comprehensiveness to offer substantive conclusions. This book would be of interest to all students of religion and the sociology of religion.

Anton K. Jacobs
Kansas City Art Institute


Hayes argues that the development of a Catholic womanist theology must be grounded in the myriad historical and religious experiences of persons of African descent. Noting the lack of attention to black Catholics in African American religious studies and politics, Hayes devotes the first half of the book to documenting the historical experiences of black Catholics in the United States and their interpretations of the connection between faith and social justice. Advocating a sense of cultural hybridity in contemporary Catholic teaching and practice, Hayes encourages black Catholics and Catholic generally to acknowledge and own the uniqueness of the tradition; she envisions will challenge the church to move beyond its Eurocentric beginnings and accept the diverse expressions of God and Christ. Building upon the need for greater Catholic liturgical and ecclesial diversity, Hayes unpacks her view of the evolution of ministry, opining that the presence of women, persons of color, and GLBT communities “does not take away from Roman rite,” but adds complexity to the work and teaching of the church by centralizing dialogue and practices geared toward solidarity against all forms of oppression as they impinge on the multifaceted image of God in human life. The final half of the text considers public implications of religious faith and the role of black women therein. Highlighting the core of Catholic social teaching as grounded in the needs of the most vulnerable in society, Hayes proposes a reclamation of the notion of interrelated responsibility found within Martin Luther King’s thinking and within the theological conception of the imitatio Christi. At the center of this reclamation, Hayes says, is the activity of black women. In black women’s bold insistence upon reclaiming their own voices and stories, they can instill hope in others by having the courage to speak and proclaim truth for communal, societal, and global transformation. This book is highly valuable in its efforts to forge intersections between the larger discipline of black religious studies, black female agency, and the important role(s) played by black Catholics therein.

Darrius Hills
Rice University


These twenty-three autobiographical pieces feature a number of leading contemporary theologians reflecting on their life stories in relation to the development of convictions that have shaped their theologies. Central insights can emerge in a number of ways, and this collection shows how unique is the development of each person who has come to prominence as a theologian in the last decades. Some pieces here have been published before, some have been revised, and six contributors have died since their essays were written. The book is interesting and helpful for other theologians as well as theological students. It shows ways in which important theological thoughts can take shape in a person’s life and that autobiographical reflections can clarify one’s convictions when they are seen as integrally related to one’s life story. Two further values of the book are that the pieces give a personal context to theologians whose writings one has read through the years. This makes the theologians “come alive” in interesting ways. Taken together, these essays from theologians such as Cox, Marty, McGrath,