A Review of Religion, Politics & Culture

Commonweal

FEBRUARY 20, 2015

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George Hunsinger

INTERRELIGIOUS ISSUE

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HOLY LAND PRINCIPLES

A vacuum crying out to be filled

A Role Waiting For You

The Mac Bride Principles has been the most important campaign ever against anti-Catholic discrimination in Northern Ireland. The Holy Land Principles—also launched by Fr. Sean Mc Manus—can do for Palestinian Muslims and Palestinian Christians what the Mac Bride Principles did for Catholics in Northern Ireland.

England—NOT GOD—sowed the seeds of partition in both lands: the Balfour Declaration for Palestine (1917) and the Government of Ireland Act (1920).

Until Fr. Sean Mc Manus—President of the Capitol Hill-based Irish National Caucus—launched the Mac Bride Principles on November 5, 1984, the American companies doing business in Northern Ireland were never confronted with their complicity in anti-Catholic discrimination. Incredibly, that obvious domestic and foreign policy nexus, with its powerful economic leverage for good, was missed. Same, too, with the American companies (apart from a few with obvious military-security aspects) doing business in Palestine-Israel ... ***A vacuum crying out to be filled***—and filled by the Holy Land Principles, launched on International Human Rights Day, December 10, 2012.

The Holy Land Principles are a corporate code of conduct for the 546 American companies doing business in Israel-Palestine. The 8-point set of Principles does not call for quotas, reverse discrimination, divestment, disinvestment or boycotts—only American fairness in American companies. The Holy Land Principles are pro-Jewish, pro-Palestinian and pro-company. The Holy Land Principles do not take a position on any particular solution—One State, Two State, etc., etc. The Principles do not try to tell the Palestinians or the Israelis what to do—they only call on American companies in the Holy Land to proudly declare and implement their American values by signing the Holy Land Principles.

One hundred sixteen American companies doing business in Northern Ireland have signed the Mac Bride Principles. Can American companies now say: "Catholics in Northern Ireland deserve these principles but Palestinian Muslims and Palestinian Christians do not?" And can fair-minded Americans—companies, consumers, investors and other stakeholders—go along with that?

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR SHAREHOLDER RESOLUTIONS

Shareholder resolutions are proposals submitted by shareholders for a vote at the company's annual meeting. Holy Land Principles has three Resolutions filed for 2015 proxy votes: GE—Annual Meeting, April 22; Corning—Annual Meeting, April 29; and Intel—Annual Meeting, May 21, 2015.

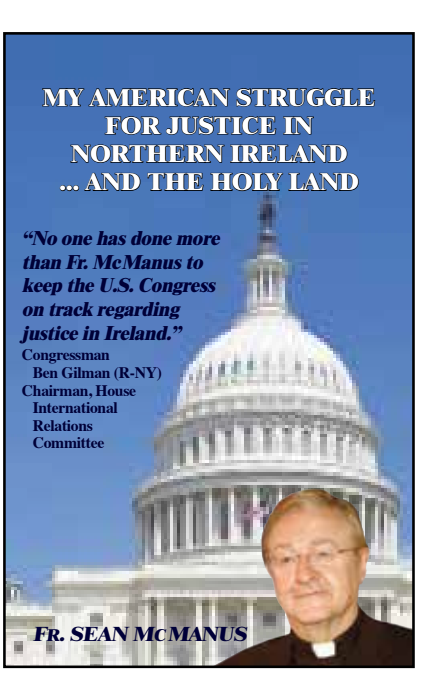
We need your help to get these **Resolutions *passed***.

Please urge investors you may know in these three companies to vote for these three Resolutions filed by Holy Land Principles.

ALSO, please email the Investor Relations Contact (IRC), the person who deals with the issue for the companies: **GE (gary.sheffer@ge.com)**; **Corning (nicholsoas@corning.com)**; and **Intel (linda.l.qian@intel.com)** urging the company to sign Holy Land Principles. Just address them as "Dear IRC."

WHAT MORE YOU CAN DO

Go to HolyLandPrinciples.org—to "Contact Companies," to the list of companies. See email address list of the Investor Relations (ICRs)—the individuals who deal with the issue for the Companies. Please follow directions and email all the IRCs urging their Company to sign the Holy Land Principles.



CAMPAIGN TO DATE

1. Holy Land Principles campaign was launched by mailing Fr. Mc Manus' Memoirs, *My American Struggle for Justice in Northern Ireland ... And The Holy Land* to all the 550 CEOs and 550 IRCs, to all Members of Congress, House and Senate, and to thousands of media.
2. Monthly mailings and emails to all the CEOs and IRCs.
3. Our Pamphlet publications to date are: *Why Cisco Should Sign The Holy Land Principles*, *Why Intel Should Sign Holy Land Principles*, *Why GE Should Sign the Holy Land Principles*, and *Why Corning Should Sign Holy Land Principles*.

   These pamphlets contain a Special Report, we commissioned, by the Sustainable Investments Institute (Si2): "The first reports of this kind published by Si2 or any other organization." WE TOLD YOU THERE WAS A VACUUM CRYING OUT TO BE FILLED.
4. Shareholder Resolutions: Filed with Intel, GE, and Corning. With many more to come, like Coca Cola, FedEx, General Motors, Cisco, and so forth.

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LETTERS

Baby-making, remarriage, death

MINORITY REPORT

In Gilbert Meilaender's essay on sex and reproduction ("The Future of Baby-Making," January 23), he seems tentatively pessimistic about the prospects for sex should it ever become definitively separated from reproduction. His hesitation is not necessary, however, since he could examine the experiences of an experimental "control group": the millions of lesbian and gay committed couples who have sexual relationships that are naturally nonreproductive. Their experiences show that his claim that sexual love is oriented "in its very nature to the next generation" is not true in all cases. For this statistically significant segment of the population, sexual love bears gifts other than children: deeper care for one another, unselfish giving, personal integration, and a renewed sense of the love God has for each person, to name a few. These gifts also connect people to the "deeper—mysterious and mythic—aspects of our humanity," which Meilaender identifies as a distinctive feature of sexual expression.

FRANCIS DEBERNARDO
Mount Rainier, Md.

UNLUCKY DRAW

Gilbert Meilaender warns appropriately against the separation of the sexual embrace from the conception of babies, but while he quotes Joseph Fletcher's words, he fails to mention the danger of "sexual roulette" in "random sexual combinations." That is, there are situations when couples may transmit genes dominant for fatal illnesses such as thalassemia. With recourse to what deserves to be called a "medical miracle," or rather a whole assembly of them, it is possible to prevent that disaster by selection of the ovum, followed by in vitro fertilization. Far from impairing the love of the parents for one another and the child, the successful procedure is likely to result in gratitude and awe.

STAN LEAVY, MD
Hamden, Conn.

OMISSION

Soon after deciding to write about Pope Benedict XVI's decision to revise his earlier approval of Communion for some divorced and remarried Catholics ("Right the First Time," February 6), I knew I wanted to use Johann Metz's idea of "dangerous memories."

Not having studied Metz in decades, I found Catholic blogger Michael Iafrate's essay on Metz ("'We Will Never Forget': Metz, Memory, and the Dangerous Spirituality of Post-9/11 America") at voxnova.com. Iafrate's essay led me back to Metz's book *Faith in History and Society*. Two of my citations of Metz in my *Commonweal* essay come from my own rereading of his text. But for one of Metz's ideas, namely, his literal definition of compassion, I am directly indebted to Iafrate.

I am sorry that I did not acknowledge the debt to Iafrate in the essay itself, and hope my doing so here adequately acknowledges both that regret and my gratitude for his fine essay.

WILLIAM MCDONOUGH
Minneapolis, Minn.

WISE WORDS

Thank you for publishing Win Bassett's "The Silent Treatment" (January 9). I have been on the other end of some of those well-meaning but unhelpful words that Bassett describes, so the column made an impression.

I lost my first son, Ben, in stillbirth seven years ago. As my wife and I grieved

continued on page 30

From the Editors

Boehner's Blunder

The bitter partisan politics of the past six years in Washington has made governing almost impossible, delayed economic recovery, and alienated the American people. This has damaged President Barack Obama's standing with voters, but it has tarnished Congress even more. Partisanship has, of course, long played a role in debates about U.S. foreign policy. More often than not, however, Congress and the executive branch have forged a united front on fundamental questions regarding U.S. interests abroad.

Nowhere has this emphasis on bipartisanship been more evident than in U.S. support for Israel. Given the dangers Israel faces and the intensity of the feelings it arouses, turning the U.S.-Israel relationship into a partisan issue would be bad both for the Jewish state and for American politics. Yet that is the rash step House Speaker John Boehner has taken by inviting Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to speak to a joint session of Congress next month, and doing so without consulting the president or congressional Democrats. Netanyahu reportedly will speak in opposition to Obama's ongoing efforts to reach a negotiated settlement with Iran that would prevent that country from developing a nuclear weapon. Obama has responded to the Boehner-Netanyahu gambit by making it known that he will not meet with Netanyahu during his visit to Washington. The U.S.-Israel relationship seems to have taken a perilous turn.

Netanyahu faces an election of his own next month, and this stunt may be calculated to burnish his waning popularity at home. But it could make a different impression on the American public. Americans usually do not take kindly to being lectured to, by either friends or foes, about the nation's obligations abroad. Even some of Netanyahu's longtime supporters have urged him not to go through with the speech.

Whatever political advantage Boehner hoped to gain by this unprecedented violation of diplomatic protocol, his decision is likely to backfire. Israel has long enjoyed unflinching support from congressional Democrats, but they will not sit by quietly as Boehner attempts to turn Israel into a wedge issue designed to make Democrats look weak on national security. Iran has been brought to the negotiating table because of the crippling economic sanctions imposed by the international coalition organized by President Obama. But any negotiation entails some degree of give and take. In an effort at confidence building toward a final settlement, the United States and its partners entered into an interim agreement with Iran in 2013. That deal—opposed by hardliners on both sides—lifted some sanctions. In return, Iran has curtailed its production of highly enriched uranium as well as its use and manufacture of centrifuges. Work on its nuclear reactor at Arak has also been suspended. In addition, Iran agreed to strict inspections of its facilities. A final agreement will not be easy to reach, but an escalation of hostilities at this time would be a serious mistake.

The interim agreement expires near the end of March, but could be extended until June. Netanyahu wants Congress to impose stronger sanctions should no final agreement be reached next month. Obama and the coalition partners have said that tougher sanctions now would sabotage negotiations, allowing the Iranians to claim the West is bent on confrontation. Any move to increase sanctions would also fracture the international coalition, making it nearly impossible to sustain economic pressure on Iran. Consequently, Obama has promised to veto such a bill.

Before Boehner's invitation to Netanyahu, many congressional Democrats were lining up behind stiffer sanctions. That support has now dissipated, giving an unexpected victory to the president. Cooler heads may yet prevail.

It is reported that Netanyahu, who did not disguise his support for Mitt Romney in 2012, has "written off" Obama. Shunning the president of the United States, however, will only further isolate Israel, which is already facing broad condemnation for its wars in Gaza and illegal settlements in the West Bank. As the Middle East sinks deeper into chaos, it makes no sense for Netanyahu to meddle in American politics, and in so doing undermine the bipartisan support Israel has long enjoyed.

