premises. Küng will speak for God *and* for humankind. This commitment does not blind him to the church's failings in this area. Indeed Küng is very explicitly critical at several points (e.g., 24, 35, 59, 116-17, 176). But his interest is clearly constructive. This is already evident in the preface:

Some time ago, an English Nobel prizewinner is supposed to have answered the

question whether he believed in God: “Of course not, I am a scientist.” This book is sustained by the hope that a new age is dawning when the very opposite answer will be given: “Of course, I am a scientist” (xxiii).

Well, perhaps not “of course.” But surely Küng is right that the trust to which he calls fulfills rather than negates the human. This conviction is a theological one; it has to do with God, the God of the gospel. It is that Christian faith which calls him to write this book. Here apologetics is seen to be evangelism barely incognito.

Standing on Küng’s shoulders, one can see unfinished tasks in this book. It is not clear to me how Küng can speak of God’s relationship with the world as one “of strength, of unlimited freedom, of absolute sovereignty” (185). He seems to resist this—for example, in his closing discussion of the God who triumphs in, not over, suffering (694-5). Küng would seem to be helped if he could formulate a framework in which the transcendence of God in relationship could be stated. Such a framework might also permit him to accept and address questions of meaning in the book’s hurried final chapter. There Küng writes:

Christology or Christ theory may be important, but faith in Christ and the following of Christ are more important. What matters is being a Christian, and this he—Jesus Christ—makes possible for me (688).

I do not disagree with his judgment, but I am disappointed by the deficient attention given to crucial secondary tasks, as when Küng seems to settle for saying that the distinctive “Christian aspect” of God is precisely the sheer facticity of this Jesus. We need to do better than that, I believe, and Küng can help us.

To have brought us—all of us, wondering believers and wondering unbelievers alike—to such specifically Christian questions is of course an immense accomplishment. For that church and world have reason to join to thank Hans Küng.

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**STUDIES IN LUTHERAN HERMENEUTICS**, edited by John Reumann. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979. Pp. 370. \$14.95.

Collections of essays are notoriously difficult to review, even if they are written by one author. If they are written by sixteen authors whose only common denominator is that they claim to be Lutherans the task becomes virtually impossible. One could take sides in the profound disagreements concerning the significance of the Bible here revealed. But before I do this a short summary of the content would be in order.

After an introduction by Paul D. Opsahl there is an “Overview and Personal Appraisal” by John Reumann, which gives a very helpful introduction to the material. Harold H. Ditmanson writes on the perspectives on the hermeneutics debate, Samuel H. Nafzger on the scripture and word of God, Karlfried Froehlich on the problems of Lutheran hermeneutics.

The second section deals with the lectionary as hermeneutic and contains only one article by Arland J. Hultgren which analyzes the hermeneutical tendencies in the three-year lectionary.

The third section deals with the confessional propria as hermeneutic, and contains a helpful article by the late Warren A. Quanbeck and articles by Ralph A. Bohlmann, Horace D. Hummel, Foster R. McCurley and Joseph A. Burgess. One notices the attempt to balance representation.

The final section deals with methods of interpretation and contains articles by Ronald M. Hals, David L. Tiede, Duane A. Priebe, Kurt E. Marquart, Martin H. Scharlemann, and Donald H. Juel. Apparently there were many other papers not presented in the book, but mentioned in the article by John Reumann who gives a history of the debate.

One might read Nafzger's "Scripture and the Word of God," to get a feeling for the style of the discussion proposed by some of the participants. He ends his chapter not untypically for his contribution with a syllogism:

1. The historical-critical method is by definition inappropriate for application to Word of God.
2. Scripture is without qualification Word of God.
3. Therefore the historical-critical method is by definition inappropriate for application to Scripture (123).

The book reveals that a fruitful discussion of the subject seems no longer possible. The positions are so frozen in opposition to each other that the participants could really find a more profitable way to spend their time than continuing the debate. From the perspective of a nonparticipant who considers himself an orthodox Lutheran, the approach of, for example, Nafzger is so contrary to all that Luther stood for, especially his biblical vision that the "finite is the bearer of the infinite" and that "the word becomes flesh," and that we receive the body and blood of Christ under the elements of bread and wine, that one would have to say that the position so vociferously proclaimed as Lutheran by some of the writers is not really Lutheran at all. It is Aristotelian rationalism, pure and simple. The ultimate criterion is not the Bible but Aristotle's law of the "Excluded Middle." Luther would have said, "Sie haben einen anderen Geist."

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**MARXISM: AN AMERICAN CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE**, by Arthur F. McGovern.  
Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1980. Pp. 339. \$12.95 (paper).

For American Christians seriously concerned with the future of human society, this is an indispensable book. Father Arthur McGovern has written a comprehensive, balanced and insightful book which investigates the compatibility of Marxism and Christianity. Profoundly aware of world-wide economic injustice, he has undertaken this task because "the Marxist-socialist critique has convinced me that monopoly capitalism undermines democracy and too often does not promote the common good; hence simply to stay with what we have is for me un-

Christian” (321). He himself is not a Marxist; his personal option is for democratic socialism; but all points of view are treated fairly and without caricature.

There can be little doubt about the

timeliness of this book. Modern post-industrial capitalism, nationally and globally, lurches from one crisis to another. Its much vaunted potential for Third World “development” is viewed by many as a rhetorical mask for its persistently exploitative tendencies. New liberation and political theologies critique the economic and social structures which imprison the majority of the world’s inhabitants in cultures of poverty. The bureaucratic centralism of the Communist nations seems to lack the vision and power required for the necessary social transformation. Marxist thought, nevertheless, continues to engage persons in all of these contexts, challenging their prior assumptions, setting forth its own historical program, and promising a future unlike anything that has been.

