# Religion and Representation

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**Abstract**

This review is divided into three sections: 1. Edward Baring, *Converts to the Real: Catholicism and the Making of Continental Philosophy*, 2. Jeffrey T. Zalar, *Reading and rebellion in Catholic Germany, 1770-1914*, 3. Thematic issue of *Religion*, 'Translation and Religion: Crafting Regimes of Identity,' ed. Hephzibah Israel and Matthias Frenz. Taken together, these works provide an overview of approaches that demonstrate the value of interdisciplinary research into religion and representation. Drawing on the disciplines of social, political, and cultural history, literary studies, book history, theology, religious studies, translation studies, and postcolonial studies, they highlight the importance of research that contextualises the relationship between religion and representation, bringing attention to its historically overlooked aspects.

Recent years have seen renewed interest in examining religion and representation in its political, cultural, and linguistic contexts. Emphasis has been put on the historical situatedness of discourses surrounding religious affiliation and identification. The historicisation of the complex relationship between the religious and the secular undertaken by researchers working in the fields of book history, cultural history, literary studies, and history of philosophy has produced thought-provoking scholarship that re-examines some of the long-standing assumptions about religion and modernity. The two books discussed in this review have both contributed to this important development. Jeffrey T. Zalar's *Reading and Rebellion in Catholic Germany, 1770-1914* offers an insightful history of how the 'Reading Revolution' in Germany challenged and transformed theologically grounded norms of reading. Edward Baring's *Converts to the Real: Catholicism and the Making of Continental Philosophy* traces a fascinating yet largely forgotten history of neo-scholastic thinkers' engagement with early phenomenology and examines ways in which they contributed to the postwar phenomenological turn in continental philosophy. Both titles, based on solid historical and archival research, invite the reader to take a critical view of the notion of secular modernity and discover unexpected affinities between what is commonly perceived as the religious and the secular.

The study of religion and representation in its specific cultural and linguistic contexts has seen increasing interest among scholars working in the field of translation studies. While translations of the canonical sacred texts such as the Jewish and Christian Bibles had been researched by the very founders of the discipline of translation studies, including Eugene Nida, recent studies expand that canon and examine the issue of religious representation in transnational and transcultural contexts. The special thematic issue of *Religion,* 'Translation and Religion: Crafting Regimes of Identity,' edited by Hephzibah Israel and Matthias Frenz, brings together a wide range of scholars researching ways in which religions travel across

languages and cultures through the practices of translation. The articles included in the volume offer thoughtful analyses of diverse religious translation projects and the political, ideological and cultural contexts that shaped them. The contributors to the volume propose to examine the interface between religion and representation from the perspective of transcultural and transnational encounters, paying special attention to language and ways in which it forms individual and communal identities.

**1. Jeffrey T. Zalar, *Reading and Rebellion in Catholic Germany, 1770-1914***

Zalar's *Reading and Rebellion in Catholic Germany, 1770-1914* is an insightful study that brings together book history, religious history, and socio-cultural history to provide a well-informed account of the transformation of reading disciplines that shaped German Catholics' engagement with the printed word in the long nineteenth century. Zalar sets out to challenge the view that the concept of 'the confessional milieu' can satisfactorily account for the reading practices of German Catholics, which is an interpretation that he considers to have a significant impact on the historiography of modern Germany. His study aims to provide a corrective view to the narrative that asserts that 'in response to the challenges presented by German modernity, Catholics found unity and mutual succor in an insular subculture, whose boundaries were policed by an authoritarian clergy' (pp. 6-7). The problem with this interpretation, as Zalar explains in the Introduction, is that it implicitly complies with secularist narratives of liberal progress that inform scholarship on the topic. It also provides a history from above that assumes that lay Catholics' reading practices were strictly guided by clerical pronouncements and prohibitions. Zalar argues that 'in adopting the clerical hierarchy, and particularly the bishops, as the privileged unit of analysis, we are more likely to comprehend what ought to have happened in Catholic book history than what may actually have happened' since the 'claims that are routinely made about lay submission to reading discipline […] have never been demonstrated with documentary or archival evidence' (pp. 10-11). Thus, Zalar's study seeks to interrogate the clerical-lay relationship and investigate 'lay attitudes with regard to reading – the primary intellectual act of the modern age' (p. 11). To meet this objective, the study examines a wide range of sources, from publishers' records, subscription lists, catalogues of home and parish collections, and accounts of reading, through library questionnaires, lending statistics and rolls of reading clubs, to evidence of book gifting and swapping, correspondence between laity and their priests and bishops, and priests' reports on popular reading. These sources provide ample material to construct a history of Catholic reading from below, accounting for lay Catholics' everyday reading experience. The book has a chronological structure and is divided into eight chapters, offering a convincing narrative that covers the period from 1770 to 1914, focusing on the geographical region of the Rhineland and Westphalia that belonged to the 'core regions' of German Catholicism.

