

and economic ties of the Jesuits in the seventeenth century, Joseph argues that the oath was not an isolated incident but a part of an ongoing nonviolent struggle by Thomas Christians against India's colonization. That ongoing struggle included seeking alternative trade markets outside colonial control and conducting unauthorized ordinations.

Finally, Joseph turns to the eighteenth century and examines the *Varthamanappusthakam*, a Malayalam travelogue detailing the trip of a Thomas Christian delegation to Rome. The narrative recounts colonial racism as well as the ways Thomas Christians responded to that racism through strategic counter-discourse, calls for unity, and arguments for self-rule. The travelogue itself became a tool for promoting colonial resistance and national unity among its readers.

Joseph offers a crucial corrective to scholarship of the period, highlighting the ways the entanglement of church and crown require any study of early modern Christianity to examine carefully the ways "church matters" inevitably were also colonial matters. She also troubles the persistent binary of Christian West versus Non-Christian East. She dispels misunderstandings about Thomas Christians and makes a case for their significance to India's struggle for independence. In doing so, she demonstrates that nonviolent resistance to colonization and the work for self-rule in India are older and more diverse than normally stipulated. The history of Thomas Christians shows the very real ways Christianity cannot be necessarily conflated with colonialism. However, the ongoing narrative that equates all of Christianity with conversion and colonialism persists. This has had deadly consequences for Indian Christians, as Joseph details in her conclusion.

Joseph is to be commended for this excellent historical, cultural, and literary study of the Thomas Christians in the early modern period. Her analysis offers key insights for anyone interested in the history of Christianity, Indian Christianity, nonviolence, and/or postcolonial, decolonial, and subaltern studies.

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Spirituality for the Godless: Buddhism, Humanism, and Religion. By Michael McGhee. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021. x + 200 pages. \$30.99 (paper).

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Spirituality for the Godless starts right in the middle of things. By page 2 we have mused briefly on Shakespeare's *Rape of Lucrece* and witnessed the "Cordelian voice," from *King Lear*, in dialogue with the *Karaṇiyametta Sutta* from the Pali Canon. To call McGhee's work eclectic is a bit of an understatement: the book consists of twenty-four chapters, some as short as three pages, with titles like "Wittgenstein's Cool Temple" and "Only a Little Snivelling Half-Wit Can Maintain That." It reads like a whirlwind tour of continental and Buddhist philosophical and literary traditions with an obscure itinerary, but relentless enthusiasm.

McGhee holds an appointment in philosophy at the University of Liverpool, and he describes his work as "a modest set of proposals about how Buddhism can offer a *non-theistic* contribution to an *intercultural conception* of the philosophy of religion" (5, emphasis by the author). He refers on at least three occasions to Daya Krishna's (1924–2007) intervention at a 1960 symposium in New York, calling out the ethnic and religious parochialism of most Western thought. At stake is more than an additive or strictly comparative venture into new territory; instead, engagement with Eastern traditions facilitates a transformative "return to the sources" for the whole philosophical project. "Personally," McGhee writes toward the middle of the book, "my own Buddhist practice, such as it is, has made me aware of strands or aspects of Western philosophy that I might otherwise have overlooked or neglected, and has seemed congenial to the ancient conception of philosophy as a form of *therapeia*" (89). Elsewhere he uses different language for the same idea: philosophy as right mindfulness (55–56), as cultivated practice (64–65), and as "an inventive convergence of *methods*" or "a set of resources within a community that strives to live well" (75).

The allure of such an approach appears to be twofold: it recenters questions of moral agency on one's intrinsic character rather than extrinsic commands, while also offering a nontheistic spiritualization of contemporary secularism. The argument is not systematic, nor are the chapters organized into sections. One can, nevertheless, intuit successive waves of inquiry inching up the beach. A first such wave (chapters 1–7) develops through a series of short illustrations, a notion of spirituality as a form of seeing or perception of reality, both within and beyond its pervasive concealment by selfishness, egoism, and a shared grasping for domination. A second wave (chapters 8–13) extends this insight to the practice of philosophy, discussed previously. A third wave (chapters 14–18) takes up the issue of moral agency explicitly, and this is followed by an extended meditation on the Buddhist doctrine of no-self (*anātman* or *anatta*) in chapters 19–22. I found this section of the book the most intriguing, insofar as McGhee attempts to retrieve a realistic, if not substantialist, account of Buddhist selfhood and engages in a spirited, critical

comparison with nondualist (*Advaita*) Hinduism. The final wave of the work (chapters 23–24) suggests that such Buddhist accounts of self and spiritual practice may offer a valuable corrective to the attenuated anthropologies of Western secular humanism.

McGhee's book is a worthy read. At the same time, the accounts of Buddhism and Hinduism are somewhat weak in historical contextualization, and the work would also benefit from a stronger focus and argumentative structure. I was frustrated, for example, that aside from the last two chapters, McGhee's accounts of secular humanism were usually marginal, such as his passing comment that "If anything is 'missing' in secular accounts, it is this background spiritual community dedicated to this kind of practice, as a preparation for life" (104). There's a lot to unpack in that short statement!

Or perhaps this desire for focus and system is yet another form of grasping, when what is required is something more like aesthetic receptivity, holding oneself ready for a glimpse of reality when the moment is right. Either way, the book merits a place in any academic library, as well as in upper-level or graduate courses in comparative philosophy and philosophy of religion.

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The present collection of essays by and interviews of Johann Baptist Metz (1928–2019) is a much-welcomed addition to the availability of this important German thinker in the English language. The originator of "the new political theology" in Germany in the years just after the conclusion of Vatican II, Metz has been of unsurmountable importance in his influence on liberation theologies, feminist theologies, Hispanic theology, Black theology, contextual theologies, and on categories like narrative theology and theology as biography. Phrases like "dangerous memory" and "a mysticism of open eyes," images that are widely used today, were developed and formulated by Metz. His prophetic voice span sixty years of theological life, which he developed out of his own horrific experience of WWII when he was pulled into the army at the age of sixteen and then as a postwar theologian paying utmost attention to the central memory of Auschwitz.