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COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE: A TRIBUTE TO KARL BARTH

Jon Butler of the University of Illinois at Chicago on "The Sacralization of the American Landscape: Church-building, Bell-ringing, and Ritualization, 1680-1760."

The culminating event of the "Re-visioning" project, however, was the public conference held on March 28-30, 1985, which displayed the work of over two dozen scholars and showcased three plenary addresses: "We the People: Black Religion and the Re-Creation of America," by Vincent Harding of the Iliff School of Theology; "Revisionary, Revisionist, or Revisory; or, How Do You Revision an America?" by Giles B. Gunn of the University of Florida; and "Missions and Millenialism: American Christianity's World Vision," by Timothy L. Smith of the Johns Hopkins University.

Quite literally as an afterthought, the conveners held a fifth and final symposium on January 30-February 1, 1986, to consider essays by Martin E. Marty of the University of Chicago on "20/20 Revisioning: An Acute Eye on American Religion"; and Henry W. Bowden of Rutgers University, "Six Authors in Search of a Character: Religious History and Revised Meanings in America."

One measure of the success of these meetings is, of course, the quality of written work which they inspired. Fortunately, those who did not attend will be able to judge for themselves within a year's time, for the enterprising conveners have edited two volumes of essays, and their colleague, Anne Fraker, has compiled a participant-contributed companion bibliography on American religion. These books will be published by the University of Illinois Press.

Another important measure is the quality of discussion. This was a fundamental concern of the planners, and they worked hard to create a climate that encouraged the free exchange of ideas. In my estimation, they succeeded admirably. Their large public meeting in particular was designed to draw in and encourage the participation of "laity" (actually religious professionals, by and large) who sported no scholarly expertise, but were vitally interested in the subject.

Such participation, at least in the sessions I attended, was animated, intelligent, and refreshing. Only a few of the academicians in this motley collection of literary critics, religionists, ethicists, American studies scholars, political scientists, psychologists, and historians failed to communicate effectively to each other across disciplines, and to the large public audiences. The relative success of these meetings speaks well for the development of a genuinely interdisciplinary study of American religion.

Readers of *TSF Bulletin* will no doubt wonder whether the purpose of "Re-Visioning America" was more analytic or prescriptive. Did these folk have visions to pursue, or were they content to assess the American dreams of past and present and to discuss new angles of vision from which to evaluate them? I am not sure whether the participants agreed. Two of the papers at the first meeting, by Sturm and Ronda, openly prescribed alternative visions of the common good. Many of the others saw their task as bringing new clarity to our understanding of American life, past and present, and thus providing some insight on how to work with present reality. And still others were content to learn more about the various perspectival "lenses" and levels of "signification" with which one discovers and makes "visionings."

Participants seemed to agree, however, that if the United States is not quite in a state of crisis concerning its purpose and mission, that it is exhibiting some pronounced symptoms of malaise. Yet scholarly reticence about offering concrete suggestions, and strong doubts as to what sort of explicitly religious visioning today's norms of public civility might allow, inhibited what might have been a fruitful discussion of such ideas.

As one of the relatively few evangelicals involved in these sessions, I was taken aback by the intensity of the disgust and anxiety that my colleagues felt about the new religious political right. It seemed clear to them that politicized fundamentalism is a major threat to democratic institutions and process, and that in league with the bellicose Reagan administration, these Moral Majority types are endangering humanity's very existence. Copnsequently, some of the "scholarly interest" I heard expressed about fundamentalism in particular seemed to be predisposed to show how "pathological" this movement truly is. It seemed well-nigh impossible that many of my fellow scholars could develop a humane empathy for fundamentalists as subjects of research. For the sake of fairness and honesty in our work, we all should heed Leo Ribuffo's cautionary tale of liberal scholars' ritual slaying of the "Old Christian Right" a generation ago.

This fear and loathing of fundamentalism underscored to me what was the burden of Martin Marty's address: that assessments of American religion are neither fully objective nor completely subjective, but perspectival. For religious scholarship to help those who wish to live responsibly in America today, it needs to be the product of a pluralistic community of contributors, whose varying angles of vision will add perspective to the commonly agreed-upon landmarks. "Re-Visioning America's" conveners seem committed to Marty's inclusive, collegial approach. Evangelicals, no less than other religious, ethnic and gender groupings in American life, should accept such invitations to contribute to the re-making of American religious studies. They cannot afford to have scholarly analysis "done" to them without adding some perspectives of their own.