The first part of this book establishes the historical context within which the question of the Christian relationship to Marxism can be considered. Chapter 1 deals with the evolution of Marx’s ideas, and McGovern offers an excellent survey of those concepts which have become decisive for later followers. A clear statement of Marx’s materialist view of history is followed by a discussion of his understanding of the capitalist mode of production. The Marxist strategy and program for social change is traced to its roots in Marx’s thought. Chapter 2 details the development of Marxism since Marx. The contributions of Engels, Lenin, Bernstein and Stalin are noted, as are the developments which led to the emergence of “critical Marxism” in the latter part of this century. Chapter 3 reviews the changing attitudes of Catholics and Protestants toward the various movements which derived from Marxist thought. The author’s discussion of the Protestant encounter with Marxism is sketchy, as he himself acknowledges.

The second part of McGovern’s book considers the impact of Marxism upon Christian social thought and action. Chapter 4 presents the “case against capitalism” from a Marxist perspective, and highlights the forms of alienation, the subversion of democratic rule, and the resultant poverty and inequality which are said to characterize this social system. The origins, nature, and conclusions of Latin American liberation theology are brilliantly summarized in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 is a case study in the relationship of Chilean Christians and Marxists, and carefully delineates both the possibilities and problems of that association.

The final section of this book seeks to appraise the objections which are raised with respect to Marxist theory and practice. Chapter 7 takes up the issues of atheism and materialism. The several understandings of materialism in Marxist thought are noted, and McGovern distinguishes carefully the view of Marx from that of Engels and Lenin. He further discusses the various forms of atheism found in Marxism, and concludes that atheism was not intrinsic to the Marxist view of reality. Current Marxist reappraisals of religion conclude the chapter.

Chapter 8 engages the critical issues of property, violence, class struggle, and democracy. McGovern’s carefully nuanced response is a model of critical Christian reflection. His ability to make social and theological distinctions is evident throughout, and he deals fairly with the concerns of both the political right and left. The question of Christian participation in a revolution is particularly interesting. The “totalitarian temptation” in those societies which have Communist governments is noted as a persistent threat to the democratic expectations of Marx

and later “critical” Marxists.

A final chapter includes the author’s personal reflections on Marxism and socialism in the American context. Turning once more to the question of the compatibility of Marxism and Christianity, he concludes:

...[the answer] depends on the definition one gives to Marxism and what one holds as essential to Marxism. The dominant “classical” Marxism, with its atheistic worldview, is incompatible with Christianity and presents itself as such. Marxism viewed as a self-critical method of analysis is not incompatible. When tactics and strategies of social change are added on, Marxism may or may not prove incompatible. Socialist ideals of cooperation and sharing are certainly compatible with Christianity (310).

The most important distinction for Christians, he continues, is between an open, self-critical Marxism and a closed, dogmatic one. McGovern then describes contemporary Marxist and socialist move-

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ments in the United States and indicates his own preferences. A final “Christian epilogue” views the relationships between Marxism and Christianity with cautious optimism, recognizes the failures of both, and points to the common vision of a truly just and human society (328).

This book has particular usefulness for the pastors of the church. McGovern’s wide-ranging and accurate analysis is of special help in coming to a critical understanding of current economic, political, and social structures. The congruence of certain Marxist views with biblical insights will become apparent; the distance between Christian theology and Marxist thought with respect to other issues will be equally evident. Recent efforts by both Catholic and Protestant theologians to provide an apology for “democratic capitalism” can also be more incisively evaluated after a careful study of this book.

A genuine engagement of American Christians with Marxist thought and practice is still to occur. Bearing as an integral part of their witness the hope of the coming Kingdom, Christians cannot postpone this encounter much longer. The urgent need for a new social vision, the compelling demand for a more just, sustainable, and egalitarian future, require that Christians enter into dialogue with Marxists—and others—as part of the inescapable task of shaping the structures of human existence. The knowledge, wisdom, and faith of Father McGovern, embodied in this volume, advance both the dialogue and the common project.

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**THE TEN COMMANDMENTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS**, by Walter Harrelson. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980. Pp. 240. \$9.95 (paper).

Rarely have I found myself so stimulated by any book! Admittedly, I was provoked in

most cases to strong disagreement, but nonetheless my reaction must mean that this work deals with vital issues.

After a brief raising of the question of the need and value of fundamental community norms for human life (3-17), the lengthiest chapter is given over to “The Origin, Structure, and Setting of the Ten Commandments” (19-48). Here Harrelson summarizes the familiar critical issues in a style and language that is easy for the non-specialist to understand. Although he does not follow any single scholar’s opinions slavishly, he does often adopt the views of Eduard Nielsen. Comparisons are made with the curses of Deut. 27:15-26, the “ritual decalogue” of Exod. 34:14-16, and some other lists of commandments. An “original” form of the Decalogue is set forth, a date in the time of Moses is defended, and the problems of numbering are surveyed. Although it is not a major matter, the Reformed numbering pattern is chosen as the most suitable.

Then, the central portion of the volume is devoted to an analysis of the individual prohibitions (all are negative in Harrelson’s reconstruction). The “prologue” and First Commandment are treated with the prohibitions of images and misuse of the divine name under the heading of “God’s Exclusive Claims” (51-77). Commandments against working on the seventh day or despising parents are examined as “God’s Basic Institutions” (79-105). Laws against taking a neighbor’s life and against adultery are viewed as “Basic Human Obligations” (107-133), and the remaining prohibitions are dealt with as “Basic Social Obligations” (135-154). Then the volume concludes with brief summaries of how the Decalogue is related to the New Testament (157-172) and to “religious life today” (173-193). The United Nations “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” is printed as an appendix.

The survey format of the volume means that only the briefest sort of treatment can be dedicated to ethical issues of an individual sort, such as capital punishment, the biblical view of marriage, or the right to private property. Still, Harrelson does touch provocatively on these and a host of others. It is not, however, in the details of his treatment of these or other issues that I found the greatest questions to arise. Instead, it was in the analysis of the connection set forth in the title between the Decalogue and *human rights*.