The first two chapters outline the key differences in the Protestant and Catholic reading cultures that took shape during the 'Reading Revolution' of the late eighteenth century. Chapter one discusses the book culture of bourgeois Protestant laity, which was centred around the ideology of *Geschmack* (taste). As Zalar demonstrates, the 'Reading

Revolution,' which led to the 'eclipse of theology' and 'the beginnings of a literary entertainment industry based on market choice' had a profound impact on the way in which Protestant Germans experienced their literacy (p. 23). Everyday reading practices became 'private, diversified, and autonomously controlled' (p. 24), which created a threat of unregulated compulsive consumption of printed material by individuals who lacked the skills and knowledge to exercise aesthetic and moral judgement. To control those potentially dangerous practices, *Geschmack* was put forward as 'a tool of reading authority' that could help readers discriminate between books using the criteria of 'piety, intellectual expansion, and moral duty' (pp. 35-6). Engaging with worthwhile and 'tasteful' texts was seen as an act of self-improvement – to read was 'to pursue the art of *Bildung*' (p. 38). This understanding of cultural taste was underpinned by a theologically informed worldview, as the Protestant 'leaders of the eighteenth-century book trade viewed the emancipatory themes of Enlightenment as a continuing elaboration of Protestant Christianity, in which the reading, interpreting, and moral reforming self now became an agent not of private religious but of public intellectual, social, and political change' (p. 37). In the eyes of Protestant bourgeoisie, Catholics were seen to be violating this code of cultural and moral conduct, which gave rise to anti-Catholic stereotypes that focused on Catholics' inferiority as 'clerically dominated, undereducated, and impoverished' (p. 39). Catholic priests, especially Jesuits, were accused of intellectual manipulation that aimed to keep their flock blissfully ignorant and easy to control. Ironically, as Zalar points out, one of the methods of fighting Catholic ignorance was the destruction of Catholic libraries that were seen to perpetuate superstition and serve as a tool of clerical tyranny. As the French authorities imposed a form of 'secular terror' on the four Rhenish departments they occupied during the French Revolution, ransacking monastic libraries and shipping precious manuscript and incunabula collections to Paris, 'Protestant elites applauded the secularization as an inevitable step toward progress,' and viewed 'the strike against the libraries' as 'the first concrete act of "civilizing mission"' (pp. 48-49).

Chapter two examines the Catholic view of the 'Reading Revolution' and its social and political implications. Despite the self-pronounced differences between Protestant and Catholic reading cultures, the 'theologically grounded norms of reading' that shaped Catholic reading practices had much in common with the Protestant *Geschmack* (p. 57). Reading was seen as a moral and spiritual activity, and 'was intended to occur within the structures of discipline by which faith, knowledge, and respectability were secured' (p. 56). The clerical authorities were keen to safeguard believers, who could easily fall prey to corruption by reading unwholesome books. However, 'the obstacles Catholics faced in acquiring literacy had less to do with the practices and disciplines of their religious tradition than with the settings in which they resided' (p. 58). Rural education that peasant farmers, labourers, and craftsmen received was aimed at 'prepar[ing] upright Christians for salvation and instruct[ing] them in the practical activities of household economy' (p. 58). While reading was a leisurely pastime in which rural Catholics did not have much time to engage, by 1800 'most Catholic peasants and even women in urban parishes in western German regions could read and write' (p. 63). Their reading practices can be characterised as 'voluntarist', that is, aimed at 'proper formation of the will through habituation to concrete examples of heroic action' (p. 66). Texts that enjoyed particular popularity were *Imitatio*

*Christi* by Thomas à Kempis and the lives of the saints, which allowed believers to read themselves into the stories and see the devotional books as 'friends' or 'companions' (p. 66). At the same time, Catholics had access to much secular material, including romances, fables, jokebooks, and astrological advice, that were disseminated by peddlers, students, and various travellers, and they read extensively 'in line with the emancipatory spirit of the age' (p. 70). The ecclesiastical authorities' attempts to control and guide lay Catholics' reading practices led to 'serious miscalculations about modern intellectual life' and resulted in 'several species of popular rebellion that became fixed features of Catholic book culture' (p. 72). The clergy failed to enforce an effective reading discipline due to a number of disagreements about what kind of book rules to apply and how to do it in an effective way. The crisis of control that ensued led to a widespread dissent 'on the popular level', which was 'a matter not of academic theology but of "disordered" desire for books and buckling intellectual discipline amid a crush of consumerist temptations' (p. 77). To respond to that, the clergy aimed to resort to positive strategies that would reinstate the normative framework of Catholic reading culture, which included emphasis on orality over literacy, pastoral guidance, communal discernment of a text's value, reading for spiritual edification, and replacing 'bad' books with 'good' ones (pp. 78-94). While the Catholic and Protestant book cultures had much in common at the end of the eighteenth century, the crucial difference, as Zalar points out, is that the former imagined a future redemptive community that was 'Catholic and confessional', while the latter – 'Protestant and national' (p. 94), which had serious implications for the development of the Catholic reading culture in the long nineteenth century.