Antiphonal Readings For Summer

by Steven F. Trotter

Summer is upon us at last. Are you looking forward to a long break and some good reading? Steve Trotter of Christ Our King Presbyterian Church in Bel Air, Maryland, provides us with a very helpful list of books drawn from the classics of pastoral care and spiritual guidance.—Ed.

In the fall of 1983 I wrote Eugene Peterson asking if I could spend a study year with him. I wanted to study with a pastor rather than an administrator, and I also wanted to study with someone called to a smaller congregation. Pastor Peterson was known to me through his books and articles (e.g., *Long Obedience in the Same Direction* (IVP); *Earth and Altar* (IVP); "Annie Dillard: Praying With Her Eyes Open," *TSF Bulletin*, Jan/Feb 1985).

To my surprise, he and the church said yes to my request. So my wife and I moved to Bel Air, Maryland, in the fall of 1984. For that year, I was not on staff at the church, nor did I serve as a paid intern.

In the course of that year I read a book a week and wrote a response to each. Neither a review nor a critique, my response to each writer often surprised me. Usually the responses I wrote seemed antiphonal to the works I had read—different in style, but shaped and influenced by what I had read.

I was exposed to a great variety of writers who have shaped my thinking about the church and my preparation for ministry. This year I am serving as sole pastor at Christ Our King Presbyterian Church, while Eugene is on sabbatical. He is spending the year writing and replenishing his own spirit.

The books I have selected to discuss are, in my opinion, good instructors in many aspects of a pastor's work. They also speak to the larger topic of spiritual guidance. Additional titles for good reading this summer appear at the end. Many of the titles listed and discussed are available in the *Classics of Western Spirituality* series (Paulist Press). All should be required reading during seminary. They are best read as conversations rather than treatises, or, to put it another way, they should be heard with the ears rather than read with the eyes. Pastor Peterson is always saying that we need to turn our eyes into ears, especially regarding Scripture: our eyes serve primarily the mind, the intellect. Thus *hearing* the Word is so important. Pastors need to *hear* Teresa and Von Hugel, Gregory and St. John of the Cross.

An example is Barth's *Romans*. It is usually read more for its content than for examining Barth's method. But both content and method make Barth especially valuable for the pastor. His dogged determination to pay attention to every detail, to come to his material fresh, to *listen* first without pressing his own agenda into the text: these are good pastoral practices.

Showings I & II, by Juliana of Norwich

"All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well."

So Juliana of Norwich wrote during her lengthy illness and her accompanying visions of God and His love. The work, in two sections (a short and a long account of her vision), is the journal of a soul trusting only God. She provides an able example of praying without demanding; she is a person living with the immensity of grace and immersed in her journey of faith.

Her view of God as wholly good and wholly kind isn't swayed by her circumstances. Instead, she sees everything in light of the God who loves her. Thus her confidence and trust in God is deep, her understanding of God deeper still. Her references to God as Mother are relatively unique among mystical writers—as well as among contemporary writers.

Juliana provides a good introduction to a certain style of mystical writing and models an approach to prayer that is refreshingly un-self-centered.

The Country Parson and *The Temple*, by George Herbert

George Herbert's *The Country Parson* needs to be read alongside his poetry in *The Temple*. The former describes his practice of pastoral work in the early seventeenth century; the latter contains verse written during the same period.

Herbert provides a model of good pastoral work; and despite his era, his model is still valid in its concentration on individuals in the parish, its appreciation of an all-inclusive spirituality, and because he had quiddity.

His poem "The Quiddity" says that it is poetry that is his quiddity. It is while he writes poetry that Herbert finds himself closest to God, which is suggestive for pastors today: What is quiddity for you? What is the activity outside of pastoral work that draws everything together and provides unity where you find yourself in union with God?

Herbert is a guide to both good pastoral practice and the essential role of a whole, non-fragmented life; a life where there is quiddity in the midst of ministry.