Boehner and Netanyahu are flirting with another danger. Younger Americans, including younger American Jews, while supportive of Israel, are critical of its expansionist policies and its treatment of the Palestinians. They also strongly support the current president. These Americans have come of age during a time when Israel has been a powerful military and political force, not a vulnerable land of refugees threatened with extinction. Their support for Israel is genuine but not unconditional. When confronting Israel's enemies, Netanyahu may have good reason to set the niceties of diplomacy aside. But it is a mistake for him to bully his friends. If he cannot tell the difference between his friends and his enemies, Israel is in greater danger than he imagines. ■

February 2, 2015

Jo McGowan

Hidden Behind Words

HOW LANGUAGES REFLECT AND REINFORCE SOCIAL BIASES

Last week I held a writing workshop for some of my young colleagues here in India. Although fluent in spoken English, they struggle to get their thoughts and ideas on paper. One reason they find it hard is their preference for the passive voice. Sentences written in the passive voice are often clunky and complex (compare: "It was observed by me" to "I noticed"). But no matter how hard I try, I can't get them to shake this habit.

It's not their fault. They think in Hindi, and Hindi uses the passive voice much more than English does. In English, we know our friends. Here in India, our friends are people "known to us." In English, speakers seem to forge their own destinies. In Hindi, things just seem to happen to them.

So does language shape character and culture, or is it the other way around? At one level it seems clear that a language develops to reflect the concerns and preoccupations of the people who speak it. In India, for example, where the family is the primary social framework, you never refer to just a sister-in-law. If you refer to your *nanad*, you mean your husband's sister, while your *jetani* is your husband's older brother's wife and your *bhabhi* is your own brother's wife.

Sexism is enshrined in the language too. On the mother's side, all aunts are *masis* and all uncles are *mamas*. But on the father's side, where property is inherited, the uncles' titles depend on their place in the line. The father's sisters, meanwhile, are all called *bua*: because they don't inherit, their birth order doesn't matter.

These linguistic biases accurately reflect the beliefs of a large segment of the culture, but I think they also contribute to the preservation of those beliefs. Children who constantly identify relatives according to their specific place in the family hierarchy unconsciously place value on that hierarchy. It *matters* that you are my *tao* (father's elder brother) and not my *masur* (mother's sister's husband); the distinction is more than verbal.

The idea that languages both reflect and reinforce social attitudes has been explored in other contexts. A Chinese economist named Keith Chen designed a study to determine whether the language one speaks affects the likelihood that one will save money for the future. Chen found that people whose languages do not have a future tense, such as Chinese, are 30 percent more likely to save than speakers of languages like English, in which past, present, and future are clearly distinguished. Chen's theory is that people who see the future as distinct from the present (and therefore far away) are less likely to feel the need to prepare for it.

Lera Boroditsky, a professor of psychology at Stanford University, has studied spatial awareness in aboriginal Australians. The people of Pormpuraaw, for example, do not use words for left and right to situate an object in space but instead employ directional terms like "due southwest" or "northeast." Boroditsky has found that speakers of these aboriginal languages are remarkably good at figuring out exactly where they are with respect to the four cardinal directions, even in unfamiliar terrains.

I recently attended a workshop on keeping children safe, designed especially for people who work with children with disabilities. These kids are statistically more likely than other children to be sexually abused, in part because of the assumption that they don't have the language to report abuse.

"How do we teach children about their bodies here in India?" Roma Bhagat, a Delhi-based lawyer specializing in children's rights, asked. "We go into great detail about their faces, their eyes, nose, mouth; we talk about their arms, their legs, their hands. But below their waists, it is a wasteland. We call their genitals 'shame-shame' and in the process we not only rob them of the words they need, we tell them these things are not to be spoken of."

Wendy Doniger's remarkable book *The Hindus: An Alternative History* makes it clear that ancient Hindu texts not only were explicit about sexuality; they reveled in it. That doesn't mean they were liberal (adultery was punished with death, and homosexuality was mostly frowned upon), but there were words available to talk about sex, and these words reflected an underlying assumption that sexuality was a major part of people's lives. In today's India, history is being rewritten to reflect a new understanding of what makes a good Hindu. The result is a growing fundamentalism, in which silence on certain issues is mandatory.

As we sat in the workshop, many of us were thinking with trepidation about the long road ahead of us if we did indeed "break the silence." Where would it end? Acknowledging sexuality and desire in people with disabilities, especially cognitive disabilities, summons all sorts of fears in their parents, caregivers, and the rest of the community (most of whom are uncomfortable about their own sexuality, too). What about pregnancy? What about same-sex attraction? What about the unacknowledged realities of incest and sexual abuse that so many people with disabilities suffer? How many rocks are we prepared to look under?

The challenges are enormous. Finding the right words, so that we can speak about these challenges openly, is the first step toward addressing them. ■

Peter Steinfels

Not Ours To Mend

JOHN GARVEY, R.I.P.

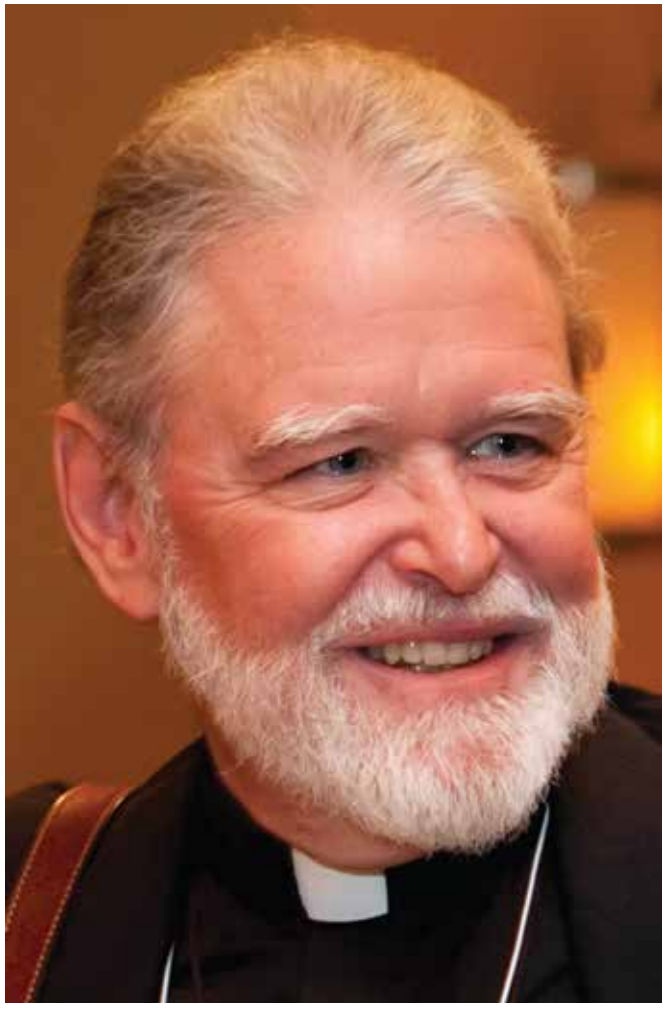


PHOTO: SOFIA NEGRON

When Regina Garvey phoned to say that John had died that morning, I was speechless. I heard my voice repeating *so sorry so sorry so sorry,* but my mind was scarcely functioning. Days later, words continue to elude me.

Born in 1944, three years before his father and an uncle founded the small but distinguished publishing house Templegate, John Garvey was twenty-nine when he began writing reviews and articles for *Commonweal*. Five years later, when I returned to the magazine as executive editor, I asked him to become a regular columnist.

Actually I also asked him to consider joining the staff in New York. He cheerfully and instantly brushed off the offer, content with his life in Springfield, Illinois, married to his high-school sweetheart, the father of two young children—and anyway wasn't New York City Babylon?

What *Commonweal* could not do, John's evolving faith did. In December 1984, he informed readers that he had become a member of the Orthodox Church, "the result of some twenty-one years of moving in that direction. When I first discovered Orthodoxy I found that I had no doctrinal disagreements with it, whereas I did with Catholicism.... Over the years I found in Orthodox spirituality and liturgy something which I could find nowhere else, something I need.... This was not a matter of leaving Catholicism, which I love, but a matter of becoming Orthodox. If it were not for the existence of Orthodoxy I would gladly remain a Catholic until death."

Several years later John first decided to pursue the study of Orthodox theology at St. Vladimir's Seminary in Yonkers, New York, and finally chose to be ordained. Only in America: An Irish-American, Roman Catholic Notre Dame graduate from the Midwest ends up as pastor of St. Nicholas Albanian Orthodox Church in Queens.

Throughout that assignment and others, John continued his writing, 341 articles for *Commonweal* over four decades, as well as occasional articles for other journals and four short books. In 2000, his wife Regina became the administrator of *Commonweal*'s three-year study of American Catholics in the Public Square.

John's columns were gems of the plain style: conversational, first-person, direct, without elaborate metaphors or clever categories. He had a rare capacity for conversation, and especially for listening. In his columns, he introduced people from his pastoral experience or from the rest of his everyday life: "I once knew a man who..." or, "A woman who sat next to me on a four-hour bus ride...." Where many columnists dwell on the world's wholesale miseries, John went retail: the loss of a loved one, or of love, or of faith, or of purpose.

"On the day the news reported rumors that Jerry Brown and Linda Ronstadt were heading for a nudist colony in Africa," he began one of his early columns, "I met a man who had left his job as mechanic in a small town and moved, with his family, to be near the hospital where his twelve-year-old son was being treated for a brain tumor. He had no money and his car was stalled. We were going to get it started again with jumper cables…. He was patient nearly beyond belief…. At the center of his life was this heartbreaking, perhaps hopeless thing." And, yes, there was a connection between the attention we give, often of necessity, to "newsmakers" like Jerry Brown and the man patiently trying to cope with a wrenching reality.

John wrote about our self-delusions, especially of control and autonomy, and our ways of propping them up: therapeutic clichés, media clichés, conservative clichés, liberal clichés. A favorite theme was the confusion of faith with certainty. Believers could turn anything, including Jesus, into an idol to be manipulated to serve their self-interested purposes. Nonbelievers could equate all faith with fundamentalism and ignore their own certitudes.

THE CRUCIFIXION

The blast blasted blubber beyond all believable bounds
—Paul Linnman of KATU-TV

What now? In a forty-five foot, eight ton mound, the dead sperm whale
washed a question ashore: once given, how do you go about giving god back?

So isn't it shameful that we, still unknowing, will answer with dynamite?
Monkish distraction: this quick digging the pits beneath the enormous

bearded flank, handkerchiefs guarding our faces from the real work at hand,
which is looking—isn't it?—a difficult looking at slipping away, an end

larger than ours, decay. That's the task we all return to, however briefly,
when the easier business of shovels is done. Backs on dunes, sandwiches

on our sandy laps, we try to watch the blubbered hall go on not moving.
There's not much to see. Early clouds the size of countries ride over us

and slip off unrememberable. New questions flock. Spirals of terns and gulls
collapse from the sky to pick at the carcass staunch as a church. A god

has come. What will make it matter? Fire, nails, camera, action. As if
we make the unimaginable more: we plant the charge, we run the cables.

—Anthony Carelli

Anthony Carelli lives in Brooklyn, New York, and teaches writing at New York University. "The Crucifixion" is from his book Carnations, *published by Princeton University Press.*

John's columns—at least in the years before the editors put tighter word limits on columnists—were spiked with hilarity. Writing of appeals to "get in touch with one's feelings," John reported that he had tried, but "they were out so I left a note." Lamenting the mental befogging of our culture, John remembered a university job repairing academic jargon "that came by our desks by the barrelful." A proposal for a program called "Human Development Counseling" bravely announced, "The process of human development, according to [recent studies], can be both constructive and destructive."

