

collection. Taken together, the pages of this textbook communicate that the true sociological (and even theological) center of history's ethical progression lies not with the privileged and powerful minority, but in the struggles and liberatory praxes of the world's marginalized majorities. Nevertheless, this new, liberative center is not a monolith offering a new set of universal "truths." Its ethical wisdom lies, at least in part, in its diversity. And yet the diverse strands of liberative ethics presented in De La Torre's textbook do intersect, intertwine, and coalesce to weave a strong and hopeful symbol and practice of freedom, empowerment, and justice.

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Karl Rahner's Theological Aesthetics. By Peter Joseph Fritz. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2014. xvii + 286 pages. \$49.95 (paper). doi: 10.1017/hor.2015.39

It is noteworthy that at least three monographs examining aspects of Karl Rahner's theology have appeared in the last twelve months or so. The three books—Peter Fritz's work, which is the subject of this review, joins Gregory Brett's *The Theological Notion of the Human Person* and James Bacik's *Humble Confidence*—are diverse in theme and style, but it is perhaps not too extravagant to claim that an apologetic tone marks all three. In highlighting the communal dimension central to Rahner's analysis of the human person and the pastoral applications of his theology, Brett and Bacik, respectively, address the oft-heard criticisms that Rahner focused only on the individual and is the archetypal "ivory-tower" theologian. The apologetic, even revisionist, impulse is strongest in Fritz, who sets himself over against much conventional wisdom regarding Rahner's theology.

What establishes Fritz's revisionist credentials is that he disputes not only disdainful readings of Rahner, but also many that are favorable to their subject. In so doing, Fritz seeks to bring into relief the beauty, no less than the breadth and depth, of Rahner's understanding of God, faith, and Catholic life. At the heart of Fritz's study is the relationship between the philosophy of Martin Heidegger and Rahner's theology. In this domain, Fritz rejects both those who dismiss Rahner as an uncreative echo of Heidegger and those who deny any significant connection between the two.

The particular focus for Fritz's inquiry is whether Heidegger, and Rahner as his alleged acolyte, is simply a representative of modernity's "turn to the subject." As Fritz demonstrates, that term has come to imply that the human being is the measure of all things and marked by self-sufficiency.

Through his careful analysis of Heidegger's early work, Fritz makes abundantly clear that Heidegger himself opposed such an interpretation, that he derided any notion of human mastery over life. Most importantly, Fritz establishes that while Rahner joined Heidegger in rejecting the canonization of the modern subject, Rahner also departed radically from Heidegger in defining the human person in terms of openness to God, rather than the "nothingness" that is the terminus of Heidegger's thinking.

Indeed, Fritz establishes, with laser-like precision, that Rahner's stress was always on God. Nor was Rahner's concern with some generic "god" or idealistic "spirit," but the God of Jesus Christ, the God revealed in history, the God at the heart of what makes human beings human. Along the way, Fritz also illustrates how Rahner's reading of Thomas Aquinas, his appropriation of Ignatius of Loyola, and his profound grasp of the theological tradition, no less than his own understanding of the dynamics of prayer, all combine in Rahner to produce a theology that is, first, last, and always, God centered.

In the final third of his book, Fritz lays out what he identifies as Rahner's "Catholic sublime," which he understands as both an alternative to "individual autonomy" and as a recognition of "God in all things." Fritz underscores how Rahner's focus on God's "mystery" is not tantamount to advocacy of an escapist mysticism, but challenges every expression of the human temptation to assert control over God, and other people. In exploring Rahner's insights into angels, Mary, the sciences, and apocalypticism, Fritz amplifies the demanding nature of Rahner's theology, a theology that refutes all efforts to domesticate God and to separate the individual from the community.

The virtues of this book are manifold. Not the least of those virtues is Fritz's ability to make his subject, as forbidding as it might seem at first blush, remarkably accessible. Fritz has digested Rahner and Heidegger in such a thorough manner that his text avoids both obfuscation and fussiness. Through clear analysis and a series of helpful summaries, Fritz brings readers with him, ensuring that this is not a difficult book to read, the density of its protagonists notwithstanding.

An obvious conclusion to this review would be to say that all those interested in Rahner should read the book. A more appropriate conclusion, however, is to say that all those interested in theology should read this book. Peter Fritz has given us a wonderful study of Karl Rahner as exemplar of theology at its faith-filled best.

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