Letters to a Niece, by Baron Friedrich Von Hügel

Anyone writing about, reading about, or practicing spiritual direction will come across Baron Von Hügel sooner or later. He is a recognized scholar of his day, a Roman Catholic with catholic tastes and a deep concern for the work of the Spirit in individual lives.

What he did had always been known as "spiritual direction"—a term being rediscovered today. Von Hügel was one of the best, and this collection of letters written to his niece show the master at work, letting all of life be the creative ground for the spiritual journey. Nothing was ignored, everything was included as his niece learned to pray, to think, to live with God at the center.

Von Hügel's approach exposes the superficiality that frequently afflicts modern day counseling and pastoral care. Both of these disciplines attempt to meet a person's deep need for prayer and reflection—and often fail. As pastors discover again the central priority of spiritual direction, Von Hügel will regain prominence.

A book to read and reread and read again.

Life of Moses, by Gregory of Nyssa

As a student I read people like Gregory as an example of allegorical exegesis. My instructor's intent was to say, "Don't do biblical interpretation this way."

But read Gregory from another perspective, not as a model for exegesis but as an approach to a broad and full spirituality, and his allegorical/analogical method explodes with meaning. Gregory illumines the way to seeing life analogically, to living a life that chooses not to understand everything in order to understand God better.

Gregory's approach suggests that our scholarship has squelched our sense of wonder, and he uses the life of Moses as a paradigm for analogical living. He shows Moses slowly responding to the diverse events of life, discovering the finger of God in them all, allowing himself to be pulled further into the great scheme of creation and redemption. Our faith is full of analogies: bread and wine, the seasons of the church year, creation itself.

Gregory of Nyssa can awaken our abillity to think and live within the analogy of faith, and stretch our narrow vision of our vast Lord.

The Descent of the Dove, by Charles Williams

Perhaps better known for his fantasy works, Williams' *Descent of the Dove* should be required reading for anyone concerned with how the Spirit works in the Church.

"Thorough" is descriptive of Williams' approach as he traces the way God has carefully worked in and through history to shape His will. The basic assumption that God is at work is a necessary prerequisite to good pastoral work—yet is often ignored in the church's frenzy to be active. Williams keeps it front and center.

His description of church history, always with the common thread of the Spirit at work, reminds activists in the ministry that God is perfecting His Church—despite us. Williams' story of the church is a welcome respite from typical histories and can inform pastoral work well.

***Interior Castle*, by Teresa of Avila**

Read any anthology of Christian mystics or any book on spiritual disciplines, and eventually you will come across Teresa.

Put up the anthology. Set aside the survey of Christian spirituality. Read Teresa.

Interior Castle uses the image of the heart as a seven-chambered castle, an abode of Christ. The faith-journey leads us further up and further in, moving from one chamber to the next, until she finds, in the seventh, union with Christ.

She describes how easily we are distracted, held for a time in one chamber or another, resisting the pull of God's love to move more deeply into His love. Awareness of circumstances gives way to a greater awareness of God, and we stop being tourists and become true pilgrims: risking, exploring, trusting, enjoying, maturing.

Teresa conducts a wonderful tour of the Interior Castle, the dwelling place of God in each of us.

Additional Readings of Classic Pastoral Care

Regula Pastoris, by Gregory
The Imitation of Christ, by Thomas a Kempis
The Reformed Pastor, by Richard Baxter
The Shape of the Liturgy, by Gregory Dix
The Ministry of the Word, by R.E.C. Browne
Diary of a Country Priest, by Georges Bernanos
Letters, by Samuel Rutherford, compiled/edited by Horatio Bonar
Confessions, by Augustine
Commentary on Romans, by Karl Barth
Purity of Heart is to Will One Thing, by Kierkegaard
Pensees, by Pascal
Leaves From the Notebook of a Tamed Cynic, by Reinhold Niebuhr
Characters in Pilgrim's Progress, by Alexander Whyte
The Soul's Journey Into God; The Tree of Life; The Life of St. Francis, by Bonaventure

TSF AND ESA JOINT-SEMINARS

TSF and Evangelicals for Social Action (of which Dr. Grounds is president) are planning seminars at theological and graduate schools across the country. These seminars will present the Biblical/theological bases for political involvement and address the difficulties in motivating Christians to become more aware and to participate more actively in community and national affairs. Effective working models will also be presented. For more information concerning these seminars, write to Dr. Grounds in care of the *Bulletin*.