Because my own focus on the Ten Commandments stresses so strongly the matter of Israel’s peoplehood, I waited eagerly to see how Harrelson would make this bridge to *human rights*. To my amazement the relation of the Ten Commandments to Israel’s election received only the scantiest attention until the final chapter, where it was examined rather creatively as “bondage under God” (173-181). But even there virtually no space was given over to the way these Commandments—and the entirety of Old Testament law—set forth what is to be distinctive of Israel in contrast to the rest of humanity. Even the most blatant case of the Sabbath is treated as a wise valuing of the importance of rest and its potential for reflection and passing on tradition.

What is at stake here is the presupposition of the Decalogue. Two significant problems arise. One in the way Harrelson, in my judgment, sees these laws as essentially rooted in Creation, and thus he can move easily to the human community’s need for such norms. To move in this manner away from the redemption-centered root of Old Testament law is to engage in a drastic reinterpretation, and more seriously to minimize the most crucial aspect of the Old Testament’s own perspective. The way in which Harrelson frequently turns, in spite of its later date, to P and J material in Gen. 1-3 and 9 to elaborate the Sabbath, the taking of human life, and

the nature of marriage, makes his approach clear, as does the way in which the special obligations of the redeemed community are given only minimal attention. The other problem is that the Ten Commandments are seen as far too separate from the body of Israel's law, especially its ritual legislation. Plainly, for Harrelson it is human values that are central, rather than allegiance to Yahweh. Again such a basic switch in perspective may be justifiable in the modern *use* of this literature, but I view it as highly questionable in a writing in which the first priority is clarity about the theological intent of the Commandments themselves.

The objections which I have raised are not really matters of detail or of degree. Rather I consider them to be among the most vital issues of fundamental orientation, and in consequence I feel Harrelson's treatment is devastatingly mistaken. Still, he made my adrenalin flow, and perhaps he can do the same for you.

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**JEWISH MONOTHEISM AND CHRISTIAN TRINITARIAN DOCTRINE: A DIALOGUE**, by Pinchas Lapide and Jürgen Moltmann. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981. Pp. 93. \$4.50 (paper).

This is a book of many faces. In spite of its brief compass, it includes forewords by two persons, followed by presentations, dialogues and a common declaration by the two major spokesmen. What holds it together is that all the parts address a common theme from either a Jewish or a Christian point of view. The presentations and the dialogue following them were heard in a West German parish in 1978.

Jewish-Christian dialogue moved a good step forward in the instance recorded in this little book. Obviously, much took place before this occasion, and the topic at hand is not the place for novices or strangers to each other to begin. These two participants dared to tackle a topic where more disagreement than agreement was to be expected and where an impasse was apt to be reached sooner or later. Yet they attempted it and with a considerable result.

In spite of acknowledged Jewish problems with Christian Trinitarian doctrine, Lapide freely acknowledges Christians as monotheists. Moltmann, in turn, seeks to find Jewish thinkers who have espoused binary or triadic views of God as opposed to absolute monotheism. This does not meet with much success or with approval from Lapide. More promising are his attempts at showing Jewish understandings of God as full of pathos, as suffering through seeking and maintaining a relationship with humans. This, Moltmann maintains, is the way Christians understand God too. The doctrine of the Trinity, in fact, begins as an attempt at understanding "the story of the passion of Christ" (47). Both spokesmen seem anxious to avoid the apathetic, unmoved God of the philosophers, among which Lapide

wants to include the Trinity as explained by early Christian Greek-philosopher theologians. So far there is considerable agreement, though Moltmann is more fond of philosophy aiding theology than is Lapide.



Yet, even so open and generous a fellow-participant as Lapidé must finally distance himself from Trinitarianism. He cannot and does not accept that Jesus was more than *a* son of God, something Lapidé would say of any of Jesus' Jewish contemporaries. Nor does he understand the *Spirit* of God in some personal sense which might meet Moltmann halfway with a binary understanding of God. The debate is obviously hung up, and one would be overly optimistic in hoping that it will be resolved before the eschaton.

Yet, much clarifying has been done by both sides so that at least some of the obscurity which beclouds the usual trinitarian explanations is removed. What was achieved here in deference to a Jewish audience is apt to be helpful for Christians as well. We welcome this in the face of the general apathy and ignorance of the Trinity in the Christian community. Other participants in the world-wide dialogue should be encouraged to try this subject too. Much remains to be done.

Some other matters not directly related to the main topic are also worth discovering in the book. For instance, the translator, Leonard Swidler, in his preface shows that such interfaith dialogue was not possible for earlier generations of believers. Even now, only a minority—those who hold to a non-absolutized, dynamic view of truth—are really able to participate in such an encounter. This makes the event recorded in the book all the more valuable. It also explains how Lapidé can speak of the Church as a God-willed community of salvation or of Jesus' resurrection as an historical event. It also makes the common declaration at the end a rare thing, one unique to these two men. But it is a gift for which we have been looking. Each participant was open to and in danger of being swayed by the other. This was no rigged, forced debate such as rabbis were forced to participate in during the Middle Ages for the amusement of the masses and the humiliation of the minority. Thank God we are living in a different era, and that we are convinced that God's Spirit is leading us to exciting, edifying encounters with the Jewish people.

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**PSYCHOLOGY AND THEOLOGY: PROSPECTS FOR INTEGRATION**, by Gary R. Collins. Edited by H. Newton Malony. Nashville: Abingdon, 1981. Pp. 154. \$5.95 (paper).

Collins, a professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, delivered the Finch symposium in Psychology and Religion Lectures at Fuller Theological Seminary in 1978. This volume includes three chapters which comprise the lectures, a chapter by editor Malony which summarizes the responses to the lectures by three members of Fuller's faculty and a graduate student, and a final chapter in which Collins replies to the respondents.

As the title indicates, Collins and his critics addressed the problem of integrating psychology and theology. Collins believes that psychology poses a threat to theology, especially a biblically-grounded theology, but he thinks an effort should be made to integrate them. The question: What is the best strategy for such integration?

