

“the belief that other religious traditions have much to offer, but they are only partial measures” when judged against another religion, usually Christianity (24). The inclusivist approach is easily dismissed both as a slightly more tolerant form of religious exclusivism and an imperfect form of pluralism. But, as Howard notes, the inclusivist outlook has guided key participants in important moments of interreligious dialogue, including many Protestant organizers of the Parliament of Religions and much of the post-Vatican II Catholic hierarchy. It is a position that warrants serious study, which Howard has afforded it. Finally, Howard notes repeated instances when “efforts to achieve interreligious unity often result in internecine divisions among Christians” (178). This is perhaps a less novel claim, but it is nonetheless an important byproduct of interreligious dialogue that this book rightly acknowledges.

As is perhaps inevitable in such an expansive study, some elements of the book work less well than others. Howard credits key events—especially the Parliament of Religions and the Second Vatican Council—with a singular influence that at times obscures broader context. Organized interreligious dialogue in the United States predated the Chicago gathering by several decades. This is not to diminish the Parliament’s significance but rather to suggest it might better be understood as a manifestation of wider interest that guided it and subsequent instances of dialogue. Likewise, the Catholic Church’s dialogue partners seem to be relegated to the background for much of chapter 4, seemingly existing only to react to decisions made at the Vatican. This is a loss because Howard’s discussions of representatives of other traditions lobbying Catholic leaders are some of the most intriguing instances of interreligious dialogue discussed in the book. Having a deeper sense of their motives and reactions would have made the chapter all the richer.

Finally, given the ambitious goals of the book, Howard might have wrestled more fully with the elite nature of interreligious dialogue and the extent to which these historical episodes resonated with people who did not participate in them. Howard raises the question of whether these discussions “exert any actual influence among the rank and file of various faiths” (178). It is a valid question, given that much of this book centers on a sixteenth-century emperor, an early twentieth-century British aristocrat, and members of the Catholic hierarchy, including several pontiffs. Yet with discussions of the press coverage of interreligious gatherings, Howard provides hints that such events captured the imaginations of a far wider audience. Finding ways to broaden the lens of this study beyond elites might have revealed an even deeper, more robust lineage of modern interreligious dialogue.

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***Water the Willow Tree: Memoirs of a Bethlehem Boyhood.* By George Anton Kiraz. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgia Press, 2022. xvi + 315 pp. \$48.00 cloth.**


Anyone familiar with the field of Syriac studies knows the contribution of George Kiraz as publisher, pioneer of Syriac digital humanities, scholar, teacher, and founder of Beth Mardutho: The Syriac Institute. Kiraz has given most of his adult life to the promotion

of Syriac language, literature, history, and culture. This memoir immerses us in the story of his Syriac Orthodox family in Bethlehem.

The opening chapter sets up the story by recounting the family's departure in 1983 to a new life in the United States, narrated in a cinematic style that recounts every detail of their last drive through Bethlehem and Jerusalem. This theme of departure and migration is sadly common for those of the Syriac traditions, who, like their Armenian brothers and sisters, were savagely persecuted, often killed, and usually displaced from their traditional homes in the early twentieth century. The second chapter tells the story of Anton Kiraz, his father, whose family was originally from a village near Kharput in Turkey. Anton himself was born in Adana, then under French control, where his parents had found temporary refuge after the Sayfo, the Syriac genocide. The family soon moved to Beirut, then to Haifa, then to Jerusalem, an itinerary not unusual for Christian refugees of the era. Anton Kiraz became a successful businessman and built a house in the suburb of Talpiot just in time for the neighborhood to fall under Jewish control in the 1948 war. Bethlehem, which remained under Jordanian rule until 1967, became their last stop before emigration to the United States. Those interested in the Dead Sea Scrolls will be fascinated by the extensive quotations from Anton Kiraz's account of his involvement with the Syriac Orthodox Metropolitan Samuel, who possessed the scrolls at an early stage and profited from their sale. Later chapters delve into George Kiraz's childhood in Bethlehem and the early awakenings of his scholarly interests. Kiraz's youth was spent almost entirely under Israeli occupation, and he describes the encounters with soldiers, checkpoints, and the other indignities that remain a feature of life in the region today.

An outstanding feature of the book is the extreme attention to detail. It is not only a memoir, but an ethnographic documentation of a vibrant community. It is packed with evocative photographs of people, places, and ephemera that are more than simply illustrative. The book is handsomely produced with an embossed cover and high-quality paper.

For scholars accustomed to studying the Syriac Christianity of the early Christian centuries, this glimpse into a modern Syriac culture is an important reminder that this is a living tradition, though still under threat throughout the Middle East. In 1967, Christians made up approximately half of the population of Bethlehem, but now are less than 20 percent. Many, like Kiraz's family, reluctantly chose the path of emigration for the sake of freedom. Few among them have paid back their debt to their community of origin in such a profound way.

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***Pastor Tillich: The Justification of the Doubter.* By Samuel Andrew Shearn. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022. 245 pp. \$85.00 hardcover.**

Shearn combines his intensive knowledge of German, philosophic theology with untranslated early German works of Paul Tillich to present in English Tillich's early work on the theme of justification of the doubter. He has three types of readers in