"I wrote in the margin," John recalled, "'Let's make sure this knowledge doesn't get into the wrong hands.'" He also decided, "I should think about quitting."

For many years after their son and daughter had moved to the other coast, Regina brought hors d'oeuvres and John his storytelling and infectious laughter to our dinners at Thanksgiving, Christmas, and—thanks to the difference with the Orthodox liturgical calendar—almost every Easter. Once he and Regina retired to the Northwest to be closer to children and grandchildren and live on their modest resources, John and I marked all those holidays with hour-long phone calls trading hilarious illustrations of the Downfall of Humankind.

That hilarity was streaked with melancholy, however. In an unusually personal column last July, John mentioned his serious childhood illness and the deaths in his family that had contributed to a prolonged "mix of depression, anger, fear, and anxiety.... I lived as if I were a clenched fist." Ultimately he was blessed with a recognition of his own brokenness, one that it wasn't in his control to mend.

"You have to turn from yourself to something outside yourself, hoping it will be gracious," he wrote. "This is where the Christian story matters so much—we see in Jesus what the God who called us forth from nothingness is like. I know now that I can't be without him."

He isn't. ■

Paul Steinfels *is the author of* A People Adrift: The Crisis of the Roman Catholic Church in America.

Margaret O'Brien Steinfels

An Ambassador to the End

ROBERT E. WHITE, R.I.P.

Robert White, who spent a quarter century in the U.S. Foreign Service and was ambassador to El Salvador at the beginning of its civil war, seemed never to have forgotten anything. Among the things he never forgot were the murders of Jean Donovan and Sisters Dorothy Kazel, Maura Clarke, and Ita Ford. White was present when their bodies were recovered from shallow graves on December 4, 1980. He returned to the embassy as angry as his wife, MaryAnne, had ever seen him. It changed him, she told me in 2001, when I interviewed her for a profile of Bob I wrote for *Commonweal*. Indeed, his refusal to cover up Salvadoran military involvement in the women's murders—and those of thousands of Salvadorans, including Archbishop Oscar Romero—led to his resignation from the Foreign Service in 1981. He continued his work for democratic reforms and human rights in the Caribbean and Latin America at the Carnegie Endowment for Peace and the Center for International Policy.

Bob, who died on January 13 at the age of eighty-eight, was a great interview; in 2001 I left his Washington office with tapes full of details. He could summon conversations from years past and recount policy details lost in the fog of diplomatic maneuvering. Not only did he remember names and details of long-past events, he was also forthcoming in his analysis of U.S. foreign policy. He had joined the Foreign Service in 1955. After President John Kennedy announced the "Alliance for Progress," he requested an assignment in Latin America. Designed to encourage democracy and human rights, the new policy was a turn away from, as White put it, doing the work of "the colonial office." That derogatory title summed up the tangled political and economic relationship between the United States and its neighbors to the south. Even when support in Washington faltered after Kennedy's assassination, White tried to keep the policies of the Alliance in play. Full-blown Cold War policies had returned in 1968 with Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger, coloring White's years in Honduras, Nicaragua, Columbia, Paraguay, and El Salvador. While serving as U.S. representative to the Organization of American States, he faced down Kissinger, whose statements supporting Pinochet were contrary to U.S. policy. This brought White to the edge of dismissal; he won the battle and stayed on to serve in his final post, El Salvador.

A long history of interventions and exploitation of the continent's natural resources made the United States the imperial power that both democratic reformers and Marxists loved to hate. White saw in the reformers the path to more democratic governments and respect for human rights. Washington, focused on Soviet threats and Fidel Castro's support for guerrillas, increasingly favored the dictators and caudillos. Secret agreements were struck between U.S. military and intelligence agencies and their Latin counterparts. This often put the Department of State, though the official representative of the United States, on the margins of both policy and practices. Jimmy Carter's victory in 1976 pushed U.S. policy once again toward a human-rights agenda; that ended with Ronald Reagan's election in 1980.

White had long found himself the mediator in many of the struggles between Latin American governments and reformers, as well as between those governments and his own. His job was to work with each country's political leaders, notwithstanding their anti-democratic policies. While they might tolerate his cajoling and plain-speaking about land reform, fair elections, and human rights, they usually had a U.S. military representative or CIA agent to turn to for direct contact with Washington (often someone on the ambassador's own embassy staff). At the same time, White made it his business to seek out and get to know sympathetic academics, journalists, labor leaders, clergy, and reformers in the Christian Democratic tradition. He understood the central role that the Catholic Church, especially its cardinals and bishops, played among the social and political elites. His friendship with some and parrying with others gave him behind-the-scenes influence; his attendance at Mass could be the occasion for a pointed homily on topics a prelate might otherwise avoid. If White was regarded with suspicion and contempt, especially by Salvadoran politicians and military officials, his reputation among Americans (and American Catholics) opposed to El Salvador's brutal regime was hardly better. The U.S. ambassador was seen to be compromised by his position and not to be trusted.

After his resignation, White, more than any U.S. official, exposed the hidden ties between U.S. military and intelligence and their Latin American counterparts. He testified against the Salvadoran military for its complicity in torture and murder, especially of the American churchwomen. He never ceased pressing for better political and economic conditions in Latin America, termination of sanctions against Cuba, and an end to human-rights abuses not only by dictatorships but also by democracies. Bob's work as an ambassador—from the United States at its best—never really ended. ■

Margaret O'Brien Steinfels, *a former editor of* Commonweal, *writes frequently in these pages and blogs at dotCommonweal.*

Jeffrey Meyers

A Good Place to Work

ERNEST HEMINGWAY'S CUBA

Ernest Hemingway's long involvement with Cuba illuminates the recent normalization of diplomatic relations between the United States and that country.

Hemingway lived in Cuba for twenty years and instinctively sympathized with Fidel Castro and the Cuban Revolution. In the spring of 1939, just after the Loyalists had been defeated in the Spanish Civil War, Hemingway's third wife Martha Gellhorn found the Finca Vigía (Lookout Farm) in the village of San Francisco de Paula, twelve miles southeast of Havana. The rundown one-story Spanish colonial house had high ceilings, tile floors, a sixty-foot living room, a swimming pool, and a tennis court. It was surrounded by fifteen sprawling acres and stood on a 468-foot hill that caught the breezes and had a fine view of the lights of the capital.

In a 1952 letter Hemingway described his Cuban house, routine and habitual diversions: "It is a good place to work because it is out of town and on a hill so that it is cool at night. I wake up when the sun rises and go to work and when I finish I get a swim and have a drink and read the New York and Miami papers. After work you can fish or go bird shooting and in the evening my wife and I read and listen to music." At his favorite bar, La Floridita, he piously covered the bronze bust of himself during Lent. During his years in Cuba he finished *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and wrote *Across the River and Into the Trees, The Old Man and the Sea,* and the posthumously published *A Moveable Feast* and *Islands in the Stream*.

When Hemingway lived in Cuba the country was ruled by Fulgencio Batista, who had overthrown the government in 1934 and governed by patronage rather than by terror until 1944. Batista lived in Florida for the next eight years and returned to be elected president in 1952. He promised to restore normal conditions after several chaotic years, but became a brutal dictator, repressed the universities, and crushed Castro's first attempt at revolt in 1953.

Ernest Hemingway and Gregory Hemingway at the Club de Cazadores in Cuba, circa 1943

During World War II Hemingway organized a private spy network, which he jokingly called the Crook Factory, and gathered information about Nazi sympathizers on the island. But in a secret, 124-page report on Hemingway, the FBI—which feared his personal prestige and political power—expressed resentment at his amateur but alarming intrusion into their territory, and unsuccessfully attempted to control and vilify him.

In October 1942 the local FBI agent told J. Edgar Hoover that the American ambassador had granted Hemingway's request "to patrol certain areas where German submarine activity has been reported" and had given him scarce gasoline for this purpose. Hemingway thought that his boat, the *Pilar*, fully manned and heavily armed but disguised for fishing, would attract the attention of a German submarine. The sub would signal the *Pilar* to come alongside in order to requisition supplies of fresh water and food. As the sub approached, Hemingway's men would machine-gun the crew on deck while a Spanish jai alai player would throw a small bomb into the conning tower. Fortunately, for both Hemingway and the Germans, he never actually encountered an enemy submarine.

After reporting on the war in Europe in 1944–45, he returned to Cuba with his fourth wife, Mary Welsh. He won the Pulitzer Prize in 1953 and the Nobel Prize the following year. He gave his gold Nobel medal to the shrine of the national saint, the Virgen de Cobre. On January 1, 1959, Castro seized power and Batista fled to the Dominican Republic. Acknowledging Hemingway's influence, Castro told the English author Kenneth Tynan, "We took *For Whom the Bell Tolls* to the hills with us, and it taught us about guerrilla warfare."

Out of the country at the time, Hemingway had not seen the bloody fighting and the consolidation of power when Batista fled in December 1958. His own house and property had not been harmed. After Castro had ruled for ten months, Hemingway's nostalgic support for the Spanish Left and distaste for Batista's cruel regime inspired a public statement when he flew into the Havana airport on November 3, 1959. The American Embassy reported to the State Department that Hemingway told journalists:

1. He supported the Castro government and all its acts completely, and thought it was the best thing that had ever happened to Cuba.
2. He had not believed any of the information published abroad against Cuba. He sympathized with the Cuban government, and all *our* difficulties.
3. Hemingway emphasized the *our*, and was asked about it. He said that he hoped Cubans would regard him not as a *Yanqui* (his word), but as another Cuban. With that, he kissed the Cuban flag.

In those early days of hope, when Fidel greatly improved schools, hospitals, and transportation on the island, Hemingway naturally expressed support for the new regime. He told Tynan that he thoroughly approved of Castro and said, "This is a good revolution, an *honest* revolution." In May 1960 Castro won a fishing competition and Hemingway presented him with the prize. When interviewed about Castro, Hemingway contrasted a commonplace uprising in a banana republic to this "real revolution" and stated his admiration for Fidel. In April he compared the Castro government to the Spanish Republic and expressed cautious hope in a letter to a Polish friend: "This is a very pure and beautiful revolution so far—Naturally I do not know how it will come out. But I hope for the best—So far it is what we hoped for, in intent, when they made the Republic in Spain (and which never arrived). I hope things will go well—The people who are being shot deserve it." But he scrupulously paid his American taxes, and remained a United States citizen and patriot. He would not have stayed in Cuba if his presence there hurt American interests.

In July 1960 Hemingway left Cuba for his new home in Ketchum, Idaho. In January 1961, after Castro had nationalized most of the American property on the island, the United States broke off diplomatic relations with Cuba. The disastrous American Bay of Pigs invasion followed in April. A few days after Hemingway's funeral in July 1961, his boat and possessions were expropriated by the Castro regime. Mary explained, "I had a phone call in Ketchum from the Cuban government asking me whether I would consent to donate our home in Cuba as a museum. In exchange I would be allowed to remove all the papers from the bank and my personal belongings. I accepted. At the time I was so grief-stricken that I didn't care about giving up the house."