In chapter 1, he surveys a variety of strategies. These include the *denial* approach, *railroad-track* approach, *levels of analysis* approach, *integrated models* approach, "*spoiling the Egyptians*" approach, and the *rebuilding* approach. His preferred strategy is the rebuilding approach. It says that, for integration to occur, psychology will need to be built on a whole new

foundation, one which recognizes that psychology is based on certain epistemological presuppositions, its claims to neutral, scientific objectivity notwithstanding. He argues that psychology should be rebuilt, from the bottom up, by establishing it on the fundamental presupposition that “God exists and is the source of all truth,” and its corollary, that “Man, who exists, can know the truth” (34). Psychology beginning from this presupposition will be guided by the following working assumptions: the need for an expanded empiricism (i.e., not just controlled experiments); an acceptance of the

paradox of determinism and free will; a modified reductionism (i.e., not losing sight of the wholeness of the personality when studying its various parts); a Christian supernaturalism (i.e., the belief that “God created all things and through his Son holds everything together”); a biblical absolutism (as a corrective to scientific relativism); and a biblical anthropology (35-36).

In chapters 2 and 3, Collins applies his model of integration. These applications focus primarily on how theology and psychology may be integrated in the practice of “people-helping.” Readers who expected concrete examples of how a psychology based on a biblical foundation might address the typical concerns of modern psychology will find these chapters disappointing. Readers who share Collins’ view that the integration of theology and psychology is finally achieved in the act of ministry will appreciate this shift from theory to practice.

The respondents, whose views are ably summarized by Malony, criticized various aspects of Collins’ integration model. The basic thrust of these criticisms is that his model reflects an “eristical attitude” toward psychology, characterized “by disputatious, argumentative reasoning debating the validity of other assertions to the ‘one truth’....Psychology is considered useful, especially in practical people-helping matters, but must be carefully screened and contended with on the theoretical level” (107-108). In their judgment, this eristical attitude is most evident in his attempt to build a psychology on biblical absolutism and Christian supernaturalism, to the neglect of modern secularity and cultural relativity (including the Bible’s own culture-boundness). In response, Collins quite generously (at times, apologetically) grants this and most of his critics’ other objections, agreeing with Malony that “it is not easy to stand on the border between two fields” (132).

The book’s most interesting feature is Collins’ survey of various strategies for integrating theology and psychology, and Malony’s suggestion that these strategies reflect five distinctive attitudes toward psychology (103-109). This discussion calls to mind H. Richard Niebuhr’s typology in *Christ and Culture*. Parallels between Collins’ strategies, Malony’s attitudinal schema, and Niebuhr’s typology would be worth exploring, with psychology being the “cultural” achievement which evokes various types of Christian response. Collins’ own rebuilding model comes closest to Niebuhr’s “Christ transforms culture” type, though it is a predictably conservative version of this type, carrying vestiges of the “Christ and culture in tension” model. These vestiges are reflected in his view of Christ as “holding everything together.”

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**THE INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: THE POPULAR VIEW OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE AND THE TEACHING OF THE APOSTLE PAUL**, by Hermann Gunkel. Trans. by Roy Harrisville and Philip Quanbeck II. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980. Pp. 133. \$10.95.

Hermann Gunkel is well known as one of the seminal Old Testament scholars of the last century. His commentary on Genesis (1901), commentary on the Psalms (1925/26), and his introduction to the Psalter (1933) have assured him a place in the history of interpretation. It is not so well known that Gunkel began his academic career as a New Testament scholar. The present volume opened his career, published in 1888 when he was only twenty-six years old. It was followed in 1895 by *Schöpfung und Chaos*, a study of the protology of Genesis in relation to the (apocalyptic) eschatology of Revelation. That was followed by his *Zum religionsgeschichtlichen Verständnis des Neuen Testaments* (1903), a volume in which he formulated some of the hermeneutical principles of the school of comparative religion and at the same time inaugurated the series *Forschungen zur Religion des Alten und Neuen Testaments*, a series he edited with Rudolf Bultmann for almost thirty years. It was only his failure to obtain a position in New Testament that led him to the Old.

Now his first work is translated almost a century after it was first published. One might well ask whether it was worth the effort and the money. One immediate an-

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swer, of course, is that the volume would be helpful in this age of linguistic poverty for anyone who wished to understand the growth of Hermann Gunkel as a theological thinker. This book gives us our first glimpse into the nascent scholar. It shows the early dissatisfaction with the thought of the dying enlightenment and the philosophic schema of Hegel. Gunkel is concerned to read texts and let them take him where they will. In that sense it is the first modern discussion of the Holy Spirit and is the father of a myriad of books down to the most recent one by Eduard Schweizer.

It also has some value in and of itself. Gunkel methodologically sought to describe the popular (i.e., the common and prevalent) view of the Spirit as the backdrop for understanding the peculiar nature of Paul's teaching. In the process he pays attention to the Old Testament, to early Judaism, and to early Christianity (drawn primarily from Acts, the Gospels, and Paul). Here we might find material that is dated, e.g., the idea that glossolalia is the Spirit's "most striking and characteristic activity" (30), that the apostolic age thought of the Spirit as "the supernatural power of God which works miracles in and through the person" (35). It is a mark of the age of writing that the apocalyptic motifs are little stressed. Today people would make those motifs major structural categories for understanding the Spirit in Judaism and early Christianity.

The discussion of Paul's theology of the Spirit appears dated. (This is, of course, no critique of Gunkel.) A presentation today would be structured quite differently from that given here. Gunkel deals mainly with the gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12-14 and Gal. 5), without giving the broader canvas.

Gunkel anticipates methodologically some of the commonly held positions of scholarship today. His book was significant in its time as one of the first truly exegetical studies of biblical pneumatology. But its value today is largely that of a landmark in the history of scholarship.

Careful attention to works by E. Schweitzer, J. D. G. Dunn, and others would benefit the contemporary reader more.

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**ASIAN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY: EMERGING THEMES**, edited by Douglas J. Elwood. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1980. Pp. 342. \$14.95 (paper).