BOOK REVIEWS

***The Protestant Reformation 1517-1559* in the series *The Rise of Modern Europe*, founding editor William L. Langer, by Lewis W. Spitz (Harper & Row, 1985, 444 pp., $22.95);**
***Reformation of Church and Dogma (1300-1700)*, volume 4 of *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, by Jaroslav Pelikan (University of Chicago Press, 1984, 424 pp., $27.50).**
Reviewed by Rodney L. Petersen, Assistant Professor of Church History and the History of Christian Thought, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

Some books should be required reading for those interested in the affairs of the church. These two studies deserve such attention. First, among the spate of books recently published on reform in the sixteenth century, none are better. In these anniversary years of the Reformation, the topic is germane. Second, both authors represent the best in American church history, each having weathered a lifetime in the field. Each has served as president of the American Society of Church History. Each is a committed (Lutheran) churchman.

Spitz's text, part of a series that surveys the socio-cultural development of Europe since the Middle Ages, sets the Reformation in its widest context. Pelikan's study, fourth in his series of five volumes on the development of church doctrine, offers an internal look at the theological forces emerging out of late medieval debate that would shape the Reformation and condense into distinct confessional positions. Both texts draw us to the period with ecumenical intent.

Spitz offers us a vivid narrative of "a great religious movement within society as a whole" (346, cf. 3). It is as well executed as it is ambitious. We are introduced to the rupture in European cultural life between the Fifth Lateran Council and the signing of the Treaty of Cateau-Cambresis (occurring in the year of Calvin's definitive edition of the *Institutes*), four decades (1517-1559) that, together with the Renaissance, "constitute the twin cradle of modernity" (5). Spitz's interests focus upon the religious issues of the period. He underscores the importance of the Reformation as a religious event in which the creative role of the individual is not lost before the larger sweep of history: "The Reformation was born deep within a single individual but emerged to become a public matter..." (59). The question of justification before God "triggered the Reformation" (66). It set in motion a powerful historical force which, despite "conservative overtones," proved to be "more radical" than the Renaissance.

Following such terminological distinctions, Spitz maps the social and demographic terrain. Braudel's wide perspective is balanced against "the story of men in action" emphasized in the historical methodology of Namier and Carlyle. Such balance is seen in the "action and passion" of Luther, amply illustrated in the following chapter where a helpful distillation of scholarship on Luther's person and theology is offered without neglect to social history: "the Reformation was the first historical movement in the post-Gutenberg era and the printing press made it possible" (88).

In further chapters on the progress and second surge of the Reformation we are offered the same balance of biographical influence set in the context of succinctly delineated social history: Zwingli the theologian in the context of urban "defeudalization of the church" (183), Calvin the systematizer of Reformed thought in the context of diffuse French and wide Genevan efforts at reform.

Spitz balances popular groundswell against royal leadership in the English Reformation, and continental Catholic renewal against the spiritual wellsprings of medieval reform. A chapter sketching countervailing developments in the East and West plays off of Toynbee's theme of conflict in the center, expansion in the wings as the peripheral states of a civilization grow to dominance (Russia, Ottoman Turks, the Atlantic seaboard).

The closing chapter on society and culture offers limited reflections upon changes in the social order. Events which occurred in the period are never viewed from a reductionist perspective, but are seen to have "resulted from the interaction of societal forces and individual drives and decisions" (346). Spitz flatly states that the Reformation itself must be seen and judged from a religious perspective, whatever its social effects might have been: "What the reformers basically achieved was not an ethical reform, but a resurrection of basic evangelical teachings which gave to Christianity renewed vitality—one more, and perhaps the final, lease on life" (348).

This study is a distillation of much of the solid historical work of the past forty years. One leaves with a summary picture of the potentially radical effects of religious change. Such change, even more than the revival of learning (upon which the Reformation was so deeply beholden) affected basic premises and theories of legitimacy. Such were the consequences of a movement that was, in the first place, intensely personal and concerned with questions of eternal salvation.

It is difficult to point out weaknesses in a book so bold, lively, and well executed. However, this reader would have appreciated a fuller treatment of the "radicals" of the Reformation, a topic left for the "marginalia" in