

**THEOLOGIANS IN THEIR OWN WORDS.** Edited by Derek R. Nelson, Joshua M. Moritz, and Ted Peters. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013. Pp. vi + 288. \$29.00.

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,

Russell, and Tanner give a “freeze frame” of contemporary theology, showing formative influences and developments in a number of leading contemporary thinkers. The editors have chosen wisely in selecting the writers, providing a variety of theological voices across the current spectrum. These short pieces are engaging and instructive.

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**STRANGERS NEXT DOOR: IMMIGRATION, MIGRATION AND MISSION.** By J. D. Payne. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012. Pp. 206. \$15.00.

“This book is about diaspora missiology . . . a complement to, not a substitute for, the traditional approach of sending missionaries to other lands. It is an approach to thinking about the missionary work of the church from an integrated perspective.” Transnational Missions, or missions to and from migrants/immigrants, is not only a reality of today’s world but a necessary component of worldwide mission that is often neglected. Payne succinctly summarizes: “Something is missiologically malignant when we are willing to send people across the oceans, risking life and limb and spending enormous amounts of money, but we are not willing to walk next door and minister to the strangers living there. Again, we must continue to go to the nations, but we must also remember that the nations have come to us.” For a fairly slim volume, this book has a wide scope, a hallmark of InterVarsity Press (IVP). In its target of a university-aged audience, it tends toward both the academic and practical. Its versatility includes grounding in scripture, technical definition of terms without being encyclopedic, spiritual depth, historical breadth, relevant present-day stories, sound statistics, and the book’s applicability. Payne’s work is a great complement to Soong-Chan Rah’s *The Next Evangelicalism* (also published by IVP), whose thesis is that the center of gravity of Christianity has shifted to ethnic minorities and immigrants. If that is the case, then not only are they a mission field, but they are themselves the present and next generation of missionaries.

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**BLACK THEOLOGY.** By Anthony G. Reddie. London: SCM Press, 2012. Pp. 288. £25.00.

British liberation theologian Reddie introduces black theology by tracing the rationale of the discipline historically, and clarifies the transformative ways in which black theology can continue to be grounded in the quotidian experiences of black communities. Reddie argues that black theology has never been a “stand alone” discipline within religious studies; rather, black theology has an applicatory dimension in which the lived experiences and social uplift of black persons are central. Through this emphasis, Reddie highlights the practicality of the discipline over against

charges that it fails to address audiences beyond the church or academic institutions. There are a few ways through which Reddie demonstrates the ongoing relevance of black theology worth mentioning. Reddie introduces this idea through his observations regarding the subversive nature of black theology, namely its response to “the question of how and in what ways God cares about and is in solidarity with peoples who are oppressed and marginalized.” Black theology is subversive to the degree that it speaks a new word of black humanity and faithful praxis, and reinterprets the meaning of God in Christ for black liberation in order to deconstruct and problematize a society and theological worldview ordered by the concept of black inferiority. Most insightfully, Reddie examines the ways black theological discourse has succeeded, and failed, to use its resources to address social issues, namely those of racism, socioeconomic equality, Western imperialism, and gender/sexuality. Although the discipline has provided excellent analyses of the first three, says Reddie, it has consistently, until the emergence of womanist thought and black female religious scholarship, neglected to consider the intersections of racial, economic, and global oppression centralized within the problematic of gender. To strengthen its relevance, black theologians must continue to grapple with the plight of women and recognize their experiences as valid components of black theological discourse and methodology. Overall, Reddie’s book succeeds in giving the reader a clear exposition of the development, issues within, and global range of black theology from the United States, to Africa, and to his context within the UK. However, it is clear, particularly after the chapters on Christology and pneumatology, that his understanding of black theology is primarily framed by the Christian tradition. This may give readers the false impression that Reddie is not attentive to the plethora of black religious traditions. Critical attention to the ideas of more representatives within black theology who do not rely upon Christian doctrine would have strengthened the text in this regard.

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**CLOTHING.** By Michele Saracino. Compass Series, Christian Explorations of Daily Living. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012. Pp. xii + 124. \$15.00.

This introductory text examines the far-reaching implications of the daily rituals of dress, utilizing sources from Tertullian and St. Antony to Judith Plaskow and Thich Nhat Hanh. How do our clothing choices express or affect our attitudes toward our human bodies and our relationships with others and with God? According to Saracino, norms and practices surrounding clothing are often occasions for sin, embodying structures of oppression and evincing our desire to disavow human limitations in an effort to attain perfection. Rituals of dress often emphasize covering up, protecting ourselves from vulnerability, which is problematic for those hoping “to imitate a messiah who seeks out