It is commonly accepted that the theology of the churches of Asia has been shaped greatly by the theology of Europe and North America. D. T. Niles once described Christianity in Asia as a “potted plant” which has been transported without being transplanted. However, how is the living seed of faith to be rooted and grow in Asian soil, in ways that are faithful both to the “text” and to the “context?”

One Asian ecumenical consultation described the task as follows:

We have inherited the “great tradition” of the gospel from those who brought the gospel to Asia, but we believe that Christ has more of his truth to reveal to us as we seek to understand his work among men in their several Asian cultures, their different Asian religions, and their involvement in the contemporary Asian revolution...even as people of other times and cultures made their own confession, we too must do the same in our time and culture (45).

This is an updated edition of a collection first published in Manila in 1976 entitled *What Asian Christians Are Thinking* (New Day Publishers). Essays are included by twenty Asian theologians, fourteen representing Protestant mainline traditions, one from the Protestant conservative evangelical tradition, and five Roman Catholic contributions. Nine additional readings are theological statements from Asian ecumenical conferences and manifestos from national churches and others in South Korea, Taiwan, and the Philippines. All contributions are from contemporary Asian theologians, who bring a variety of concerns to this task of relating the Christian message to the Asian scene today.

Emerito Nacpil of the Philippines describes seven features of Asia:

1. Diversity in races, peoples, cultures, religions.
2. For most countries, a colonial experience.
3. Countries in the process of development and modernization.
4. Peoples seeking to achieve authentic self-identity and cultural integrity.

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5. Home of some of the world’s living and nascent religions, representing alternative ways of life and experiences of reality.
  6. Peoples searching for new forms of social order, often resorting to authoritarian forms of government.

## 7. Christian community a tiny minority (57).

Christians within Asia as a whole make up only 2% of the population, with half of these in the Philippines (245).

Aloysius Pieris of Sri Lanka describes Asia as a region marked by two inseparable realities—overwhelming *poverty* and multifaceted *religiosity*. He believes that these coalesce to create the peculiar character of the Asian continent (240).

The essays of this volume move back and forth between these two realities. At times, there is a focus upon the need to relate Christian theology to the contemporary religious context, and at times to the economic and political bondage experienced in Asia today.

Regarding the religious context, Pieris uses the term “cosmic religion” to designate that species of religion referred to traditionally in the West as “animism”—cosmic forces such as heat, fire, winds and cyclones, earth and its quakes, oceans, rains, and floods. He ‘believes’ that these have become integrated into Hinduism, Buddhism, and to some extent Taoism (243). Therefore one task of Asian theology is to come to terms with this reality, even as this theology seeks to relate to the major religious traditions themselves.

S. J. Samartha writes particularly of the Indian scene, and of points of similarity between Christian revelation and of themes within the Hindu advaita tradition. In preparing for this dialogue,

...the sense of the mystery and depth in God should not be eliminated through any cheap formulations of Christology in India (152).

Jung Young Lee describes the “both/and” framework found in the Taoist Book of Changes (the I Ching) which he finds preferable to the “either/or” pattern of rational thought so common in the Western philosophical tradition.

The West, using either/or categories of thought, finds it difficult to express the divine transcendence and immanence together. For the Yin-Yang way of thinking, it is no trouble at all to think that God is both transcendent and immanent at the same time (87).

Hideo Ohki describes the contribution which a Japanese philosopher Seiichi Hatano makes to the conceptualization of how the self-transcending God crosses the abyss to reach and save humankind (142).

Lynn de Silva writes from within the context of Sri Lanka, seeking to restate the fundamentals of Christian theology in relation to Theravada Buddhist thought (221).

Other essays focus upon the reality of Asian society and the imperative for Christians not only to address rationally the issues of social justice, but also to become involved in the day-to-day needs of men and women caught in the web of poverty and dehumanization.

An Indian Jesuit, Sebastian Kappen, states it this way:

The springtime of Asian Christian theology will burst forth only when we refuse to theologize by proxy, that is, when we refuse to be mere relaying stations for ideas fabricated elsewhere and muster enough courage to face the naked God and

creatively respond to his challenge to create a social order of justice and freedom (312).

Raymond Fung, with long experience in evangelism among factory workers in Hong Kong, has been actively involved also in challenging the conditions under which they work. For him, the first concern of a Christian who lives among oppressed peoples is to identify with their struggles, recognizing that while all humans are sinners some in a special sense suffer further as the “sinned-against.”

Our evangelism has to become a lot more biblical and effective, and the best way this process can begin, I believe, is to focus on the poor. Evangelism of the poor will demonstrate clearly the false dichotomy between doing evangelism and doing justice...a middle-class church in a sea of peasants and factory workers makes no sense at all (209).

Of considerable interest is the essay written by K. H. Ting of the People’s Republic of China. Ting, who heads the newly reopened Nanking Theological Seminary, addresses the Marxist charge that “religion is the opiate of the people.”

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He acknowledges that some preachers have presented religion as an anesthetic, but that this has no bearing on the question of the being of God. In fact, as he points out, even prior to Karl Marx this charge was made by an English clergyman, Charles Kingsley, to dramatize his deep concern over a church ignoring the plight of downtrodden working men, women, and children (261). Ting adds an illustration from the socialist world:

In the museum at Prague there is a statue of John Hus, on which is carved this memorable saying of his: “Woe to me if I keep silent. If I do not speak out against the greatest evils, then I become an accomplice of sin and hell, and it were better had I never been born.” Who dares to say that a man who talks like this has been drugged with opiate? (262)

Ting welcomes the change of social system in the new China, yet affirms the need for continuing Christian witness.

We should welcome a social system that shows itself able to raise the level of moral life. But the change of social system can only limit the effectiveness of sin, it cannot solve the problem of sin. Sin can only be healed by forgiveness, salvation, and grace (264).