Chapters three and four narrate the developments that took place between 1815 and 1880. After the Congress of Vienna in 1815, Catholics living in the Lower Rhineland and Westphalia found themselves under the Protestant rule of the Kingdom of Prussia. The political, economic, and social frictions shaped the Catholic book culture in the region. The Protestant press attacked Catholics with Prussian authorities' consent. Zalar contends that the 'administrative and rhetorical attempts at "protestantization" were part of an evident campaign, recognized by all involved, to marginalize Catholics in public life upon convictions of their political unreliability' (p. 107). Social tensions ran high, and included conflicts related to anti-Catholic discrimination in civil service, teaching profession, access to education, and social status. As Zalar declares: 'With few exceptions, Protestants put as much distance between them and Catholics as possible. Catholics, for their part, developed the complicated self-consciousness of an aggrieved minority that both hated the Prussian yoke and yearned to be included in the system that imposed it' (p. 113). The Catholic reading culture was shaped by these tensions. With the decline of cloister libraries, it was the collections of rural parishes, reading clubs, and regional book associations that provided laity with printed material. The devotional press and literature helped to 'immerse believers in a subculture of shared religious texts' (p. 119), but Catholics formed book clubs where they enjoyed reading fiction as well. Furthermore, bourgeois Catholics began to distance themselves from the reading discipline promoted by the clergy. Indeed, by the 1830s, 'educated and socially self-conscious Catholics rejected all clerical interventions in their reading behaviour' (p. 129) and emulated the Protestant reading ethos in the hope of social

betterment. The bishops, while aware of their rebellion, failed to develop any effective strategy to counter it, possibly because 'they may have lacked the necessary pastoral techniques for addressing the complex problems of mass literacy' or they were overwhelmed with the 'legal, political, and financial pressures of institutional reorganization' (p. 138). The developments spanning the years 1845-1880 are examined in chapter four, which narrates the founding, growth, and activities of the Association of Saint Charles Borromeo, the first lay organisation to promote the Catholic reading culture, and the impact of the Kulturkampf on lay Catholic readers. The Association was created by initiative of prominent lay Catholics and was led by Franz Xaver Dieringer, Professor of Theology at the University of Bonn. Among its aims was to '"displace harmful books [and] to spread healthy knowledge"' (p. 146). Working in collaboration with the bishops, they liaised with publishers, supported parish priests, set up libraries, and created booklists of pious texts that expanded members' home collections. While their activities 'never enjoyed the reach sufficient to seal off all Catholics from the secular print market, […] it helped prepare many of them for the trials to come' during the Kulturkampf of 1871-1878, when the 'very legitimacy [of Catholics] as Germans' was called into question (p. 156). The political rhetoric of the Kulturkampf relied on by now long-established tropes of portraying Catholics as ignorant, passive, 'politically treacherous' and 'culturally incompetent' (p. 157), in short, the inferior others who did not comply with the modern German self-image that equated national identity with Protestantism. Viewing Catholics as the enemy within, 'Prussian authorities spied on Catholic reading clubs,' attempted to disband the Association on made-up charges, and 'directed the police to confiscate books from chapter libraries' (p. 158). The Catholic reading culture of the time showed a sense of urgency. 'It provided emotional succour in a regime of pervasive prejudice' and 'emphasized Catholic distinctiveness and strength in corporate unity' (p. 161). At the same time, lay Catholics continued to enjoy leisurely reading, which could not be stopped by the clergy. Zalar contends that 'in the era from 1845 to 1880, the German church lost whatever power it had to set reading priorities in its historically stormy relationship with literate believers' (p. 182). While Catholics continued to value religious and devotional literature which provided them with a sense of identity and confessional belonging, they nevertheless became independent and autonomous readers.

Chapter five analyses the continuing Protestant criticisms of what was perceived as the Catholic 'deficit in education' and the impact of that discourse on the Catholic educational and reading culture from 1880 to 1914. As Zalar observes, in the 1910s Catholics were still overrepresented in 'peasantry, unskilled labor, petty crafts and retailing' and significantly underrepresented among urban-dwelling population, higher school and university students, and civil service as well as highly esteemed professions such as teachers, lawyers, and physicians. Elementary education in the Rhineland had suffered as a result of the Kulturkampf and the banishment of Catholic teaching orders. Thus, Catholics came to bear 'the stigma of second-class citizenship' (p. 191). For Protestant commentators, that was a self-inflicted condition that stemmed from Catholic 'unwillingness or impardonable inability to "modernize"' (p. 191). This led to the view that 'the entire Catholic ethos [was] an improper medium to impart the cultural values of the national state' (p.

192), and it was Protestants who were the only worthy 'custodians of national culture' (p. 193). As Zalar demonstrates, Catholic intellectuals were increasingly concerned about this perception of their educational inferiority, which led to an intra-Catholic debate on how to remedy it. Zalar writes that for 'the bourgeoisie at least, the imperatives of integration had become paramount,' which led them to endorse modern scholarship and greater social mobility (p. 197). The clergy began to engage with secular culture in a more systematic way as they came to realise that 'their status depended not only upon their competent performance of sacred rites but on their mastery of secular knowledge' (p. 205), and the clerical authorities became pretty liberal in granting lay Catholics permission to read forbidden literature to progress in their careers.

