

Job's dialogue with God bears particular importance because God's questions about nature provoke and motivate readers to reflect on natural laws and grandeur in creation.

While heavily focusing on Christianity, McLeish also attempts to evince that his vision of 'theology of science' and 'science of theology' could be embraced by other monotheistic religions. The pitfall, McLeish warns, is mistakenly perceiving science as a product of the modern world and overlooking its potential contributions to religion. McLeish places his trust in religious people who would leave their comfort zones to engage in a different relationship with science. This is not an easy task. Religious leaders and organisations would need to embrace scientists and motivate their members to study natural sciences through sermons and courses.

In sum, McLeish demonstrates that neither historical evidence nor philosophy supports the conflict thesis. On the contrary, man's problematic relationship with the material fortifies the argument that science and theology are not in conflict, but could serve the common humanitarian purpose of healing the world. Finally, by drawing attention to Job's story, McLeish shows that there still are things waiting to be discovered in scripture concerning the relationship between science and religion.

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Bo Karen Lee, *Sacrifice and Delight in the Mystical Theologies of Anna Maria van Schurman and Madame Jeanne Guyon* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2014), pp. 264. \$29.00.

Self-affirmation, not self-denial, is the predominant mode in present-day life – including our spiritual life – but are we thereby missing something important? That question underlies this well-written, thoughtful study of two seventeenth-century writers, Madame Guyon (1648–1717) and the much less known Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–78). Lee's work on them was inspired by the example of her own parents, in whom she witnessed 'the beauty of a surrendered life, a life fully devoted to serving God even at apparent cost to themselves', who exude joy and tireless love (p. ix). At first repelled by Guyon's emphasis on 'self-annihilation', Lee was then drawn to her joy in God and the strength she paradoxically drew from her spirituality. Lee was intrigued to discover similar teaching in van

Schurman who, uniquely for a woman, studied languages and theology at the University of Utrecht. She later renounced 'worldly' intellectual theology which, she concluded, was at best affording her an external knowledge of God, and joined a Pietist movement headed by Fr Jean de Labadie, a Calvinist ex-Jesuit, in search of experiential intimate knowledge of God.

The two writers agree with Augustine that ultimate happiness is the enjoyment of God (*frui Deo* is the term in Augustine; the phrase Lee uses, *fruitio Deo* – or *Dei* – came later). Unlike Augustine, they hope to taste that enjoyment in this life. Lee might also have quoted Augustine on the two loves: *caritas* as love for God and of all else in and for God, and *cupiditas* as love for self in contempt of God. The practical effort to replace *cupiditas* with *caritas* underlies the writings she goes on to examine.

Both writers taught that 'thoroughgoing denial or annihilation of the self was required for the greatest pleasure in God to be experienced' (p. 5). Lee examines two works, offering gentle reinterpretations, seeking to retrieve what constitutes 'right' self-denial, as opposed to its abusive misuse.

Schurman penned, in good Latin, a treatise on 'choosing the better part': *Eukleria: seu melioris partis electio* (1673). Lee is translating it, and gives selected passages. Schurman insists that absolute self-surrender, renouncing self and all created things, comes at the start of the Christian life. It immediately frees the person to rest in, and enjoy, God. 'Pure love' of God is unalloyed by love of self, but Schurman does affirm that we come to a 'pure love' of all things including self, in and for God. So that Christ may become 'all', the individual must become 'nothing' – but, Lee glosses, the change is primarily one of perspective: the soul still exists, but *regards* itself as nothing in light of God's infinity.

Guyon's language is far more excessive. Lee examines self-annihilation in her commentary on the Song of Songs. The bride-soul must undergo crucifixion and 'death'. Lee interprets: what must die is self-regard and self-interest, so that the bride may enter into the resurrection life where she finds joy and activity in Christ, in works of intellect and love of neighbour.

These writers' 'radical emphasis on self-denial', Lee cautiously suggests, 'may serve to counterbalance the love of comfort and consumption that marks our culture and even our faith' (p. 6). Lee's questions deserve consideration. In what positive ways can we understand purgation and the way of the cross? 'Perhaps the constant preoccupation with self, and with one's accomplishments and successes', is an impediment to deeper union: 'The self has become small, rather than enlarging into a generous, hospitable

place for God' (p. 107). Can these writers bring to us 'something life-giving in their approach to the theological task and also their coupling of self-denial with the joyful pursuit of God?' (p. 128).

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Najam Haider, *Shi'i Islam: An Introduction* (Cambridge: CUP, 2014), pp. 266. \$27.99 (pbk).

In *Shi'i Islam: An Introduction*, the author examines the theological and doctrinal developments of Zaydi, Ismaili and Twelver Shi'a Islam as they are embedded within their particular historical and socio-political contexts. Other introductory works on Shi'a Islam, as the author argues, either have a historical framework which concentrates on the early historical fragmentation of the Muslim community or have a theological framework emphasising central theological beliefs and practices of mainly Twelver Shi'is – thus ignoring smaller groups such as Zaydis or Ismailis. In this book, the author combines both approaches by engaging critically with the various, sometimes controversial and contradictory, historical narratives of Zaydi, Ismaili and Twelver Shi'a Islam which have been in constant negotiation of their theological beliefs through remembering historical events, that as the author argues, are shaped in a way to explain current socio-political circumstances. The author shows in this book how these contexts have influenced the theological developments and particularities of each Shi'a group throughout history.

The book covers four thematic areas discussed in ten chapters. The first engages with the central beliefs and how they influence various Shi'a communities' historical memories. The second area discusses various narratives of Shi'a past. Here the author emphasises the various readings and interpretations of historical accounts and textual sources. Since, as the author argues, Ismailis and Twelver Shi'a emphasise the Imam's role as an inerrant interpreter of revelation and regard him as the source of religious guidance, they focus on the Prophet's biography and use it to create a narrative which proves Ali's superiority and right of succession, particularly in relation to the Prophet's speech at Ghadir Khumm when they believe he was formally declared as his successor. Zaydi Shi'a on the other hand do not give the events at Ghadir Khumm the same religious importance as Ismailis and