Choan-seng Song’s bold essay suggests the need for a radical restatement of mission theology from the standpoint of creation, recognizing there is no dichotomy of Christian and non-Christian cultures.

At most, all we can say is that in and through Jesus Christ we believe we are given access to considerable degrees of God's truth, particularly when it is made known to us in the form of God's love for the world in creation and in redemption. A perception such as this will...keep us from confusing the Christian way of life as the embodiment of the whole truth of God (186).

The book concludes with five courageous statements issued in recent years by churches and other Christian groups, midst political oppression and interreligious tension in South Korea, the Philippines, and Taiwan.

Each essay or manifesto is prefaced by a clarifying word from the editor which introduces the writer(s) and gives a succinct overview of their argument. Most essays are followed by references and editor's notes.

This volume presents a stimulating cross section of diverse issues being raised by thoughtful Asian Christians. While they speak primarily to fellow Asians, the concerns they raise are of relevance to North Americans as we become increasingly aware that we all live in a fast-moving, global society. Charles C. West of Princeton puts this in perspective in his brief foreword:

We have had our fill, in the Western world in recent years, of pseudo salvations from the East—whether Maoist, Taoist, Hare Krishna, or Zen. We may have in this book the beginnings of a real word of God to us from the Asian experience (12).

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**EBLA: AN EMPIRE REDISCOVERED**, by Paolo Matthiae. Translated by Christopher Holme. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981. Pp. 237. \$14.95.

Professor Matthiae of Rome University, chief archaeologist of the expedition, has presented a description of the finds and his interpretation. Holme's translation reads well; however, I have not seen the Italian text for comparison.

The book divides into three main sections: Chapter 1, a history of archaeological research in Syria; Chapters 2-4, archaeological investigation of Tell Mardikh and a description of the material of Periods II and III; and Chapters 5-7, an interpretation of the finds, description and importance of the tablets, a comparative study of the art and architecture of Tell Mardikh, and the significances of Periods II and III within the history of the Ancient Near East.

Tell Mardikh is a large mound of about 56 hectares located 55 km south of Aleppo in northern Syria. The mound consists of two distinct areas: a central acropolis built on a natural out-cropping of rock, and a much larger flat area surrounding the citadel. Work was begun in 1964 under the auspices of University of Rome, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Na-

tional Research Council. In more recent years support was received from the Ministry of Public Education. The work has been directed by Paolo Matthiae, Professor of Archaeology and Art History of the Ancient Near East, University of Rome. Tell Mardikh was identified as the site of ancient Ebla through an Akkadian votive inscription from Period III in which Ebla is mentioned by name.

The excavators have opened eleven areas on the mound, three on the citadel and eight in the Lower City. Seven major strata with numerous sub-strata and several occupational gaps have been identified. The history of the site extends from the Proto-Literate (Chalcolithic) to Byzantine ages. The most significant period of occupation from the point of view of history and culture was during the Early Bronze Age of the third millennium. A second period of importance was during the first half of the second millennium, Middle Bronze Age.

Matthiae says very little about Periods I and IV-VII. Most of the book is concentrated on Period II (Early Bronze) and Period III (Middle Bronze). Period II is dated 2900-2000 B.C.E. and is divided into three phases: IIA (2900-2400), IIB<sub>1</sub> (2400-2250), IIB<sub>2</sub> (2250-2000).

Period IIB<sub>1</sub>: With this level Matthiae takes up his detailed description. According to him, IIB<sub>1</sub> marks the beginning of major urban culture at Ebla. The only architectural feature of this period that has been excavated is Palace G. Evidence of a temple from the period has been discovered in soundings along the Middle Bronze temple in the Lower City.

Palace G appears to have been part of an extensive building complex. Only part of the palace has been excavated, an area extending from the southwestern end of the citadel into the Lower City.

The elements of Royal Palace G so far uncovered are: the north and east sides of the so called 'Court of Audience'; the Northwest Wing of the northern facade of the court; the Tower with Ceremonial Stairway at the intersection of the two facades of the Court; the Monumental Gateway opening out of the east side of the Court; a small part of a Guard House, north of the Gateway; a short section of the administrative quarters, south of the Gateway (68).

The most exciting find from the palace area was the tablets. About 15,000 tablets and one-third again as many fragments were found in six different locations in and around the palace between 1974 and 1976.

Matthiae's description of the tablets is found in Chapter Five to which we now turn. The majority of the tablets, about 80%, were written in Sumerian while the remaining tablets were in Eblaite or Old Canaanite using Sumerian logograms. The translation of Eblaite was greatly helped by the discovery of a Sumerian-Eblaite dictionary of over a thousand words.

The tablets had been stored on wooden shelves in the archive rooms. The smaller collections found in the palace had apparently been removed for study. When the archive and palace were destroyed by fire they became kilns and the clay tablets were baked to pottery. This is why they are preserved in such good condition. Matthiae indicates that most of the tablets deal with economics and administration. Lexical lists occur, as well as literary and historical texts. Matthiae describes the importance of the texts for the history, economics, city government and religion of Ebla. He does not mention their significance for Biblical studies.



A question that has caused some discussion concerns the date of Palace G and the Tablets. In archaeological work pottery is one of the principal means for dating the architecture and levels of a site. Matthiae presents a summary discussion of the pottery finds and comparison with other known pottery sequences from sites in Syria and Mesopotamia. A major problem which he recognizes in Chapter One is that the pottery sequence for the Early Bronze in Syria has not been settled. Some of the forms used by Matthiae to date Period IIB (Early Bronze IV) are also part of the pottery corpus of Early Bronze III. There needs to be an established chronology for Early Bronze pottery in Syria before a definitive date can be given for the palace and the tablets.