The State Department arranged Mary's visit to Cuba that July. She was forced to give up the house. But Castro, who came to the Finca to see Mary, allowed her to keep her clothes and jewelry; twenty-five precious books; paintings by Joan Miró, Juan Gris, Paul Klee, and André Masson (a Braque had been stolen in their absence); all of Hemingway's papers and forty pounds of manuscript from the bank vault. The *Pilar* was hauled onto the grounds and the Finca became the Hemingway Museum. In 1972 Mary gave all the surviving papers to the Hemingway Collection in the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library in Boston.

HEALING

Some procedures have no pain
that we remember.
Anesthetized, we slowly wake
to the delirium of daylight,
the gated bed, the tubes, telemetry,
the insistent recall to identity,
the life we are required to resume—
it is there pain takes up residence.
They call it healing.

My daughter, lifted from the cross,
must now endure recovery.
My neighbor, crawling from the grave,
must now walk upright.
Our soldiers, damaged in an instant,
must mend for years.

They say the suffering unto health
hurts less than suffering unto death.
Those suffering don't say this.

They say: We are broken, Lord,
like communion bread.
What can we do but kneel
and open our hands?

—Diane Vreuls

Diane Vreuls has published a novel, a children's book, a collection of short stories, and a book of poems. She lives in Oberlin, Ohio.

Hemingway was a shrewd political observer. As early as 1922 he'd interviewed and satirized Mussolini, and had reported on wars in Turkey, Spain, China, France and Germany. He thought Castro was a welcome change from the repressive Batista regime, and supported the revolution before Castro established his own dictatorship, declared himself a Communist, and opposed America. If the United States had adopted Hemingway's sympathetic attitude and maintained relations with Cuba instead of trying to overthrow that government and adhering to a policy that has failed for more than fifty years, the people of both countries would have benefited. ■

Jeffrey Meyers *has published* Hemingway: The Critical Heritage *(1982),* Hemingway: A Biography *(1985), and* Hemingway: Life and Art *(2000).*

What Christians Owe Jews

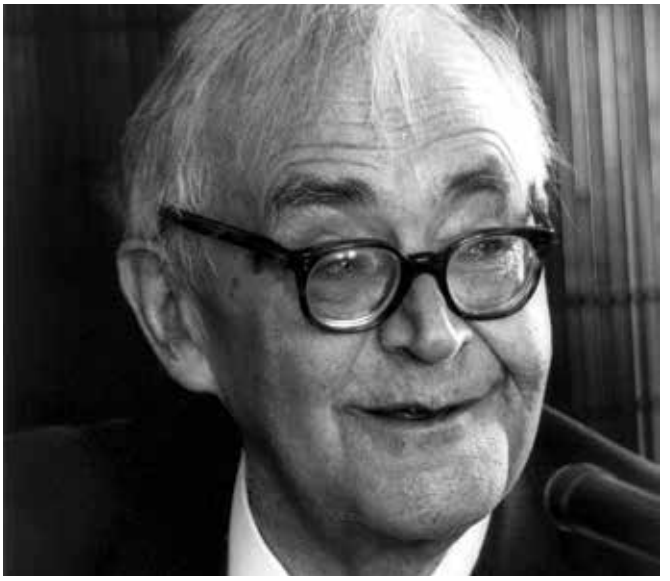
The Case for 'Soft Supersessionism'

George Hunsinger

Since its inception, Christianity has been beset by a troubling and fundamental question: Can the faith exist without some animus against the Jews? While the long and unseemly history of Christian anti-Semitism might suggest a grim answer, I take a hopeful view. In fact, I would argue that Christianity enters into profound self-contradiction whenever it is anti-Judaic; indeed, that when Christianity does not love the Jews, it corrupts its love of Jesus Christ at the very core. In this view, loving Christ is inseparable from loving the Jews—and where the Jews are not loved, Christ himself is dishonored. What I would like to advocate is a form of philo-Semitism or Judaeophilia rooted in Christ.

Anyone proposing such an idea faces a problem—namely, that this same christocentrism requires a form of supersessionism, which traditionally held that in refusing to accept Jesus as the Messiah and the fulfillment of biblical prophecy, Jews have forfeited their covenantal status as the chosen people of God. (See "Getting Past Supersessionism," Steven Englund, et al., February 21, 2014.) An almost universal conviction in contemporary theology holds that supersessionism is an inevitable cause of anti-Judaism and its repellent cousin anti-Semitism, and thus that any form of supersessionism is unacceptable. And yet in my opinion the inner logic of the Christian faith necessitates supersessionism in some form. The form I will advocate is the one that David Novak, in his 2004 essay "The Covenant in Rabbinic Thought," called "soft supersessionism."

This approach asserts that the new covenant does not replace the old covenant, but rather fulfills, extends, supplements, and fundamentally confirms it. There is only one covenant, and thus only one people of God, and yet there are also two faiths. The presence of two faiths—in some ways diametrically opposed—represents a festering wound



Karl Barth

in the one people of God. Neither Christians nor Jews know how to heal this wound; only God does. Certainly the day is long since past when Christians might hope to heal this wound by adopting St. Paul's strategy of "making Israel jealous." Today any such strategy smolders in the ruins of the Shoah—for which Christian history supplied the dreadful background, if not the direct cause.

It would be a major step if Christianity were to commit itself not to making the Jews jealous, but to entering fully into solidarity with them. Yet even such solidarity is not enough; nor are contrition, confession, or (insofar as possible) reparations. Beyond such things, what the Gospel requires of Christians is love. Christ must be loved and honored in the Jews, because the Jews must be loved and honored in Christ. They must be loved and honored in Christ precisely because he has made them his own.

While there are precious few examples of what this solidarity and love might look like, here is at least one. During the Nazi occupation of France, the lives of as many as two thousand Jewish children were saved in the southern mountain village of Le Chambon, under the leadership of a Reformed pastor named André Trocmé, who urged

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members of his congregation to shelter the children in safe houses, often under assumed names. Le Chambon stands as an emblem of Christian solidarity and of a love toward the Jews grounded in love for Christ. Significantly, the people of Le Chambon did not try to convert the children. They simply tried to help them by taking the necessary risks of love.

Love for Christ is also the ground for the "soft supersessionism" I am advocating. Love for Christ, according to Nicene Christianity, is tantamount to love for God, because Christ is God with us in human flesh. He encounters us as God's self-revelation, as the reconciliation of the world with God and as the proper object of our worship. He himself is the savior of the world. According to Christian faith, however, he is the world's savior only because he is also Israel's long-awaited messiah. The universality of his saving significance is grounded in the particularity of Israel.

It was one of the signal achievements of Karl Barth—the great Swiss Protestant theologian whose influence pervaded the twentieth century—to insist that God's covenant with Israel is irrevocable. Barth repudiated, and helped invalidate, the "strong supersessionism" that insisted that Israel is replaced by the church in God's covenant. But Barth arguably kept too much anti-Judaic baggage in his theology, and what needs to be worked out today is a soft supersessionism purged of every anti-Judaic element.

Supersessionism in some form remains unavoidable because there is only one covenant and only one people of God. It is impossible to read Holy Scripture in any other way; there simply is no other covenant than the one established by God with Israel, and thus no other people could possibly be the elect people of God. By virtue of this divine election, Israel's unique status as God's elect is irrevocable and eternal, and nothing Israel can do, whether in obedience or disobedience, can revoke it. Let me hasten to add that Christians, including Karl Barth, have said far too much about Israel's disobedience in rejecting Jesus Christ and far too little about their own disobedience—especially their historic disobedience in the form of anti-Semitism, mass persecution of Jews, and the teaching of contempt. Every possibility of Christian triumphalism was consumed in the fires of Auschwitz.

Nevertheless, according to apostolic authority, God's covenant with Israel is fulfilled in Jesus Christ—for Jews, for Christians, and for the world. Just as there is only one covenant, so also is there only one people of God, and here Barth's doctrine of the unitary-but-twofold people of God is another key contribution. I want to suggest that Jews and Christians cannot undo their divine election as the one indivisible people of God. In a way that passes all understanding, Jews and Christians together are one in Christ, now and until the end of history. *Sub specie aeternitatis*, what is true *de iure* in Christ overrides all that exists to the contrary in history, and what is not yet true in history will be judged and forgiven, transcended and overcome, at the end of all things.

In their very Jewishness, the Jews are witnesses in the world to God's love; and their preservation as a people despite all that has assailed them throughout history attests, Barth argued, to the covenant faithfulness of the God who will not let them go.

No doubt Jews will fear at least two things about this turn in my argument: their coercion by Christians and their disappearance as Jews. If these understandable fears cannot be convincingly addressed, then my argument for a soft supersessionism will turn out to be anti-Judaic after all, despite my best intentions. I must therefore explain why I think my argument supports neither the dreaded coercion nor the feared disappearance.

As is well known, Karl Barth discouraged all Christian missions to the Jews, insisting that the Christian community can never presume to proclaim the one true God to Jews—since, as the people of the covenant, they already worship and serve the one true God, even after rejecting Jesus Christ. In their very Jewishness, the Jews are witnesses in the world to God's love; and their preservation as a people despite all that has assailed them throughout history attests, Barth argued, to the covenant faithfulness of the God who will not let them go. On these grounds, my own argument would rule out any Christian coercion of Jews to convert and any proselytizing efforts specifically targeting them. Theologically, in any case, there are good reasons for believing that God wills the continued existence of Israel. It is hard to see how the Jewish people could retain their Jewish identity apart from their ongoing Torah observance—and so, as Bruce Marshall has argued, "in permanently electing Israel, it seems that God has also permanently willed the practice of Judaism."

If Marshall is correct, as I believe he is, how would that comport with the soft supersessionism I am advocating? The matter is delicate and complex. A narrow path must be charted between anti-Judaism, on the one hand, and anti-Evangelicalism on the other, by which I mean a position contrary to the Gospel. A position would be anti-Judaic if it led to the coercion of the Jews, while it would be anti-Evangelical if it compromised on the imperative that Jesus Christ be recognized for who he is, as confessed by faith. This imperative is incumbent upon *all* peoples: the Jew first, as Paul put it, and then also the Greek. At this point I would invoke the Pauline theme of the hardening of Israel, though again, this needs to be done in a careful way.

The mystery of the Jewish rejection of Jesus as the Messiah remains, from a Christian standpoint, a painful one. When Paul pondered this mystery in his own historical moment, he could not do so without anguish. This was in part surely the anguish of love. The monumental failure of Christianity toward the Jews in the subsequent history of the church can largely be traced, I believe, to a loss of the empathic bond that Paul felt toward his fellow Jews, as expressed in his cry of anguish. The Christian loss of empathy was accompanied by a progressive loss of love, as attitudes twisted over time into contempt.

With regard to the rejection of Jesus Christ by the Jews, and then the rejection of the Jews by Christians, I would take solace in the words of Augustine, who wrote that "in a strange and ineffable way, nothing is done without the will of God, even that which is done contrary to it." From the standpoint of soft supersessionism, both Jews and Christians have done something contrary to the will of God. If Augustine is right, however, neither the one rejection nor the other can finally escape the overruling providence of God. The Pauline theme of the hardening of Israel in order that Gentiles might be grafted in, and so join the people of God, was arguably a beginning in this direction. Paul was trying to make sense of God's strange and dreadful providence.

Here it is important to note that in early Christianity it was possible to become a Christian without ceasing to be Jew; indeed, the earliest Christians were predominantly Jews who remained law-observant. Paul did not reject this form of Christianity. His mission was to establish another form of Christianity alongside it, a form in which Gentiles could become Christians without needing also to become law-observant. Paul could not have known that the law-observant Christian community in Palestine would soon be decimated by the Romans, and that such communities would cease to survive past the first few centuries. He could not have anticipated (and in my opinion would surely have lamented) that the Gentile Christian communities he was establishing would soon lose their Jewish-Christian counterpart forever.

