

presents systematic reflections on concepts of holiness. Nancy Rahn deals with Old Testament perspectives on St Nicholas as a thaumaturgist. Florian Lippke studies St Nicholas in the perspective of the history of religion. Nils Neumann and Zbyněk Kindschi Garský examine how motifs from Luke and Matthew influenced the formation of pictures of St Nicholas. Maria Lissek presents a stimulating analysis of the figure of St Nicholas's dark antagonist in medieval sources. Jörg Swartzki employs insights from practical theology and opens new perspectives on religious customs connected with St Nicholas. Katharina Heyden's article, in summary, underlines the productiveness of the extant traditions for each theological subject as well as for the interdisciplinary discussion. The question to be answered in such a discussion could be 'What kind of St. Nicholas is appropriate to our present age?' This is an inspiring new book about one of the most popular saints in the history of Christianity. It offers a fresh approach to the historical figure as well as to the legendary portrayal of St Nicholas, and to his contemporary significance.

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Gregory of Nazianzus' soteriological pneumatology. By Oliver B. Langworthy. (Studies and Texts in Antiquity and Christianity, 117.) Pp. xiv + 189. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019. €69 (paper). 978 3 16 158951 5
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Studies in the thought and culture of St Gregory of Nazianzus (c. 329–90) (known throughout the eastern Church as Gregory the Theologian after this title was given to him at the Council of Chalcedon) have come a long way since G. L. Prestige casually dismissed him as a 'dignified populariser'. Although the complete critical edition of his works (scattered almost upon completion in 1939, when the Nazis assassinated so many Polish scholars) still remains to be achieved, critical studies have accumulated through the last two generations to make it clear that here indeed was one of the most learned men of his generation, and a theologian of immense subtlety and sophistication. The present work, originating as a 2016 St Andrews doctoral dissertation, is a welcome and worthy addition to that literature. It is elegantly and fluently written and deeply familiar with the primary texts and the commentators. It focuses on the manner in which Gregory's doctrine of the Spirit (he was one of the most insistent of the neo-Nicene movement on the Homousion of the Spirit and has a correspondingly profound doctrine of the Trinity) forms the backbone of his understanding of salvation offered in Christ, and through Christ effecting reconciliation with God the Father. This concept of the Transcendent's outreach to the immanent world (the relation of the one to the many) was a preoccupation of other sophists of his age, but Gregory shows a remarkable synthesis of philosophical, biblical and 'inspirational' notions to advance a particularly Christian understanding. Langworthy shows that the defence of the divine being of the Spirit was Gregory's lifelong mission: one resisted to a degree by more cautious protagonists at the Council of Constantinople in 381, but coming to a fruition in Gregory's Oration xxxi and *Carmina arcana* poems which he polished and published in retirement. He joins

together the burgeoning ascetical turn of Christianity to make it clear that the metaphysics of salvation offered by God in Christ were individually appropriated through the progressive purification of a person's mind and life-style, in what he called (coining the term for the Church) *Theiopoiesis*. Gregory conceives of the Spirit 'as a being that was, undertook, and possessed perfection – holiness – by nature' (p. 164). Salvation was the acquisition by the believer of this indwelling presence. Gregory's most vivid sense of the ecclesial aspect of salvation, we learn, is the way in which he sees as critical the need for Christian leaders to exhibit the Spirit's presence. His very low estimate of the quality of his episcopal contemporaries is often displayed in withering verses, which give a sense of how, still emerging from the bitterly disruptive Arian crisis, he saw the Spirit's mission as most clearly needed in his own time.

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Interreligiöse Konflikte im 4. und 5. Jahrhundert. Julian 'Contra Galilaeos' – Kyrill 'Contra Iulianum'. Edited by Gerlinde Huber-Rebenich and Stefan Rebenich. (Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur, 181.) Pp. xvi + 292 incl. 13 ills and 2 tables. Berlin–Boston: De Gruyter, 2020. €99.95. 978 3 11 055124 2

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This multilingual collection arises out a conference, held in Bern in 2017, attendant to the publication of the first critical edition of Cyril of Alexandria's *Contra Iulianum* (GCS n.s. xx–xxi). Aiming to stimulate scholarly interest beyond the editors and their immediate colleagues, its twelve papers serve as a kind of first fruits of some two-and-a-half decades' effort.

The first five papers focus on Julian, the following seven on Cyril. The foreword is focused on the editorial process, and, although it summarises all the articles, an initial study on Julian's philosophy and political aims would have helped to frame what amounts, despite a lack of formal segmentation, to a two-part collection. Instead, the first three articles all treat aspects of Julian's anti-Christian efforts. Heinz-Günther Nesselrath gathers anti-Christian motifs from across Julian's *corpus*; a more extensive bibliography might have enabled, for example, discussion of the authenticity of *ep.* lxxxiv, which some readers may still doubt. Adolf Martin Ritter discusses Julian's attitude toward Judaism and knowledge of contemporary Christian controversy; though each treatment is interesting, a unified whole does not quite emerge. Ritter's repeated engagement with Nesselrath's article, furthermore, does not lead to a similarly tight integration of the volume's other articles. An opportunity to put the intellectual profits of the new edition on even more prominent display was therefore missed. The next paper is none the less impressive, as Maria Carmen De Vita not only teases out fine allusions to contemporary intra-Christian debates in *Contra Galilaeos*, but also argues, as Nesselrath had briefly suggested, that *To King Helios* states the positive case for Hellenism that *Contra Galilaeos* makes in the negative.

Stefano Trovato and Augusto Guida study Julianic reception. Moving nimbly through medieval Byzantine literature, Trovato explores the diverse ways in which Julian was used to condemn Christians; he draws particular attention to a misidentification of the *Dormitio Virginis* of John of Thessalonica as Julian's and