Other evidence for dating the palace consists of fragments of sculpture, scattered seals and sealings, fragmentary wood carving and ivory. From his discussion in Chapters 3 and 6 it seems this material can also be dated earlier than Period

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IIB<sub>1</sub>. The palace and the archives could very well belong to Period IIA. A definite answer cannot be given until more work is done on the palace, its history and construction, and an analysis of pottery from other stratified Syrian sites. For the present, any historical reconstruction based on the archives (Chapter 5) must wait until the date of the material is established. Period IIB<sub>1</sub> ends according to Matthiae when the power of the Akkadians was extended northward into Syria. Naram-Sin (2225-2175 B.C.E.) destroyed the city and boasted that it had never been taken before.

Period IIB<sub>2</sub>: Matthiae characterizes the period as a rebuilding of the older city with no major changes. Part of the palace and the archives were left undisturbed and the economic and administrative activities of the ancient city were probably located elsewhere on the citadel. During the Third Dynasty of Ur (2050-1950 B.C.E.) Ebla came under Babylonian control and was ruled by a governor. The period comes to an end during a great conflagration.

Period III (2000-1600 B.C.E.): This is the next important period in the history of Ebla. Matthiae divides the period into IIIA (2000-1800 Middle Bronze I) and IIIB (1800-1600 Middle Bronze II). The architectural remains of this period are much more extensive than those of Period II. Some of the architectural features are: a large beaten-earth city wall, South-West Gate, Fortress M, Temples N, B<sub>1</sub> and D, and Palace E on the citadel. There is at

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least one text from this period which has already been mentioned.

The full import of the discoveries of Mardikh III is described in Chapter 6. Matthiae identifies the architectural features of the beaten-earth wall, single-cella temples and gateway with the "Hyksos" tradition of Middle Bronze IIB-C. Numerous parallels to "Hyksos" architecture can be noted throughout Syria and Palestine. The Hyksos culture extended from Syria, through Palestine and into Egypt from approximately 1750 to 1550 B.C.E. The appearance of Hyksos culture at Ebla does not solve the question about the identification of the Hyksos (Were they a group? Was it a cultural tradition?). The tripartite temple is important for the history of temple architecture which ultimately leads to the form of Solomon's temple. Matthiae also describes several carved ritual basins from the temples (B<sub>1</sub>, D, and N), as well as a carved

pillar and various seals.

A similar problem arises with the date for Period III as for Period II. The pottery chronology for the Middle Bronze Age in Syria has not been settled. The type of Middle Bronze I pottery known from other sites in Syria does not appear in the pottery corpus published from Ebla. On the other hand, most of the material published from Ebla points to a Middle Bronze II date for Period III. Again we must wait for clarification of Syrian pottery chronology before assigning absolute dates to Ebla stratification. It is clear, however, that Period III ended with the end of the Middle Bronze Age.

The Ebla material indicates an extensive culture alongside that of Sumer in the Early Bronze Age. Ebla was in the northwest and Sumer in the southeast, and Ebla probably had more influence on the formation of the culture of Syria and Palestine than Sumer. The tablets are important for the economics of the Eblaite world which included most of the Ancient Near East either through direct or indirect contact. Also, the tablets contain a wealth of personal and geographical names. From the names the ethnic makeup of the Eblaite world can be determined, as well as the geographical horizon of Eblaite influence, and the nature and structure of Eblaite language and its relationship to Hebrew, Ugaritic and Akkadian.

Early claims of the importance of the Ebla tablets for Biblical studies were based on the work of Giovanni Pettinato, professor of Sumerian and Semitic languages at the University of Rome. He identified in the tablets numerous Palestinian place names: *urusalima* (Jerusalem), *hazuru* (Razor), *iapu* (Joppa), and others; and Biblical personal names *abramu* (Abram), *esau* (Esau), *Ismael* (Ishmael), *israilu* (Israel), *sa'ulum* (Saul), *da'udum* (David), *wana>\*yona* (Jonah), and others. The most controversial reading was the identification of the five cities of the plain mentioned in Gen. 14. Initially there were claims of a direct link between Ebla and the Patriarchs. The Syrian government through the Department of Antiquities reacted quickly and with strong language denouncing such claims. A spokesperson for Syria was quoted as saying, "Outsiders are perverting the truth to serve the political claims of Zionism." Matthiae, who some say was worried that his permit to dig would be cancelled, condemned as arbitrary and false such connections between Ebla and the Bible. Also, Pettinato was dismissed from the project, and has become guarded in his statements. (Pettinato continues to publish material which he had in his possession, copies of about 500 tablets. )

The place names and personal names are undeniable, but the supposed occurrence of the names of the five cities of Gen. 14 has come under question as has the connection between Ebla and the Patriarchs. A second point of contention centers on the meaning of *ya* in such names as *mi-ka-ya* (Micah) and *i-sa-ya* (Isaiah). Some claim that this is evidence of the early use of *ya* as an abbreviation for Yahweh. Others make no such claim, and interpret *ya* as a god name similar to *el* or *ilu*, as in *mi-ka-ilu* (Michael).

The book is well written. Matthiae presents his views convincingly, but the reader must be aware that the answers to some questions are still open. The average layperson interested in archaeology will find parts of the book difficult, but there are numerous charts, maps, line drawings and plates to help the reader, as well as a bibliography and index.

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**RESOLVING CHURCH CONFLICTS**, by G. Douglass Lewis. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981. Pp. 182. \$5.95 (paper).

This book will be appreciated by every reader who has ever been involved in conflict. In a very concise yet thorough treatment of the inevitable and often destructive conflicts we encounter in trying to work together in the church, Lewis has given us some very helpful insights which can be applied in any conflict situation.

A simple illustration of the conflict he observed as two children at play suddenly found that they both wanted to occupy a box which would only hold one is woven into the discussion of the dynamics of conflict. This provides an effective analogy for exploring issues around the kinds of conflict we encounter in congregations.

While there will be those who will question some of Lewis' assumptions (e.g., that all conflict can be growth-producing and in some sense ultimately positive), he is convincing in his optimism that conflict can be viewed as an opportunity rather than a threat. The point that our instincts are to fight or flee when confronted with conflict is supported by Lewis from the natural sciences. It is less clear how we can be conditioned to be conflict managers who will be able to suppress these instincts voluntarily and consistently. At times Lewis seems to have a rather mild appreciation for the power of anger and fear. Lewis deals very forthrightly with our fallen nature and makes clear that such ability to deal constructively with conflict finds its ultimate expression only in the Christ-centered, grace-filled life. This certainly centers the discussion in an understanding that is illuminating for the Christian life and not just another treatise on human potential.