Where does all this leave us? Paul believed that in some sense all Israel would be saved, and that God desires all others to be saved along with them, by coming to a knowledge of the truth. In our own time, Karl Barth almost single-handedly revived the long-lost prospect of a universal hope by which the day will come when Jesus Christ is thanked and praised, without exception, for who he is. "At the name of Jesus," we read, "every knee will bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:10–11).

It is to the abiding shame of Christians that almost no Jew today can hear these words without revulsion, dismay, and even horror. As Barth once said in a slightly different connection, perhaps in the end the Lord God will have a little less trouble with them than he had with us. The emergence of messianic Judaism in our own day is an important and unexpected sign that it might still be possible for some Jews to become Christians without ceasing to be Torah-observant Jews. It would be quixotic, however, to expect this movement to catch on widely. For all practical purposes, it is the institutions and practices of Rabbinic Judaism that will continue to keep Judaism alive. In my version of "soft supersessionism," every actually existing form of Judaism—whether secular, rabbinic, or baptized—has its own relative validity this side of the eschaton, and much the same would need to be said about every division of Christian existence in and among the churches.

In sum, then, it is in theory possible to conceive of a soft supersessionism that is neither anti-Judaic nor anti-Evangelical—one that eschews religious coercion, and respects the indispensability of a Torah-observant Judaism, while at the same time upholding the imperative that Jesus Christ should be acknowledged by all for who he is, and the hope that this imperative will one day be accomplished universally by the inscrutable grace of God.

I have not yet developed the essential christocentric grounds that I see for philo-Semitism or Judaeophilia. Before doing so, however, I want to examine a little further the indivisible oneness of God's people. I have argued that there is only one covenant and not (as some have urged) one for Christians and another for Jews. Rather, just as the Calvinistic tradition to which Barth belonged always insisted, one covenant exists in two forms—the old and the new. Similarly, there are not really two faiths but, again, only one faith in two forms, old and new. Today the old form is represented in various ways by Judaism, and the new form by various versions of Christianity. Those who adhere to the old form of faith may see the others as idolators, interlopers, or (at best) fellow-travelers. Those who adhere to the new form will—if they subscribe to my version of a soft supersessionism—look on their opposite numbers with empathy, respect, patience, contrition, and love. Gentile Christians in particular will need to find that godly grief that leads to repentance, as Paul described it, in order to reach at least a modicum of reconciliation with the long-suffering Jews. And Jews and Gentiles alike will call upon God for the grace that might heal their unhealable wound. For only God, as I noted before, can remove this pain.

From the standpoint of a soft supersessionism, how are the universality of Christ and the particularity of Israel related? Karl Barth offers a suggestion I consider seminal to

THE WOUNDED ANGEL

painting, Hugo Simberg, 1903

This happened long ago when blood
root bloomed, the dazed spring still
holding onto makeshift railings.

We sloshed around winter's old fields
in poor man's shoes, bought large
to grow into. We heard the stubble

breathe, *caution, caution*, saw
something white crumple and fall
from the sky. A heron? Wild swan?

We ran toward it. A wingéd thing,
a heap of feathers we carried home,
her feet too odd for any shoes.

That was the year an angel lived
in our kitchen, recuperating
on the bench beside Mother's oven.

She isn't like us, Mother said,
when we're tired or hurt.
She won't put up any fuss.

That was the year we learned
about earth and its gravities,
how they hold some of us

down, but free the unearthly.
From the kitchen's back stoop
we three watched the angel

unfurl her wings one morning
and barefoot take flight
into the blue, infinite sky.

—Sharon Chmielarz

his entire theology. "God," he writes, "is he who [loves his Son Jesus Christ], in his Son Jesus Christ all his children, in his children all human beings, and in human beings the whole creation." This proposition specifies the objects of God's love by means of a gradated scheme that begins with particularity and ends in universality. We might picture it as a series of concentric circles, with Christ at the center. The first circle around him comprises "all God's children," by which Barth means Israel and the church. The second circle widens out to include "all human beings," while the outermost embraces the whole creation. Thus all creation participates in God's relationship to humanity, all humanity participates in God's relationship to his children (Israel and the church), while all God's children—the one, twofold people of God—participate in his unique relationship to Jesus Christ.

With this scheme in mind, I want to focus on the unity that governs how Jesus Christ is related to God's children. The elect children of God, as conceived by Barth, constitute a single, twofold people. Within the one people of God, Israel would arguably have priority; the church would belong only as it was grafted into Israel. Israel would thus stand out as the original and proper object of God's love—the object through which, along with the church, that love would be mediated to the world. In Barth's scheme, God's love for Israel is grounded in his love for Jesus Christ, and therefore God's love for Jesus Christ would be inseparable from his love for Israel, and vice versa. This unity cannot be destroyed because it is grounded in divine election. The direct object of election, as Barth conceives of it, is of course Jesus Christ, but in Jesus—born a Jew—the original object of election would be Israel. The love of Jesus Christ has made the people of Israel his own by virtue of divine election. A kind of covenantal ontology of love binds Jesus Christ to the Jews.

This bond of Jesus Christ with the Jews in covenantal love, I would suggest, forms the ground of Christian philo-Semitism or Judaeophilia. Jesus Christ cannot be loved without the Jews also being loved; nor can one be held in contempt without the other being dishonored. Jesus Christ's undying love for the Jews, regardless of whether it is acknowledged and reciprocated or not, means that loving Jesus Christ while holding the Jews in contempt is a contradiction in terms.

Barth did not make this logic of Christian philo-Semitism explicit—although I believe it is implicit in his theology. He did however assert, if not a robust union in love, at least a corresponding union in suffering. Jesus Christ suffers in the sufferings of the Jews, Barth claimed, and those who inflict suffering and abuse on them secretly inflict it on Christ himself. During the struggle against Nazism, he wrote:

Whoever rejects and persecutes the Jews rejects and persecutes him who died for the sins of the Jews—and then, and only thereby for our sins as well. Anyone who is a radical enemy of the Jews, were he in every other regard an angel of light, shows himself, as such, to be a radical enemy of Jesus Christ. Anti-Semitism is sin against the Holy Ghost. For anti-Semitism means rejection of the grace of God.

Those who reject and persecute the Jews, Barth adamantly insisted, are rejecting and persecuting Jesus Christ; an inseparable union between them is clearly implied. As far as I know, however, Barth never explored the larger implications of this insight; he never quite perceived that the very logic of his Christ-centered rejection of anti-Semitism implied an equally Christ-centered affirmation of the Jews—that is to say, a philo-Semitism grounded in covenantal love. In the same period Barth also wrote:

In Israel the really suffering One who bears the wrath and judgment of God is not Israel itself but he to whose advent Israel looks forward and who furnishes the clue to the inner meaning of its existence: Israel's Messiah in the one day of his passion. He and not Israel is also the One who really suffers in all that the Jews of today have to endure. He is the One who is intended, aimed at and smitten, hated and pushed aside.

According to Barth, Jesus Christ is the one who really suffers "in all that the Jews of today have to endure." In this line of interpretation an obvious danger exists—namely, that the unspeakable sufferings of the Jews might be appropriated or eclipsed. Unfortunately, this danger is not entirely absent from the tenor of Barth's remarks. Yet the preposition "in" could be understood in a different sense. It could be taken to imply a strong unity-in-distinction, pointing beyond solidarity to *participatio Christi*. In this view, Jesus Christ participates fully in the sufferings of the Jews: when they are despised and rejected, he himself is despised and rejected, not merely in solidarity, but by an ineffable union of covenantal love. He takes them into his wounded body that they might be given a share in his risen body. They are not without hope because through his sufferings he has overcome the world. If so, Jesus Christ has truly made the sufferings of the Shoah his own in order to establish a hope beyond hope.

God is the one whose suffering love triumphs in his son Jesus Christ. In him this suffering love triumphs in the sufferings of all his children. In his children it triumphs in the sufferings of all human beings, and in human beings it triumphs in the sufferings of the whole creation. The hope of resurrection ends in complete universality. But it begins, I contend, in the ineffability of God's covenantal love for the Jews. ■

Richard Alleva

A Usable Myth

'SELMA'

In his play *Mary Stuart* (1800), Friedrich Schiller invents a scene in which the imprisoned Mary, Queen of Scotland, meets her captor, Elizabeth I, and the encounter ignites a verbal brouhaha ending with the English monarch storming off in high dudgeon and Mary doomed. Surefire theater, but utter fiction. Why did Schiller, a reputable historian as well as a poet, create this historically incorrect scene? Well, one of the play's themes is that character determines political fate, and so we had to see the headstrong Mary in visible collision with the Machiavellian Virgin Queen. To bring these antagonists face to face wasn't just good drama but a crystallization of Schiller's view of history.

In the film *Selma*, written by Paul Webb and extensively rewritten by its director, Ava DuVernay, President Lyndon Johnson tries to persuade Martin Luther King Jr. not to lead protesters on a march for voting rights from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, and instead to lend his support to LBJ's War on Poverty—a program the president hoped would lead eventually to everything King wanted for black citizens. After King refuses to change his plans, it is strongly hinted that Johnson decides to unleash J. Edgar Hoover, who has evidence of King's adulteries and wants to use it to "dismantle" the minister's domestic life and, if possible, blackmail him. Several public figures and historians, including LBJ presidential librarian Mark Updegrove and Johnson's top assistant for domestic affairs Joseph Califano, dispute this portrayal and insist that the president actually urged King to use his marches to bring racial injustices into the media spotlight—thus making it easier for LBJ to push through more civil-rights legislation.

The events of *Selma* took place only fifty years ago, and so the film's alleged misrepresentations are bound to raise more hackles than Schiller's distortion of an episode that took place more than two centuries before he wrote his play (we are used to centuries, if not decades, turning facts into usable myth). Still, a movie critic must ask: If DuVernay deliberately falsified history, what was her dramatic purpose in doing so? As a citizen I want the historical truth to emerge, and nothing excuses the possible errors of *Selma* when it's considered purely as a historical account. But in drama and poetry, valid psychological and even historical insights can be achieved at the expense of factuality. *Mary Stuart*'s insights into how political power can be undermined by personality traits make it a poetic meditation on history, even if it plays fast and loose with the facts. So what is *Selma*'s meditation?

A recently published book about the congressional debates over civil rights is titled *The Fierce Urgency of Now*. That might have been the subtitle of *Selma*, for that is precisely the theme of the movie, which dramatizes one moment in the civil-rights movement when King, wracked by doubts and intimations of mortality, could have put his goals on hold. In a jail-cell colloquy with his right-hand man Ralph Abernathy (played to juicy perfection by Colman Domingo), MLK seems close to embracing LBJ's championship of jobs and education instead of immediate integration and voting rights. What good, he asks, is a place at the lunch counter if you can't afford a hamburger, and why vote when you can't read? Abernathy allays these doubts, but we can certainly understand how King could have them.