Chapters six and seven examine the resistance of the Catholic laity to the normative reading culture promoted by the clerical authorities. Chapter six focuses on the decline of the Association of Saint Charles Borromeo, which failed to inspire lay Catholics to devote themselves to pious literature. Religious books remained their 'companions,' frequently occupying 'places of iconic honor in the household' and passed down in the family (p. 228). At the same time, readers were keen to explore other areas too. 'Pious texts remained superordinate in honor, but now they were subordinate in immediacy' (p. 229). Aware of that, the Association transformed its outreach strategy under the leadership of Herman Herz to appeal to readers interested in 'novels, adventure stories, biographies, travel logs, and humorous accounts, so long as they did not offend Catholic teachings' (p. 264). This integration of religious and secular reading cultures, and the endorsement it received from the bishops, proves that 'the laity had successfully maneuvered the bishops behind their own view of reading, which rejected […] the regime of pious books the bishops set out for them at mid-century' (p. 268). Chapter seven examines how the Association's libraries were reorganised in response to the laity's needs and interests, and takes account of the statistics on collections, lending records, and readers' behaviour and preferences. The analysis of this data leads Zalar to conclude that 'Catholic energies devoted to entertainment and popular education through reading exploded' (p. 308). The clerical authorities were no longer in a position to supervise reading, the Association's libraries 'began moving out of rectories […] in a spatial and ideological attempt at integration with secular culture' (p. 308), and library collections accommodated readers looking for secular fiction and educational content. By 1914, the borrowing patterns of lay Catholics 'aligned with those of secular libraries in the rest of Germany and throughout the Anglo-American world' (p. 308). The final chapter of the book, chapter eight, is devoted to reading at home and offers an analysis of the everyday reading experience of Catholic men, women, and children. It discusses reading for entertainment, for career advancement, and for cultural integration, and shows the ultimate collapse of the reading discipline promoted by the clergy. As 'the homes of lower-class Catholics rapidly became sites of symbolic self-construction through market purchases,' individual readers 'tended to react to literary policing as a form of intimate invasion' (pp. 329-330). This, in turn, made priests ever more reluctant to challenge readers and admonish their choices. Revisiting the discussion of Protestant *Bildung* in chapter one, Zalar shows how the Association's Catholic appropriation of it shaped the lay Catholics' understanding of 'proper reading behavior at home' (p. 350). By 1914, Catholic readers

engaged in domestic reading practices that became virtually indistinguishable from other Germans' experience of literacy.

The narrative that Zalar weaves in *Reading and Rebellion* provides a fascinating account of the transformations that the Catholic reading culture underwent in the long-ninenteenth-century Germany. Examining wide-ranging archival sources, Zalar offers a history from below, which sheds light on the practices of lay Catholics and demonstrates that those practices often defied the prescriptive pronouncements of ecclesiastical authorities, and at times actively shaped the bishops' changing attitudes to secular reading culture of modern Germany. Paying close attention to the theologically based norms of reading, the book succeeds in bringing welcome attention to lay believers and the cultural agency they exercised, and in charting the impact of the complex political, social, cultural, and religious developments on the ongoing tensions and debates between German Catholics and Protestants, and the formation of modern Catholic identity. The study is a substantial contribution to the history of Catholicism, cultural history, and book history. This has been recognised by the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing (SHARP), which awarded Zalar the 2020 George A. and Jean S. DeLong Book History Book Prize. The title will be an indispensable reading to scholars interested in modern German Catholicism, history of religious reading, and cultural and intellectual history.

**2. Edward Baring, *Converts to the Real: Catholicism and the Making of Continental Philosophy***

Baring's *Converts to the Real: Catholicism and the Making of Continental Philosophy* offers a detailed account of the early-twentieth-century development of phenomenology as a movement that brought together philosophers, theologians, and religious thinkers, and by the 1950s became a truly international and continental philosophy. This was possible due to the intense interest that Husserl's work generated in the transnational network of neo-scholastic thinkers hailing from Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Germany and Poland, who began to promote new work on phenomenology and, subsequently, Christian existentialism in their journals and conferences. The book traces the history of phenomenology's postwar success to early-twentieth-century Catholic philosophers' attempts to bring together modern philosophy and Catholic metaphysics. It begins with the reappraisal of neo-scholasticism as 'the largest and most influential philosophical movement in the world' before World War I (p. 8), whose extensive infrastructure of Catholic institutions, journals and publishers contributed to the promotion of phenomenology on a global scale. As Baring estimates, 'self-professed Catholic philosophers produced more than 40 percent of all books and articles on Husserl, Heidegger, and Scheler written in French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and Dutch in the period before World War II, making Catholic phenomenology by far the largest constituent part of the early European reception' (pp. 8-9). It was those transnational Catholic networks that effectively transported phenomenology from Germany and disseminated it across Europe and into the US. The motivation behind this project, Baring argues, was philosophical conversion. Neo-scholastic philosophers 'hoped they could convert modern

philosophy to their ends,' and, subsequently, 'overturn a process of intellectual secularization' (p. 15). These conversions, as Baring shows, proved to be a double-edged sword as they worked in both directions, with philosophers such as Max Scheler or Martin Heidegger ultimately rejecting faith and distancing themselves from the church.