There can be no question, however, of the value of his discussion of the basics of conflict management. The use of case studies in presenting his material makes this an extremely valuable and practical aid for the church council that may wish to better understand a constructive response to conflict. The discussion of positive (as opposed to manipulative) management of conflict and the imaginative Litany of Conflict Resolution will be prized by every dedicated person who finds him/herself in the midst of another rhubarb.

A discussion of the styles of response to conflict is also very helpful. One can quickly sense how our perspective largely conditions the outcome of a conflict episode. In this discussion in particular Lewis demonstrates his ability to take abstract concepts and rivet his explanations in unambiguous imagery through the use of case materials.

The appeal of this book will far transcend the intended audience of church-affiliated leadership. A quick reading by a hospital administrator brought the response, "This is exactly the kind of thing I need." The principles of positive conflict management will be made available to all who wish to spend time with this excellent resource. It will be a valuable addition to the library of everyone who wants an alternative to the instinct to fight or flee.

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**JOHN UPDIKE AND THE THREE GREAT SECRET THINGS: SEX, RELIGION AND**

**ART**, by George W. Hunt. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980. Pp. 232. \$13.95.

Since the 1960s literary critics have been in pursuit of John Updike. So far, Updike, one of America's most prolific writers, has avoided capture, publishing his novels, short stories, and verse more rapidly than critics can produce their studies. Additionally, the range and quality of Updike's work has been broader and more distinguished than the sum of the critical studies. George Hunt comes closer than the authors of any of the six previous book-length studies of Updike to closing the gap between the criticism and the elusive author.

Hunt, chairman of the Religious Studies Department at Le Moyne College in Syracuse, New York, takes both his title and his cue for examining Updike's fiction from his early autobiographical essay, "The Dogwood Tree: A Boyhood." One of the sections of this sketch is entitled "Concerning the Three Great Secret Things: (1) Sex (2) Religion (3) Art," and Updike has asserted elsewhere that these

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have remained three of his central preoccupations. Hunt's contention is that "these three secret things also characterize the predominant subject matter, thematic concerns, and central questions found throughout his adult fiction" (2). Although previous critics have noted and analyzed Updike's trinity of concerns, Hunt skillfully and effectively examines the inter-relatedness of the "three great secret things" and demonstrates that in addition to the obvious concern with sex, marriage, and divorce, Updike's fiction possesses "a most sophisticated religio-artistic vision, informed and often shaped by a very complex and subtle theology" (3).

Hunt's method of inquiry is to examine the shape of this religio-artistic vision in Updike's nine novels and selected short stories. But he is as much concerned with the shaping of that vision as with its ultimate manifestation in the fiction and thus devotes considerable attention to the influences on Updike's life and work. As earlier critics have noted, the primary religious thinkers in the formation of Updike's theology are Kierkegaard and Karl Barth, particularly evident in the pre-1965 novels set in Updike's childhood Pennsylvania. For Hunt, Updike's most obviously Christian novels are *The Poorhouse Fair*, *Rabbit, Run*, *The Centaur*, and *A Month of Sundays* although he argues persuasively that the religio-artistic vision permeates almost every Updike work. More original and equally convincing are the other influences on Updike that Hunt explores: the psychology of Jung, especially in *Of the Farm* and *A Month of Sundays*; the literary theory of Northrop Frye, particularly his distinction between "sacred" and "secular" scriptures and his theory of romance as evidenced in *The Centaur*; and the artistic inspirations of Herrick, Milton, Hawthorne, Stevens, and Nabokov.

Previous critics have alluded to these influences and parallels; Hunt's contribution to Updike criticism is that he begins where former critics have left off and extends these examinations and interpretations in very systematic and helpful ways. For instance, a number of critics have explored Updike's use of the Tristan and Don Juan motifs and the Love-Death themes in *Couples*. Hunt accepts these readings as valid but indicates additionally how Kierkegaard's psychology of sexuality with its emphasis on guilt, dread, and original sin and the Adam and Eve theme buttress and expand these readings of the text. Hunt's interpretation of *Couples*, linked as it is with his examination of *Marry Me*, makes one's reading of the former novel both richer and more complex.

However, Hunt's focus on the sex, religion, and art and his preoccupation with tracing influences also has its limitations. Both of them are time-consuming tasks, and given the relative brevity of Hunt's book almost half of his study is devoted to discussion of Kierkegaard, Barth, Herrick, Hawthorne, etc. Although these examinations contribute greatly to reading and understanding Updike's fiction, the actual interpretations of the novels as novels are frequently quite thin. Updike's strengths as a writer reside as much in his vivid evocation of time and place, the believability of his characters, and the rich texture of his prose as they do in his admittedly intellectual themes and his debt to other writers. Much of the life and liveliness of Updike's fiction is squeezed dry by the sponge Hunt uses to absorb Updike's religio-artistic vision.

Hunt appears to be aware of some of these shortcomings. In an epilogue written ten months after the completion of the text, he identified several weaknesses in his book: his failure to examine Updike's "distinctive and eminently resourceful style," and an imbalance in examining the three great secret things—an emphasis on art and religion to the neglect of sex.

Hunt's final disclaimer is that he intended the book to be interpretive rather than critical in E. D. Hirsch's sense of these terms and thus the book is an appreciative study. A quotation from Updike on the dust jacket indicates that he is also appreciative of the "scrupulous and ingenious" way Hunt "traces out the religious/philosophical veins within the corpus" of his work. Likely Updike's corpus is still not complete, and until he stops writing and running like Rabbit (another Rabbit novel has recently appeared), Hunt's book will probably remain the best interpretation of his work.

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