It is DuVernay's concern to make us feel viscerally the fierce urgencies that—even more than Abernathy's words—push King's doubts aside. The injustices of the time are memorably portrayed. When Oprah Winfrey, in a vivid and unstarry turn as Annie Lee Cooper, tries to register to vote and the registrar contemptuously puts her through a ridiculous test that he would never impose on a white citizen, the director keeps her camera close enough to Winfrey's

David Oyelowo in Selma

PARAMOUNT PICTURES

face to register the suppression of rage that tugs at muscles and nerves, a rage not only at this particular humiliation but at a lifetime of having to cope with such indignities. When we see some little girls in Birmingham killed in a bomb attack as they skip down their church's steps, we can't help feeling that the comfortable safety most whites take for granted was denied—and may still be denied—to an entire race of Americans, including children. And when the eighty-four-year-old grandfather (movingly played by Henry G. Sanders) of Jimmie Lee Jackson, who was shot to death by state troopers, tells King how his grandson had promised him that he would finally get to vote after fifty years of waiting, we feel in an utterly concrete, nonsymbolic way the burden pressing its fierce urgency on King's consciousness.

All this doesn't validate an injustice done to LBJ, if that indeed is what *Selma* commits. But what sort of injustice is this exactly? In the dramatic scheme of *Selma*, this LBJ does not stand for anything evil, as Governor George Wallace and Sheriff Jim Clark certainly do. And the almost entirely black audience with whom I saw the movie lustily cheered the president's climactic speech to Congress that ends with the famous "and we shall overcome." *Selma*'s LBJ represents all the liberal Democratic presidents of the mid-twentieth century—FDR, Truman, Kennedy—who meant well by African Americans, sometimes did important things for them (e.g., Truman's integration of the armed forces), but were either unwilling or unable to secure for them all the rights of full citizenship. In other words, the movie's LBJ is not a villain but a benevolent, if retarding, force. He needs to be swept along, not swept away. I do wish, though, that the great actor who plays LBJ, Tom Wilkinson, had been encouraged to capture more of his rambunctious, über-redneck force. Instead, Wilkinson's more-than-competent performance presents LBJ as a troubled, slightly bullying CEO.

One element struck me as not quite at one with the rest of the movie: the domestic troubles of the Kings. Here, Ava DuVernay sticks her toe into murky waters but never really takes the plunge. Though she's to be commended for not overlooking the issue of King's adulteries, the sheer oddness of MLK's prolonged pause when his wife, played by the beautiful Carmen Ejogo, asks him the simple but profound question "Do you love me?" suggests a disturbing feature of King's life that DuVernay didn't really want to explore. (The middle-aged women sitting next to me at the theater loudly exclaimed, "Why did he hesitate?") So I ended up wishing she hadn't broached the issue at all. I also wish she hadn't directed Ejogo to appear so unrelievedly pensive. In the epilogue, when Mrs. King takes part in the last of the three marches on Montgomery, Ejogo looks so at ease that I wished DuVernay had given us some earlier glimpses of this other Coretta, a woman whose brow wasn't always furrowed. That would have helped us understand what attracted the Kings to each other in the first place, and made their subsequent marital troubles all the more poignant.

The rest of the supporting cast is superb, especially Stephan James's young and headstrong John Lewis and Tim Roth's George Wallace, a quick sketch of coiled truculence.

Finally, the central performance: David Oyelowo's King. It is a rare achievement. He captures both the private and public man, the magnetic orator (Oyelowo's voice doesn't sing out with as rich a melody as King's voice possessed, but the actor makes up for it with force and rhythmic control), the conciliating organizer of often-fractious followers, the relaxed crony of old collaborators, the nonplussed husband, and, most important to the tenor of this movie, a man who foresees his own death. This isn't the unbendable, righteously beaming leader we've seen in made-for-TV movies about King, but a death-haunted man, convinced that his time is running out and that he hasn't made the most of the task life has thrust upon him. For the King we see in *Selma*, the choice isn't now or later, but now or never. ■

Tzvi Novick

How Particular?

At Home in Exile
Why Diaspora Is Good for the Jews
Alan Wolfe
Beacon Press, $27.95, 272 pp.

Alan Wolfe is pessimistic about the future of Canadian Jewry. Why? "Forty percent of Canadian Jews are Orthodox and only 20 percent are Reform, twice as many Canadian Jews have visited Israel than their counterparts in the United States, and almost twice as many Canadian children attend Jewish schools." If this reasoning strikes you as odd, even perverse—if you are inclined to think that the commitment to Jewish tradition implicit in living an Orthodox lifestyle, in visiting Israel, or in sending one's child to a Jewish day school is the sort of thing that individuals concerned about the future of Judaism ought to celebrate and nurture—then you will likely find much that will raise an eyebrow in Wolfe's new book.

Wolfe's topic is not of course Canadian Jewry specifically, but the Jewish diaspora more generally. The argument of his book runs as follows. Jews ought to be universalist rather than particularist. That is, they ought to be concerned with human beings as such, rather than with their own, with other Jews, except to ensure that other Jews, too, are universalist. Why should they be universalist? Wolfe does not articulate an argument for universalism at any length, but presumably his grounds are chiefly moral. He also asserts that there is a prominent universalist strain in Judaism. About the textual and normative foundations of this strain he has little to say, but he does take a definitive position on the historical conditions that gave rise to Jewish universalism. It is the fruit, says Wolfe, of the diaspora, wherein, as an embattled minority, Jews inevitably became sensitive to the vulnerability of other minorities. Diaspora Jews today, Wolfe argues further, ought to remain in the diaspora, rather than make *aliyah* (emigrate to Israel), because only in the diaspora can Jews cultivate universalism in a robust way. Nor do considerations of physical safety argue for emigration to Israel, because in the parts of the diaspora where Jews are now concentrated—the United States first and foremost, but also France, England, Germany, Sweden, and Argentina, among others—anti-Semitism is now largely a marginal phenomenon. Rather than moving to Israel, diaspora Jews should serve as Israel's conscience, first and foremost as critics of its entrenched particularism.

Let us first note a certain inconsistency, harmful but not necessarily fatal, in the argument as a whole. Jewish universalism is said to have its origin in the self-consciousness of minority status instilled by diaspora existence. But the purported end to systemic anti-Semitism means that the diaspora will no longer foster such self-consciousness, at least not to anything like the same degree that it has in the past. Hence if Wolfe is right about the end of anti-Semitism, he undermines his own argument for choosing the diaspora over Israel. But is Wolfe right about the end of anti-Semitism, or about the other claims that constitute his argument?

It is certain that much support for universalism can be found in the Jewish tradition. It is equally certain that Jewish universalism, taken to an extreme,

A Hasidic Jew in Williamsburg, Brooklyn

MGARTEN

becomes an oxymoron. The challenge lies in striking the right balance, but Wolfe does not seriously grapple with this challenge. The opposition between universalism and particularism is in Wolfe's vision less dialectical than diametric. The result of the reductive opposition between universalism and particularism is a universalism that is ironically narrow. Thus Wolfe denies, in practice if not in principle, the presence of universalism among Israelis and among the Orthodox. (It is for this reason that Wolfe bemoans the popularity of Orthodoxy and Zionism among Canadian Jews.) One cannot but acknowledge that Zionism and Orthodoxy veer closer to the Scylla of ethnocentrism and bigotry than to the Charybdis of radical assimilation and cultural death. (The "price tag" attacks that have blighted Israel in recent years, carried out by some Israeli settlers against Palestinian and Christian targets, among others, represent one very disturbing realization of this threat.) But it is also important to recognize, first, that the Charybdis that they avoid is a genuine ill, and second, that very many Israelis and Orthodox Jews manage, despite the danger, to steer well clear of the Scylla. Concern for fellow human beings in fact exists in these circles. (Two examples: the organizations Ma'aglei Tzedek and Uri L'Tzedek, the first Israeli and the second a product of diaspora Orthodoxy.) Moreover, the universalism of Israelis and the Orthodox, both in their self-perception and in the perception of others, is arguably more "Jewish"—more a reflection of their Jewish identity—than the universalism of a secular diaspora Jew.

Wolfe's universalism is also narrow insofar as it aligns precisely with the policies of the welfare state, so that an individual who endorses libertarian ideas that would "undermine many of the gains achieved by ordinary people who have relied on governmental programs to obtain a certain degree of economic security...is taking leave of his universalism." I am myself partial toward the safety net, but universalism and political affiliation are both

complicated things, and I balk at the assumption that there is only one coherent choice for the Jewish universalist in contemporary American politics.

We come then to anti-Semitism. Wolfe's optimism about this ancient hatred cannot but be admired. Gloom and doom is, after all, the safer route, and only the pundit who risks his reputation by predicting peace can, according to Jeremiah, earn the title of prophet. I cannot say whether Wolfe's book would have looked the same on this score had it been written after the ugly summer of 2014, which brought into the streets of major European cities an intensity of Jew-hatred that shocked even the cynical, or after the still more recent kosher market killings in connection with the *Charlie Hebdo* attack. But the anti-Semitism question is really a red herring. It may compel some thousands of Jews, especially in Europe, to leave their homes, but not all of them will go to Israel, and in any case, the American Jewish community is staying put, and with it the question of diaspora Judaism.

Despite its shortcomings, the core intuition that animates the book is appealing and, I think, correct. It must be possible to live a fully authentic Jewish life outside Israel, just as it must be possible to live a fully authentic Jewish life outside the embrace of ultra-Orthodoxy. The degree to which one's Judaism is immersive—in a communitarian or political sense in the choice between Israel and the diaspora, and in a religious sense in the choice between ultra-Orthodoxy and other denominations—cannot *per se* be the sole or even the most important criterion of authenticity. To limit the authority of the immersiveness criterion is necessarily to embrace something like what Wolfe calls universalism. But for answers to the question of how a Jew in the twenty-first century can construct a life that is both meaningfully Jewish and also outward-looking, Wolfe's reader must search elsewhere. ■

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Alan Wolfe

Founding Father

Herzl's Vision

Theodor Herzl and the Founding of the Jewish State

Shlomo Avineri

BlueBridge, $22.95, 304 pp.

Accepting the Ben Hecht Award for Outstanding Journalism from the Zionists of America in September 2012, David Horowitz, the right-wing activist and anti-Muslim provocateur, surely surprised his listeners with a confession. "I have never actually been a Zionist or made a case for Zionism," he acknowledged, before adding "in the sense that Herzl and traditional Zionists understand it." I am not inclined to agree with Horowitz on much, but on this he was completely correct. Theodor Herzl was a product of the intellectual turmoil dominating Europe at the end of the nineteenth century: romantic, idealistic, cosmopolitan, humane, and committed to blending nationalist fervor with universalist ethics; Horowitz, by contrast, is none of those things.

Shlomo Avineri's *Herzl's Vision* brings out the milieu from which Zionism's greatest thinker and publicist emerged better than any other book on Herzl I've read. Israel's most distinguished living political scientist, Avineri makes no direct connection between the events of the late nineteenth century and the political situation facing his country today. But he doesn't need to: Horowitz, who describes himself as wanting "muscular Jews" and a "muscular Israel," clearly has more in common with right-wing Israeli leaders such as Naftali Bennett and Avidgor Lieberman than Avineri. By writing about Herzl, Avineri is reminding his readers, including, one hopes, the more nationalistic ones, that the Zionists who inspired Jews from around the world to leave their homes for an uncertain future in a foreign land were seeking to create not just a nation state but one that would, in Jewish terms, help repair the world.