*Converts to the Real* is chronologically structured and divided into three parts. Part I: comprises four chapters that outline the development of neo-scholasticism in the early twentieth century and account for the neo-scholastics' initial interest in phenomenology. Having established the historical context, Baring focuses on three key phenomenologists: Husserl, Heidegger, and Scheler, the development of their thought, and its subsequent reception among neo-scholastic thinkers. The four chapters of Part II examine the relationship between neo-scholasticism, phenomenology, and Christian existentialism, focusing on thinkers such as Nicolai Berdyaev and Gabriel Marcel, whose work made phenomenology particularly attractive to secular philosophers. Baring traces the debates between neo-scholastics and Christian existentialists that shaped the reception of Husserl's, Heidegger's, and Scheler's work in both Christian and secular circles. Part III (chapters nine and ten) tells the story of the smuggling of Husserl's papers out of Nazi Germany and the foundation of the Husserl Archives in Leuven (Louvain), and recounts the developments in postwar phenomenology, with particular focus on Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Paul Ricoeur.

Baring traces the connection between Catholicism and phenomenology to late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century developments within the Roman Catholic Church. In Chapter one he recounts Pope Leo XIII's endorsement of neo-scholasticism as the dominant philosophy of the church in the 1878 encyclical *Aeterni Patris*. A concerted effort followed to elevate neo-scholasticism to the status of an ambitious transnational movement that would engage scholars across the world. This included the foundation of a vibrant network of neo-scholastic institutions, such as the Catholic University in Washington, D.C. (1887), the Thomistic Academy in Coimbra, Portugal (1881), and the Institut Supérieur de Philosophie (ISP) in Louvain, Belgium (1889) (p. 24). New journals and reviews were established across Europe served to promote neo-scholasticism in particular countries, but also to boost the transnational exchanges and enhance the visibility of neo-scholastics' work. As Baring contends, '[n]eo-scholasticism was conceived as a riposte to the international fragmentation of the modern world' (p. 28). It built on the model of knowledge established by Thomas Aquinas, who – drawing on Aristotle – viewed faith as 'the perfection of natural knowledge' (p. 30) that did not undermine scientific understanding of the world but could contribute to it. For Aquinas, like for Aristotle, human knowledge derived from sensory perceptions, which underwent a process of abstraction through which human mind could grasp the essence of existing objects. This medieval epistemology was in need of renewal if it were to become compatible with early-twentieth-century philosophy and its emphasis on the subjectivity of knowledge. The first attempts at such renewal were undertaken by Désiré Mercier, who later became a cardinal and the Archbishop of Malines and Primate of Belgium. Mercier, whom Baring considers a 'progressive Thomist' (p. 31), put forward his views on epistemology in the volume *General Criteriology* (1899/1900). He rejected what he saw as the subjective legacy of Kant, and argued that 'our judgments responded to the objective order of the world, not our

particular way of grasping it' (p. 33) and that '[t]he passivity of our sense impressions showed that they could not be the inventions of the mind' (p. 36). He distinguished between 'spontaneous certainties', which are subjective, and 'reflective certainties', which are the products of the mind's reflection on its own acts and, thus, not susceptible to universal doubt. The key tenets of Mercier's revision of Thomism, including the 'correspondence theory of truth' (pp. 35-36), were endorsed by neo-scholastics in Belgium, Italy, Germany, Spain, and the US.

With the publication of Husserl's *Logical Investigations* in 1900-1901, neo-scholastic thinkers appeared to have found a secular ally whose philosophical thought could be aligned with their own. 'Husserl's work seemed to provide independent confirmation of the claim made in Mercier's almost exactly contemporaneous *Criteriology*: that it is possible to reach beyond the subject and grasp the objective order of the word' (p. 40). Husserl's intentionality allowed for a distinction between 'acts of thought and their intentional objects' (p. 44). Furthermore, his concept of 'categorical intuition' gave human mind access to 'logical relationships that we could not simply perceive' (p. 45). In this way, phenomenology allowed for an existence of 'logical concepts and relationships that are valid at all times and in all places' (p. 45), which was a proposition that chimed in with the philosophical ambitions of neo-scholastic thinkers. As Baring states, '[f]or Catholics around Europe, reading Husserl's *Logical Investigations* was a revelation' (p. 49) as it marked 'an important resurgence of scholastic objectivity in the relativist world of modern thought' (p. 50). However, as Baring demonstrates in chapter two, the turn that Husserl's work took in *Ideas for a Pure Phenomenology* (1913) presented a serious obstacle to neo-scholastics who hoped to integrate his thought with their own project. Husserl's 'transcendental idealism' moved from his earlier 'evenhanded analysis of the subject and object in their correlation, to the asserted "primacy" of the former, the way it "bestows sense"' (p. 57). While his *Logical Investigations* were read by neo-scholastics as presenting a realist position, *Ideas* seemed to endorse idealism. Baring contends: 'To the extent that they deemed Husserl's work redeemable, they argued that it needed to be embedded in a metaphysics, which would supplement the phenomenological analysis of human knowing with an account of existing being' (p. 62). In the aftermath of the modernist crisis in the Catholic Church, which led to Pope Pius X's 1907 condemnation of theologians whose work was considered to endorse the modern spirit of subjectivism, neo-scholastics were even more determined to find a satisfactory way to refute philosophical idealism and defend objectivity and realism that would be in line with strict Thomism promoted by the Vatican. The work of Xavier Zubiri, Joseph Geyser, and Edith Stein addressed the increasingly ambivalent relationship between Husserl's phenomenology and neo-scholasticism. Their and other neo-scholastics' work reflects the 'complex and changing relationship between neo-scholasticism and phenomenology' which, as Baring shows, 'had reverberations far beyond Catholic circles' and 'left its mark on the reception of phenomenology in mainstream philosophy' (p. 77). Baring illustrates the latter point by discussing Heidegger and Scheler—two key figures in the phenomenological canon whose work was informed by the early neo-scholastic debates over phenomenology—in chapters three and four.

