

of which the individual is only a part (72). It can thus be seen as a forerunner of later anthropological and sociological theories of religion.

Beiser offers a thorough analysis of the reaction to *Das Leben Jesu*. Most reaction was hostile and the bitter polemics which ensued cost Strauss many friendships. Over time, Strauss moved further away from Christianity and Hegelianism toward naturalism and historicism. This intellectual journey—including his engagement with politics—is laid out by Beiser in chapters broken down into helpful subsections. *Die christliche Glaubenslehre* (1840–1841), considered by many to be more significant in Strauss's thought than *Das Leben Jesu*, examined the core teachings of Christian dogmas and concluded that they lack any historical or rational foundation (147). The true critique of dogma, argued Strauss, is its history, and that history ends in the dissolution of the dogma. As Beiser notes astutely, there is no culminating Hegelian synthesis here (151). In 1864, after twenty years of silence on theology, Strauss published *Das Leben Jesu für das deutsche Volk bearbeitet*, which Beiser considers a far clearer statement of Strauss's position than the 1835 version. Beiser's analysis of the 1864 book is superb and shows that by then Strauss's naturalism and historicism had led him to believe that only the ethical core of Christianity should remain; no dogmas or ministers were required. It was a direct appeal to the German laity; if the Strauss of 1835 had hoped to join the Protestant clerical establishment, the Strauss of 1864 was intent on destroying it (237).

The first publication of *Das Leben Jesu* caused a storm, but the version of 1864 made scarcely a ripple. As Beiser comments, by then, many in Germany saw the whole religious *Weltanschauung* as antiquated, and a critique of religious revelation was taken for granted. "Are we still Christians?" asked Strauss in his final book, *Der alte und der neue Glaube* (1872). By then, to a great extent due to his influence, many were not. In a final flourish, Beiser offers a short study of three late critics of Strauss, including a four-page tour de force on Nietzsche's prejudiced treatment of Strauss. It is a fitting completion to this outstanding intellectual biography of "the father of unbelief."

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***From Virginia Slave to African Statesman: Hilary Teage (1805–1853)*. By C. Patrick Burrowes. Bomi County: Know Yourself, 2019. xviii + 180 pp. \$19.95 paper; \$9.95 e-book.**

This short book—104 pages of text followed by extensive notes—describes the life of Hilary Teage, called the "Jefferson of Liberia" for his role in drafting the Liberian Declaration of Independence. The author's goal is to draw out of obscurity this exceptional figure, totally forgotten in the historical record, and to shed light on his role in founding the Liberian republic. Teage's writings are the author's main source of biographical information.

Even though the table of contents lists what appear to be chapter headings, the book is structured as one continuous narrative divided into nine sections. In "A Very Superior Man," Burrowes introduces Teage as a resourceful, creative, and passionate figure who used the *Liberia Herald* newspaper to advocate for Liberian independence and

later served in public roles as a senator (1848–1849), attorney general (1850–1852), and secretary of state (1852–1853) (3). “That Boasted Land of Equality” recounts the early story of the Teage family as American slaves in Virginia. “A Vague Idea of Freedom” traces their road from slavery to freedom and the decision of Hilary’s father, Colin, a Baptist minister, to emigrate with his family to Africa as a missionary, along with his friend Lott Cary, an influential and more well-known figure.

“Like a Motherless Child” describes the early controversies surrounding questions of colonization, emancipation, and Thomas Jefferson’s ideas of racial separation at the time of the creation of the American Colonization Society. Here, Burrowes underlines the “effaced” yet seminal role of Colin Teage and Lott Cary in “the uneasy marriage of two visions of African colonization: one white, the other black . . . in the retelling of the colonization story” (34). In “Wanderers from Samaria,” with the family now settled in West Africa, the spotlight finally shifts to Hilary, also a Baptist pastor like his father, and his prodigious rise in the social and political leadership of the colony.

“Rising in the Scale of Being” describes Teage’s early work as the influential editor of the *Liberia Herald* and his business ventures, some inherited from his father, that eventually ended in insolvency. These failures led him to open a law practice in 1848.