Observing the Dreyfus case as a journalist for Vienna's *Neue Frie Presse* and astonished by the vicious anti-Semitism on display, Herzl came to the realization that only in a country of its own could worldwide Jewry be saved, or so the conventional story goes. Avineri does not so much challenge this account as tweak it in two important ways. Nowhere in his diaries or articles on the case, Avineri first points out, does Herzl assume the mantle of Emile Zola; indeed, throughout the trial and sentencing of the French officer, Herzl, who rarely pointed out that Dreyfus was Jewish, also came to believe that he was guilty; only later, when the full implications of the case were thoroughly digested, did

Theodor Herzl in Basel, 1897

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Herzl come around to the position so often attributed to him. It makes far more sense, then, to conclude, as Avineri does, that "it was not the trial of Alfred Dreyfus, but Herzl's long analysis of the failure of emancipation and the rise of German and Austrian anti-Semitism that led him to his radical conclusions."

This way of thinking ties in directly with Avineri's second point: Modern anti-Semitism is focused primarily on the historically unprecedented amount of assimilation late nineteenth-century Jews were undergoing. Jews had always been hated by those with whom they lived, often by ordinary people warped by religious intolerance, superstition, and twisted understandings of their own religious heritage. But the kind of hatred that moved Herzl "was a novel phenomenon, a product of the Enlightenment itself." Older forms of anti-Semitism hated Jews for their religion. The newer forms hated Jews for their identity. Jews were not despised because they were different but because they were all too similar; they showed an astonishing ability to succeed in formerly Christian-dominated professions, once careers became open to talents. "Racial anti-Semitism," Avineri writes, "was from the start an intellectual movement, its claims grounded, according to its advocates, in the discoveries of biological and anthropological sciences in the wake of Darwin's doctrine of the survival of the fittest." Because modern anti-Semitism was justified by an appeal to the intellect, it required stronger countermeasures than a mere appeal to the emotions.

And so this wandering journalist and playwright, without any diplomatic status or political influence, began his endless efforts to seek meetings with Europe's most prominent leaders for the purpose of winning their support for the idea of a Jewish state. The effort was not as utopian as it is sometimes portrayed; hating the Jews, men such as Vyacheslav Plehve, Russia's interior minister, did not mind seeing them relocated elsewhere. Herzl was not averse to such hostile motivations; if anti-Semitism was necessary to create a Jewish state, he would work with anti-Semites.

For similar reasons, Herzl, moved by the need to do something quickly for the Jews being massacred in the Kishinev pogrom of 1903, engaged in what Avineri calls "his biggest political blunder": supporting the possibility of moving Jews to Uganda, a place where, as Britain's Joseph Chamberlain put it, "there were yet no white people." It was in part his sense of urgency that led Herzl down the wrong path. But it was also the difference between a cosmopolitan German-speaking Central European intellectual and the masses of Yiddish-speaking Jews whose attachment to Zion was rooted in language, memory, and the sacred territory called Palestine.

Herzl's great discovery, as Avineri tells the story, was his understanding of the Jewish problem as a political issue. Jews did not need advancement or the respect of Christians to strengthen themselves; they needed a state in the same way that other oppressed national minorities did. Herzl's 1896 book *The Jewish State* reached a huge audience and literally changed, both for Jews and gentiles, how the Jewish question was understood. The early Zionists were a contentious bunch and at their annual congresses—a tradition also begun by Herzl—debates abounded. Just before the first Congress, which took place in Basel in 1897, Herzl wrote that "the Jewish Question has become the Question of Zion." He was wrong in the short term but, more important, right in the long term.

Herzl and Avineri have one thing in common: both are men of ideas. As a student of political philosophy, Avineri does a first-rate job describing what Herzl's ideas actually were. It is not just *The Jewish State* that attracts his attention. Avineri wrote the introduction to a three-volume collection of Herzl's diaries, which, as it happens, contain fascinating glimpses into the Zionist leader's boasts, fantasies, and fears. He pays significant attention—in my view too much attention—to Herzl's plays and his one venture into utopian speculation *Altneuland* (Old-New Land). Avineri's portrait of Herzl as a thinker and activist is compelling. Herzl loved Wagner's *Tannhäuser*. He insisted that delegates to the First Zionist congress dress in formal clothing to impress on observers their seriousness. He worked on rapprochement with the Arabs long before there was a Jewish state. One wants to call Herzl a *luftmensch* except that his vision became a reality.

For all the new material Avineri has uncovered, and in spite of his ability to clarify complex political concepts, his book still leaves much about Herzl unexplored. Herzl was born in Pest, Hungary, in 1860. Four years earlier and just less than three miles away, Sigmund Freud was born in the Moravian town of Pribor. The fact that the two greatest Jews produced by the Austrian-Hungarian Empire came into the world at such proximate times and places suggests that some psychological speculation of Herzl might not be out of order. Knowing the man's ideas, one wants to know more of the man.

Avineri chose instead to ignore large chunks of Herzl's personal life; we are told that he had an unhappy marriage, but there's no speculation about why, just as we learn that he died young but not what killed him. (It was pneumonia.) Perhaps Avineri believes that psychology is not his métier, or maybe he thinks it is irrelevant. In this case, its absence is the only flaw in an otherwise wonderful book.

One can only imagine what Herzl would think if he visited Israel today. My sense is that he would be as proud of its culture and entrepreneurism as he would be appalled at its treatment of its non-Jewish citizens. Of course it is impossible for Herzl to return. But it is not impossible for today's Israelis to pay more attention to their country's key founding father. If they did, they might come to realize that treating the Jewish question as a military question will not solve anything. ■

Alan Wolfe's *most recent book is* At Home in Exile: Why Diaspora Is Good for the Jews *(Beacon),* *reviewed on page 20.*

Julia G. Young

From Azusa to Main Street

Latino Pentecostals in America

Faith and Politics in Action

Gastón Espinosa

Harvard University Press, $35, 520 pp.

On a spring evening in 1906, a Mexican-American day laborer happened by a humble wood-framed building on Azusa Street in Los Angeles, near the railroad station. There, he struck up a conversation with three women who were busy cleaning the space for a religious revival the next day. The talk turned to the topic of holy living, and soon the young man "fell to his knees and burst into tears…touched by the power of the Holy Spirit." He was among the first of thousands of Latinos who would join the expanding U.S. Pentecostal movement in the early twentieth century.

In *Latino Pentecostals in America*, Gastón Espinosa traces the birth and phenomenal growth of the Latino Pentecostal movement, focusing specifically on the Assemblies of God (AG), today the largest Pentecostal denomination in the world. Espinosa shows that Latinos have been active and enthusiastic participants in the movement throughout its history, eager to take on leadership roles and willing to fight for recognition from the largely Euro-American Pentecostal hierarchy. In revising and restoring Latino Pentecostal history, Espinosa is challenging narratives that have left out Latino contributions. In 2013, he notes, the Assemblies of God commissioned a history of the denomination that made no reference to Latino leaders.

The Azusa Street Revival of Los Angeles, led by a charismatic African-American preacher named William J. Seymour, was one of several that sparked a national movement in the United States. Pentecostal practitioners believe that the faithful can receive baptism directly from the Holy Spirit. Their religious services, which often last for hours, can be emotionally charged, as participants give testimony of their faith, experience divine healing, and speak or sing in tongues.

From the beginning, Latino converts to Pentecostalism served as pastors and leaders within their own communities. Seymour himself ordained a number of the first Latino ministers, who would go on to begin independent churches and ministries in Southern California and beyond. At the same time, evangelist Charles Parham's Apostolic Faith Movement was inspiring Latinos to start Pentecostal ministries in Texas.

Espinosa's meticulously researched book tells the stories of several early Latino Pentecostal leaders. One of these was Antonio Ríos Morín, a former Mexican Revolutionary who preached to thousands in the barrios and farmlands of South Texas, and became the first Mexican ordained by the Assemblies of God in the United States. Other Latino ministers were active in New Mexico, Colorado, and Puerto Rico during the first few decades of the twentieth century.

By the 1920s, however, many of these Latino ministers had to confront the outsize personality of Pentecostal preacher Henry C. Ball, who eventually took charge of the Latino Assemblies of God in the United States, and oversaw the movement's expansion into Mexico and Central and South America. By many accounts, Ball was a fierce advocate for his Spanish-speaking faithful. At the same time, he provoked the ire of some Latino ministers, who were excluded from the highest rungs of power within the movement. One of them, Francisco Olazábal—a fiery minister from Mexico whose thousands of Latino followers fondly called him "el Azteca"—eventually left the Assemblies of God, deeply resentful at the fact that "the Gringos have control."

By 1937, Spanish-speaking Assemblies of God members finally had a Latino superintendent: Demetrio Bazan, Ball's former assistant. Under Bazan, the Latino Assemblies of God grew

CNS PHOTO / EDGARD GARRIDO, REUTERS

rapidly, thanks to the growing number of Mexican migrant laborers arriving to work as *braceros*, or field laborers. By the 1960s, the movement had grown large enough that it was divided into independent districts. This administrative change, Espinosa argues, led to an "unleashing of charisma, innovation, and an entrepreneurial spirituality."

One of these independent Assemblies of God districts is the Spanish Eastern District, which includes both Puerto Rico and Puerto Ricans in New York. Puerto Rican Pentecostalism has a distinct history, to which Espinosa devotes three chapters. It began among the diaspora of Puerto Rican contract laborers in Hawaii and California, some of whom returned to Puerto Rico and expanded their ministry. Meanwhile, the growing Puerto Rican population in New York was also receptive to the Pentecostal message. Today the movement is well established among Puerto Rican communities across the East Coast and Chicago.

After surveying the history of the Latino Assemblies of God, Espinosa examines the role of women in the movement. He acknowledges that, while Latina Pentecostal women are allowed—indeed, encouraged—to become ordained ministers, "they are still called upon to submit to the authority of their husbands at home." Nevertheless, Espinosa points out that female participation has increased in recent years, and Latino Assemblies of God districts now have a higher percentage of clergywomen than the average Euro-American district.

The Latino Assemblies of God is now the largest single Latino Protestant denomination in the United States, and it's still growing. Although Catholics still make up 66 percent of the Latino population, 20 percent of the Latinos who have left the Catholic Church are now members of the Assemblies of God. The movement's growing membership has translated into political clout. Espinosa demonstrates that—contrary to the common idea that Pentecostals are apolitical—Latino Pentecostals have been deeply involved in civic outreach and faith-based social programs since at least the 1960s. Today, national organizations such as the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference offer Latino Pentecostals "direct access to national political leaders and American presidents." Because they are swing voters who lean right on abortion and gay marriage but are strongly supportive of immigration reform, they have been courted by both Republican and Democratic politicians. Given their increasing numbers, they are likely to enjoy more and more political influence in the next few decades.

Overall, Espinosa's book provides a comprehensive look at the origins, development, and current state of Latino Pentecostalism. His scholarship will be tremendously valuable to scholars of religion, as well as to those in religious ministry. For Catholics in particular, *Latino Pentecostals in America* helps explain the attractiveness of Pentecostalism to so many Latino ex-Catholics. Nevertheless, the book does leave some questions unanswered and some topics unexplored. First, Espinosa could have said more about Catholic-Pentecostal relations. He describes violent Catholic reactions to Pentecostal Latino proseletyzing in the early twentieth century, and then, at the end of the book, explains that Catholic and Pentecostal leaders now collaborate with each other in public. How was the conflict resolved (if, indeed, it was)? Second, the growth of Pentecostalism in Latin America is only very briefly discussed—yet it is an important topic, since many Latinos arrive in the United States having previously converted to Pentecostalism in their home countries. But these are minor quibbles. Overall, *Latino Pentecostals in America* provides a much-needed window into a fascinating aspect of Latino religious life. ■

Julia G. Young *is a historian of Mexico and Latin America at the Catholic University of America.*

Derek S. Jeffreys

A Damaging Institution

Among Murderers
Life after Prison
Sabine Heinlein
University of California Press, $29.95, 256 pp.