Heidegger's early work, as chapter three demonstrates, was shaped by his attempts to secure the chair of Catholic philosophy at the University of Freiburg. He engaged with the work of progressive neo-scholastics such as Joseph Geyser, Agostino Gemelli, and Léon Noël, and 'presented himself as a resolute antimodernist' (p. 91). His *Habilitation* on Duns Scotus aimed to prove that truths 'pertained to "true reality"' by 'anchor[ing] judgment to existence' (p. 97). The important contribution that Heidegger made to the ongoing debate was to draw on Husserl's concept of intentionality while discussing the realm of sense. While Husserl's emphasis was on 'the constituting power of the subject', Heidegger's work 'showed how our constituting acts were determined by being' (p. 102). The rejection of Heidegger's candidature for professorship at Freiburg in 1916 (Geyser was offered the chair) and his subsequent break with Catholicism and new interest in Protestantism marked an important shift in his work that focused with renewed attention—following Husserl—on the constituting role of the subject. By 1921, he rejected the idea of religious philosophy, underlining that '"philosophy must be *a-theistic* in its radical self-questioning"' (p. 108). Finally, in *Being and Time* (1927), he developed an ontology that marked a radical departure from neo-scholasticism, while at the same time, as Baring argues, was 'continuous with his early Catholic studies, and […] his investigations into Protestant religious experience in the period after 1916' (p. 113). The development of Heidegger's thought had international reverberations as phenomenology gained ground among both religious and secular philosophers. As Baring notes: 'As more neo-scholastics wrestled with Husserl's ideas, increasingly in conversation with Heidegger's, the radical undecidability of these conversions—phenomenology as both great promise and irreducible danger—became the guiding problematic, generating interest in phenomenology far beyond Germany's borders' (p. 114).

Chapter five focuses on the 1930s and explores the renewed interest in phenomenology among neo-scholastics, who—despite their disappointment with Husserl, Heidegger and Scheler—'drew on [phenomenology] in debates with their non-Thomist Christian rivals' (p. 152). Baring argues that phenomenology 'became a privileged battlefield in intra-Christian debates,' which in turn contributed to its subsequent dissemination among secular philosophers and allowed it to 'make inroads into national academic establishments' (p. 152). Discussing the work of Gabriel Marcel and his engagement with Karl Jaspers's thought, Jacques Maritain and his claim that Thomism was an existential philosophy, and the discussions held in the peripatetic study circle run by Marcel, Berdyaev, and Maritain, Baring highlights the tensions between Thomist and non-Thomist Christian thinkers. Originating in France, these debates soon engaged Italian philosophers, such as Giovanni Gentile and Armando Carlini. To non-Thomists, the appeal of existentialism lay in its ability to challenge rationalism and undermine neo-scholastic metaphysics. Thinkers like Marcel drew on Jaspers's argument that '[b]ecause we are concrete and situated subjects, all our attempts to investigate being are indelibly marked by our existential "situation" and thus relative. In consequence, the history of metaphysics resembles a patchwork narrative of disparate ideas' (p. 159). On the other side of the debate was a Thomist reading of existentialism, propagated by Maritain, in whose view Thomist metaphysics could be considered existential metaphysics because it has 'the same starting point in concrete

existence' and is '"a wisdom which proceeds in an intellectual fashion, according to the pure demands of the intellect and its own form of intuitivity"' (p. 164). This widespread Christian engagement with existentialism led the 1930s critics to 'oppose the "right" Christian to the "left" secular version of existentialism,' with the former being diffused through the transnational neo-scholastic networks (p. 182).