In “Profound Knowledge,” Burrowes presents Teage’s ideas in the crucial years between 1830 and 1850 when Liberia transitioned from colony to republic. During this period, Teage was “the intellectual with the greatest influence over local events” (52) because of his views on “liberal republicanism, empirical analysis, free enterprise economics, and limited government” (53) and his romantic aesthetic evident in his writing. A brilliant speechwriter, Teage’s masterpiece, however, was the Liberian Declaration of Independence that “displayed [his] poetic skills, evident in the repetition, as well as his polemical powers to describe in terms both poignant and detailed the American racism that had shaped his world view and driven him, his family, and his compatriots to Africa” (58).

“A Republic on Africa’s Soil” recounts the events of the last decade of Teage’s life, when, in his several roles as a statesman, he displayed his commitment as a Christian, a supporter of republican government, and a critic of the concept of “civilization.” He promoted forward-thinking legislation in favor of women’s economic rights in the Declaration of Independence. Although a black nationalist, he did not support African traditions rooted in servility, the exploitation of women, or the slave trade. He championed education—particularly religious education—as the way to ensure a peaceable and orderly society based on “reason and virtue” (71), because these disciplines drove away the “evils of ignorance, idleness and passion” (70).

In “Poet, Prophet, and Pan-African Patriot,” Burrowes summarizes Teage’s legacy as a “prophet of modernity” in his goal to transform “social relations along modern lines” (75). Although Teage received little formal education himself, throughout his life he championed education that shaped the mind through “a marriage of empiricism and the deep message of religion”—ultimately the call to love, justice, compassion, and humility before God as expressed by the biblical prophet Micah (78). Burrowes deems Teage’s most valuable intellectual contribution to be his view that “republicanism, Christianity, and black nationalism were mutually reinforcing aspects of ‘civilization,’ a way of life characterized by monotheism, the spread of literacy and democratic government, and embellished with rationalism, the arts and sciences” (75).

Teage’s exceptional legacy lies in his writings because they “represent one of the earliest intellectual integrations of the previously disparate elements of black nationalism, Protestant Christianity, and republicanism” (preface, ii). But while the author uses

Teage's writings to construct an intellectual profile, he does not draw from them to give readers insight into how Teage actually experienced the events and how his ideas played out in his personal life, his faith, and his relationships. In fact, one does not get a sense of the man himself. All that is known of his personal life is that he was married to "Eliza M." but, apparently, remained childless—a lacuna that Burrowes explains by saying that "nineteenth-century standards of privacy and decorum served to obscure his private life" (50). One wonders if there were other reasons for this lack of information regarding his personal life.

Burrowes is to be commended for his portrayal of an important African Christian pioneer that fills a gaping hole in the historical record. However, this important piece of African and colonial history deserves a more fulsome account using a chapter structure and a more leisurely prose that better interprets for the reader the importance of various events, ideas, and individuals.

Overall, this story left me hungry for more—for example, better understanding of Teage's influence on women's economic status at that time. The groundbreaking ideas and pioneering leadership of this remarkable man deserve further scholarly research.

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***Bonds of Salvation: How Christianity Inspired and Limited American Abolitionism.* By Ben Wright. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2020. x + 253 pp. \$45.00 hardcover.**

Ben Wright is an assistant professor of history at the University of Texas at Dallas. He tells his readers that *Bonds of Salvation* "explores how both religious ideas and religious institutions inspired and limited the antislavery movement from the Revolution until the dissolution of the major national Protestant denominations in 1837, 1844, and 1855. Tracking the intersection of Christianity and slavery reveals how the bonds of salvation made and unmade the American nation" (7–8). *Bonds of Salvation* has a primarily intellectual and cultural focus but makes occasional forays into political history. It examines numerous sermons, pamphlets, and denomination records, as well as the personal papers of key antebellum church leaders. Many of the book's main strengths, but possibly some of its weaknesses, come from Wright's attempt to analyze the debate over slavery inside the churches of both sections simultaneously, while most earlier historical literature focused on religious developments in either one region or the other. While the views of Black Christians are examined for context, their influence on the debate over slavery is mostly minimized. *Bonds of Salvation* also devotes only passing attention to the significant portion of nineteenth-century Christians belonging to non-evangelical faiths, such as the Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Unitarians, and Quakers. Instead, Wright's analysis is heavily centered on just the nation's three largest evangelical denominations: Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians.

Bonds of Salvation's guiding thesis accentuates important ideological competition between belief systems that Wright labels "purificationism" and "conversionism" within