Down in the Chapel
Religious Life in an American Prison
Joshua Dubler
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, $30, 400 pp.

Despite the vast numbers of people who enter and leave the U.S. prison system every year, Americans know shockingly little about the conditions of prison life. Prisons are secretive institutions that control information flow, monitor visitors, and restrict access for journalists and academics. Researchers must jump through bureaucratic hoops and learn to operate in an environment distorted by violence and dishonesty. Inmates who report brutality or inhumane conditions can be dismissed as liars. When they leave prison, they are often unwilling to talk about their experiences—and even if they are, few people listen. Consequently, the public receives a distorted image of prison life, dominated by sensationalism or narrow political agendas. There is a desperate need for sophisticated journalists and scholars who are willing to enter penal institutions and report what they find. Authors Sabine Heinlein and Joshua Dubler have both gained remarkable access to inmates and ex-inmates, and have written fascinating books that reveal much about their subjects' inner lives and struggles.

Heinlein's *Among Murderers: Life after Prison* explores the idea of rehabilitation. More than seven hundred thousand inmates leave our prisons and jails every year, some after decades of incarceration. How do we help them reintegrate into society? What does it mean for a murderer to be rehabilitated? How do those who have committed violent crimes understand their identities after serving years in prison? Heinlein's book focuses on three murderers released from New York state prisons. Angel, Adam, and Bruce live in the Castle, a New York City home for ex-convicts run by an organization called the Fortune Society. For decades, the three men were degraded, brutalized, and infantilized by prison authorities. Heinlein observes and records their struggles with ordinary tasks like shopping, cooking, and dating. If she sometimes comes across as naïve (as when she says that "it is hard to look a murderer in the face"), she approaches her subjects with obvious sympathy, asks them difficult questions, and responds frankly to what they say. All three men work hard to integrate their horrible crimes and prison sentences into a coherent narrative about their lives, but making sense of the violence and shame is difficult. Though she expresses little interest in religious conceptions of moral transformation and redemption, Heinlein's work illuminates the complicated process of genuine inner change.

Heinlein's research also exposes deep flaws in the prisoner reentry system. Murderers are often stigmatized, and few employers will hire them. Some ex-convicts find jobs only with organizations like the Fortune Society, and thus end up working in a system that is parasitic on mass incarceration.

The book would have benefited from a more serious engagement with the history of American incarceration. In the United States, the "rehabilitation" goal of imprisonment disappeared several decades ago, replaced by a purely punitive approach to incarceration. Contemporary jails and prisons do little

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Two women who were baptized and confirmed during a Mass in a state prison

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to encourage rehabilitation. However, those calling for a greater emphasis on rehabilitation need to consider its problematic history. For example, Heinlein details Angel's struggles with parole boards. He went up for parole eight times, facing confusing questions and demands on each occasion. This is an old story. Inmates in the 1950s and '60s protested against the hypocrisy of parole boards, indeterminate sentences, and coercive rehabilitation. They developed a powerful critique that challenged the very idea of rehabilitation. Sociologists and psychologists maintained that "rehabilitation" is a manipulative form of social control that legitimizes deep intrusions into the human personality. African-American and Latino inmates wrote eloquently about how rehabilitation coercively reinforces narrow political agendas and social norms. Finally, horrific events like the Attica prison uprising drew attention to the failures of rehabilitation. Acknowledging this history of debate would have enhanced Heinlein's account of how we fail to help the hundreds of thousands of Americans leaving prison each year.

Like Heinlein, Joshua Dubler shows a deep interest in inmates' lives. In *Down in the Chapel: Religious Life in an American Prison*, he chronicles life in the chapel of Graterford Prison, a maximum-security facility in Pennsylvania. Dubler's book takes the reader through a typical week in the chapel, featuring extended and often heated conversations with the colorful characters Dubler meets there. They are Christians, Jews, Muslims, atheists, and others who hold strong beliefs. Baraka, a powerful and learned Muslim who retains a skeptical attitude toward some religious practices, guides Dubler through the complexities of prison life. As someone who teaches philosophy and religion in a maximum-security prison, I appreciate the way Dubler depicts inmates as thoughtful and serious about philosophical and religious issues.

Dubler also explores religious pluralism in the penitentiary. Some people see prison religion as a racket, just an-

other way for inmates to continue their criminal activities, while others view it as solace for desperate people in extreme circumstances. Dubler criticizes the idea that we can easily differentiate between authentic and inauthentic belief, rejecting the tendency to separate phony "prison" religion from genuine religion on the outside. This distinction collapses when one considers the reality of religious belief and practice. Like anyone else, inmates join religious communities for complex psychological, sociological, and spiritual reasons that we cannot easily disentangle. Dubler also suggests that in the Graterford chapel, an atmosphere of liberal Protestantism (encouraged by the Protestant chaplain) makes it possible to embrace religious pluralism. Yet he maintains that, although it purports to be impartial, liberal Protestantism makes controversial decisions about what constitutes genuine religious expression. For Dubler, it engages other faiths by forcing them into Protestant categories that locate the essence of religion in individuals and their personal convictions rather than institutions or rituals. At Graterford, this means that some people are welcomed to chapel, others tolerated, and still others excluded. Dubler's book also includes a fascinating history of Islam in Pennsylvania, describing how inmates went from the Nation of Islam and Moorish Science to Salafism, the dominant form of Islam at Graterford. And he paints a compelling portrait of Peter, a lay Franciscan inmate with a deep commitment to penance, self-reflection, and restorative justice.

Though Dubler is a fine ethnographer, he disappoints in his attempts to draw larger theoretical conclusions about religion. This becomes problematic in the last part of the book, where Dubler lays out ten theses about religion at Graterford Prison. For example: "Given a sufficiently materialist perspective, the charge that chapel religion is reactionary in character might convincingly be levied not only against all religion, but, indeed, against all but the most inscrutable and daring social practices." In this muddled sentence, Dubler couches his thesis in the passive tense. He never defines materialism or explains why we should accept the outlandish notion that religion and most social practices are "reactionary in character." His sweeping conclusions and shallow theorizing about religion do not do justice to the experiences he has chronicled in the book.

Despite these theoretical deficiencies, Dubler's work is well worth reading. Both Dubler and Heinlein reveal the profound damage that mass incarceration does to American society, and help unmask a system that tries desperately to hide its injustices from public view. ■

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that horrible loss, the well-intentioned comments of others served more to reopen the wound than to heal it. Some of the more egregious examples included "Everything happens for a reason" (which Bassett noted), "God needed a little angel," and, by far the worst, "You can always try again."

Not that I can stand on a pedestal. I have been guilty of offering canned condolences myself, just as Bassett himself admits to doing. For some reason, humans seem to feel an impulse to say something when faced with a grieving fellow, regardless of whether that something is helpful. I think it originates in the same part of the brain that causes people to offer unsolicited advice.

But a person who has suffered a deep loss is not looking for explanations or advice. That person is looking either to share the grief or to just be left to grieve alone. A listening ear and a silent embrace can say far more than cheap theology. Even a sincere "I'm sorry" says more than "everything happens for a reason."

The best words said to me after that tragedy came from a coworker who mournfully said, "That sucks." To some that might sound crass. To me it was what I needed to hear. It was direct, authentic, and cognizant of my feelings. I thanked him for saying it.

DAVE MONTROSE
Cape Coral, Fla.

CLASSIFIED

One of the Least

Jerry Ryan

I could see it coming. For many years I had worked at demanding and dangerous jobs as a Little Brother of Jesus: more than a decade in foundry work, a few years of lumberjacking, a stint in a brick factory. This was partly by choice. I wanted to take the last place, as Jesus did, to do the jobs nobody wanted to do in solidarity with the oppressed. But most of the time that was my only option anyway since I was living abroad and could get a work permit only for the jobs the "natives" didn't want. When I returned to the United States I was already in my forties. I took a custodial job at the New England Aquarium in Boston and worked there for the next thirty-three years.

But suddenly the years began to take their toll. I was unsteady on my feet. At the end of a shift at work, I was exhausted, almost sleepwalking. And it was precisely at the end of a shift, when I was taking out the last load of trash, that I fell down a couple of steps and wound up with a broken hip and wrist. At the age of seventy-seven you don't just bounce back from something like that. From now on, my balance will always be precarious. The hip will remain sore, and the wrist will continue to bother me. There's no chance of my returning to my job at the aquarium. I've become a kind of handicapped person. It's a whole different ballgame now.

The transition has not gone very smoothly. I have always been fiercely independent and now need others' help with things both big and small. I'd always seen myself as a champion for the underdog, the useless and the helpless, throwing in my lot with them and defending them as well as I could. In my more lucid moments, this was because they were a presence of Jesus for me and I hoped that somehow, however awkwardly and almost in spite of myself, I represented a certain presence of Jesus for them. Did I see myself as some kind of hero stooping down to the poor? Well, yes—a little bit at the beginning maybe. But I soon discovered that I had much to learn from the patience, generosity, and good humor of my neighbors and coworkers.

Now I'm the one others must stoop down to help. I'm the one who's useless, limited, and dependent, often cranky and frustrated to boot. But I've also discovered something else: the goodness and kindness of people toward me. Not just my friends, my neighbors, and old coworkers, but pretty much everyone. Total strangers will go out of their way to assist me, demonstrating spontaneous compassion toward this wreck of a human being wandering the streets. It has occurred to me that when people do such things for me, they are really doing them for Jesus, even though they most likely never think of that. The Gospel of St. Matthew tells us that Jesus will gather all mankind at the Last Judgment and judge each according to his or her charity toward the least, for whatever act is done or not done for them concerns Jesus personally. So in this broken person that I have become, I'm also an occasion for people to help Jesus and thus secure eternal life in his kingdom. This is something I never could have accomplished otherwise. It is a silent yet real mystery. It sometimes strikes me as very wonderful. I'd never imagined myself becoming a presence of Jesus in this way.

Christ and the Good Thief *by Titian, circa 1566*

This is all the more humbling since I myself used to be tempted to look away from the aged and the infirm. I thought I had all the answers then, looking in from the outside. But when you are stripped of everything that constituted your life, all these answers seem absurd, arrogant, even obscene. There is the tenderness of the Trinity playing itself out on another level. A strange Paradise, promised to the Good Thief simply for hanging on a cross next to Jesus—not as an innocent but as someone who knew he deserved his humiliation. It can be presumed that the Good Thief was buried not far from Jesus. Yet Scripture tell us it was precisely on that day—not the next—that he was remembered in the Kingdom. ■

Jerry Ryan *is a frequent contributor to* Commonweal.

WORLD CATHOLICISM WEEK 2015

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Fragile World: Ecology & the Church

In anticipation of Pope Francis' forthcoming encyclical on the environment

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Author of *Ecotheology*
University of Notre Dame

Christopher Hamlin
Coauthor of "The Greening of America, Catholic Style: 1930-1950"
University of Notre Dame

Michael S. Northcott
Author of *A Political Theology of Climate Change*
University of Edinburgh School of Divinity

Michael Anthony Perry, OFM
Minister General of the Franciscan Order
Rome, Italy

Brayton Shanley
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