Chapters six, seven, and eight focus on non-Catholic attempts to bring phenomenology and existentialism together, examining the impact and reception of Husserl's *Cartesian Meditations* (chapter six), Heidegger's *Being and Time* (chapter seven), and Scheler's writings (chapter eight). The three chapters show that while in the late 1940s the dominant form of existentialism endorsed across Europe was secular, it 'relied in large part on ideas forged within religious communities' (p. 240). Baring demonstrates that 'the confrontation between Thomists and Christian existentialists, which helped propel phenomenology around Europe during the 1930s, prefigured many of the debates involving non-Catholics in the postwar period' (pp. 275-276). The most important developments of the postwar period are discussed in Part III (chapters nine and ten). Chapter nine provides an account of the Belgian Franciscan Leo Van Breda's successful rescue of Husserl's papers from Nazi Germany and the subsequent foundation of the Husserl Archives. Van Breda initially had an ambition to bring together the papers of Husserl, Edith Stein, Heidegger, Geiger, and Scheler, but ultimately focused on Husserl's papers. Believing that 'the archives would flourish only if they became independent of the Church' (p. 297), he strove to secure funding from secular stakeholders, such as UNESCO, and make the Archives an '"international phenomenological center"' (p. 298). As Baring concludes, this 'downplaying [of] religious connections was compatible with the self-presentation of progressive neo-scholastics' that Van Breda could be counted among (p. 306). Further postwar developments, discussed in chapter ten, include Maurice Merleau-Ponty's and Paul Ricoeur's engagement with phenomenology that 'reveal[s] the enduring traces of the Thomist and Christian existentialist debates' (p. 309). Baring traces Marcel's influence on both Merleau-Ponty and Ricouer, showing that they both 'bracketed the objective sciences to make us aware of our embodiment' (p. 322). Furthermore, he demonstrates that the legacy of the Thomist and Christian existentialist debates informed both philosophers' political views. In their critiques of Marxism, they saw parallels between the neo-scholastic and the Communist systems, which 'tended to posit an absolute—God the father, or the inevitability of a classless society—that undercut human subjectivity' (p. 337).

In the Epilogue, Baring reflects on further traces of the Catholic debates that can be found in present-day continental philosophy, including the writings of Jean-Luc Nancy, Julia Kristeva, Luce Irigaray, Alain Badiou, and Giorgio Agamben. These 'religious specters' haunting continental philosophy, Baring contends, 'can be explained by its family history' (p. 344), which his book skilfully analyses and synthesises. Indeed, this volume offers a meticulously researched and thought-provoking account of the philosophical and theological debates that shaped the early development of phenomenology and defined its future course. It uncovers a forgotten history of transnational exchanges between key philosophers and religious intellectuals of early-twentieth-century Europe and beyond, providing an original and refreshing analysis that traces the dynamic flow of ideas across

national borders and languages, and takes the reader on a stimulating intellectual journey across the globe. The depth and scope of research that informs this book is truly impressive, and the title should be required reading for anyone studying phenomenology, early-twentieth-century Catholicism, and the interface between the two.

### 3. Thematic issue of *Religion*, 'Translation and Religion: Crafting Regimes of Identity,' ed. Hephzibah Israel and Matthias Frenz

The special issue of *Religion* edited by Hephzibah Israel and Matthias Frenz is based on contributions to the conference 'Translation and Religion: Interrogating Concepts,' held at the University of Edinburgh in September 2016. The conference was organised by the research team working on the AHRC-funded project 'Conversion, Translation and the Language of Autobiography' (https://www.ctla.llc.ed.ac.uk/), led by Israel and Frenz with John Zavos and Milind Wakankar. The volume includes articles based on some of the papers presented at the conference, and makes an important critical contribution to the field by highlighting the importance of language in the study of religion and representation. It brings together eight scholars who offer insightful analyses of the interface of religion, translation, and identity. The key question that the volume aims to respond to is (as Israel states in the 'Introduction'): 'what is translation in the religious context and to what extent do conceptualizations as well as practices of translation influence the way religions travel?' (p. 323). The contributors to the volume discuss translation and religion primarily in the Christian and Islamic contexts, drawing attention to explicit and implicit ideological implications of religious translation, and the political, cultural, and philosophical values that have shaped the strategies and practices of translators of religious texts. The authors reflect on the dynamic relationship between religion, translation, and identity, examining the interpretative function of translation, to demonstrate 'how translation strategies and choice[s], those seemingly ideologically neutral and innocuous linguistic activities, result in epistemic reordering of knowledge on religions' (Israel, p. 327). The volume as a whole offers a timely reflection on how our past and present thinking about religion(s) is actively constructed and mediated by translation processes of various kinds.

