

context. These well-founded documents evidence that the theology of orthodoxy and sexuality can produce counterproductive effects when applied indiscriminately to pastoral practice.

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Sacred Dread: Raïssa Maritain, the Allure of Suffering, and the French Catholic Revival (1905–1944). By Brenna Moore. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press. 2013. xiii + 293 pages. \$30.00 (paper).

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Today, Raïssa Maritain (1883–1960) is known to a small number of academics, and a few Catholics, as the wife of an eminent Thomistic philosopher and human rights advocate. What little recent attention she has received has depicted her as an archetype of suffering Catholic femininity or as a prospective candidate for sainthood with her husband, Jacques. This new book by Brenna Moore recasts her as a key figure in France’s early twentieth-century Catholic Revival. This *renouveau catholique* was marked by celebrated conversions, signal contributions to arts and letters, and a “suffering-centered *imaginaire*” (3) that reinforced “an association of Catholicism with femininity that was derogatory from the republican perspective” (68). This association still influences scholarly interpretations that relegate women like Thérèse of Lisieux, Raïssa Maritain, and Simone Weil “to the ranks of the pathetic and the bizarre” (7).

Moore traces the Russian-Jewish-born Maritain’s life (this is the rare study in which Raïssa is the default Maritain) from the eve of her and her husband’s conversion to the end of their wartime exile in America. Repelled by the positivism of the Sorbonne and the laicizing French Third Republic, she and Jacques sought Catholic baptism in 1906 with novelist Léon Bloy as godfather. Bloy’s focus on female and Jewish abjection greatly influenced Raïssa, and both Maritains embraced his philosemitism, tainted as it was with supersessionism. A remarkable openness to Judaism, Russian Orthodoxy, and the disparate strands of the artistic avant-garde made the Maritains’ home in the Paris suburb of Meudon both a center for spiritual retreats and a vibrant *salon* presided over by Raïssa, whose own burgeoning poetic gift was encouraged by Jean Cocteau. Her many serious illnesses and accompanying visions also inspired a certain reverence in her husband and others, making her “frail and powerful” body (93), as Moore puts it “the site where the divine entered and acted, a power that could be felt and appreciated by those around her” (74). Moore, in contrast to other scholars, resists relegating the Maritains’

bodily and psychic torture to the category of vicarious suffering, rightly identifying this experience as one Raïssa and others understood as more mystical than redemptive of others.

A highlight of this book is Moore's detailed exposition of Maritain's harrowing Holocaust poetry, written in wartime New York in isolation, horror, and uncharacteristic anger at God. She draws a telling contrast between these poems and Maritain's best-selling memoirs from the time, *We Have Been Friends Together* and *Adventures in Grace*, which established her reputation in America and outsold anything her husband had written. These translated volumes welcomed American Catholics into the lost world of the French Catholic Revival and allowed Raïssa to reimagine her Jewish childhood in a way that helped Catholics to "relate easily to these stories of ascetic sainthood and a rich liturgical sensorium" (161). *Sacred Dread* offers readers a historically informed account of Raïssa Maritain's life and works, a theologically perceptive examination of her mysticism, and a gendered analysis of her suffering that eschews caricature for rewarding insight.

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Vatican II: The Battle for Meaning. By Massimo Faggioli. New York: Paulist Press, 2012. viii + 199 pages. \$14.95 (paper).

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At the start of the period of commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Second Vatican Council, historian Massimo Faggioli published two monographs to stimulate attention about this council among American Catholics. In *True Reform: Liturgy and Ecclesiology in Sacrosanctum Concilium*, Faggioli develops a point that he also makes in *Vatican II: The Battle for Meaning*, namely, that "liturgy was not only the chronological starting point of Vatican II but also the theological starting point" (103). The latter book starts with an interesting classification of the different stages of the debate on Vatican II. The author's description of the period between 1965 and 1980 as "Vatican II: Acknowledged, Received, Refused" (6) illustrates that much attention in this book goes to the Lefebvrian schism and its rejection of the council. Even if the period between 1980 and 1990 is qualified as "Vatican II: Celebrated and Enforced" (11), Faggioli is highly aware of the limitations of the interpretation of the council imposed by the 1985 anniversary synod under the influence of then Cardinal Ratzinger. By qualifying the period 1990–2000 as "Vatican II: Historicized" (15), Faggioli understandably pays tribute to the John XXIII Bologna Foundation for Religious Sciences, which edited the five-volume