Maria Massi Dakake's article, 'Qur'anic terminology, translation, and the Islamic conception of religion', offers a comparative analysis of the Islamic and Western (historically Christian) understanding of the concept of 'religion' itself. It evaluates the extent to which Islamic terminology corresponds to the concept of religion operative in present-day scholarly discipline of comparative religious studies. As Dakake observes, the academic concept of 'religion' is of specific Western provenance and was historically used in colonial discourse to 'translate' the beliefs and practices of non-Christians into 'terminology [that] was not always an easy or natural fit for other cultural contexts' (p. 344). An examination of that methodology from a postcolonial perspective shows that 'what religious scholars might identify and refer to as "religious" practices are not necessarily recognized by those who engage in them as belonging to a special sphere of human experience that one would call "the religious"' (p. 344). Moreover, terminology used to describe religions and religious practices in a given language may undergo significant semantic shifts when translated into

another language. Dakake illustrates this by analysing different layers of meaning of the Islamic terms *dīn* (religion), *islām* (submission to God) and *īmān* (faith/belief), focusing on their scriptural and premodern usage. The polysemic character of these terms opens up meanings that might be easily obscured in translation. Dakake shows that while the translation of *dīn* as religion is accurate, in the Quran the term has a 'more dynamic, relational, and active meaning' (p. 361) than the current Western use that associates it with religious systems, communities, and institutions. The terms *islām* and *īmān* have both narrow and broad meanings. In the narrow sense they refer to the religion of Islam and Muslims as the followers of Muhammad. In the broad sense, they can refer to 'the recognition of God […] and the human being's existential and unalterable submission to God' and 'all forms of religious adherence/adherents' (p. 344). Thus, Dakake concludes that 'the Islamic conception of religion, especially in the early context of the Qur'an, reflects neither a simple adoption of Christian views of "religion," nor a form of ideological resistance to them' (p. 361). It is characterised by a set of terms whose meaning is dynamic and context-dependent, and which ought to be considered 'comprehensively and in relation to one another' (p. 362).

Torsten Tschacher's '"Extraordinary translations" and "loathsome commentaries": Quranic translation and the politics of the Tamil language, c. 1880–1950' provides an overview of the translations of the Quran into the Tamil language to examine the practices of Quranic translation in a Muslim society and its possible relationship to Protestant Bible translations in post-Reformation Europe. Tschacher focuses on the case of the Tamil translation of the Quran by Daud Shah, first printed in the 1920s. In his preface, the translator claimed that his translation was the '"the first [such] attempt in the world of Tamil,"' blaming 'the Muslim religious scholars or "*ulamā*"' for keeping Tamil-speaking Muslims ignorant of their religious tradition (p. 461). The surprising aspect of such a pronouncement, as Tschacher shows, is the fact that Daud Shah must have been aware of a long tradition of Quranic translation into the Tamil language, with the earliest partial translation published in 1874/75 (*Fatḥ al-Raḥmān*), and a competing translation printed in 1880/81 (*Fatḥ al-Karīm*). The discourse of 'novelty' surrounding Daud Shah's translation in a puzzling way ignored 'the continuity in patterns of Quranic translation and interpretation in the Tamil country' (p. 469). Tschacher contends that while Shah's deliberate ignoring of earlier translations on the surface bears similarities with the reformist Protestant Bible translations that were a response to conservative Catholic attitudes towards translation, it was in fact a result of 'transformations in the constitution of Tamil textualities and publics, which made earlier translations obsolete' (p. 477). In conclusion, Tschacher cautions against using models derived from the European Reformation to interpret transformations in the practice of Quranic translation, demonstrating that more attention ought to be paid to specific socio-cultural contexts in which particular translations originated.

The articles that interrogate the interface between religion, translation, and identity by examining translations of Christian texts include contributions by Sameh Hanna, Anne O'Connor, Hephzibah Israel, and Milind Wakankar. Hanna's 'When Jesus Speaks Colloquial Egyptian Arabic: An Incarnational Understanding of Translation' focuses on one of the earliest translations of the New Testament into colloquial Arabic, *Al-Khabar al-Ṭayyib bitāʿ*

*Yasūʿ al-Masīḥ* (the Good News of Jesus Christ, 1927), initiated by the British William Willcocks, and analyses its reception among Arabic speakers in Egypt to throw light on two different understandings of the concept of 'sacred language.' Hanna shows that when Willcocks' translation was published, it became a source of intense controversy as it used the Egyptian vernacular (*ʿāmmiyya*) and not the classical literary Arabic (*fusha*) that was used in the Quran and earlier Bible translations, and thus had acquired the widely accepted status of 'sacred language'. While Willcocks' choice of language register was motivated by his aim was to bring the Christian Scripture closer to the common people, Hanna demonstrates that 'expressing the "sacred" message in the register habitually used in mundane, everyday situations […] was (and continues to be) seen as iconoclastic by native speakers of Arabic, both Muslim and Christian' (p. 365). Discussing the controversial reception of Willcocks' translation, Hanna uses the theological concept of 'incarnation' to think through the implications of Willcocks' translatory strategy and emphasise its 'kenotic' character. Hanna concludes that the failure of the translation was due to its paradoxical status: 'Willcocks was seen as both a Christian mystic and an agent of British imperialism, a defender of the identity of the Egyptian masses and an iconoclast of Arab-Islamic identity, a carrier of the "good news of the gospel" and a distorter of Biblical sacredness whose translation was muted and pushed out of collective memory' (p. 384).

O'Connor's 'Popular print, translation and religious identity' focuses on mid-nineteenth-century Ireland and examines the circulation of popular religious translations among Catholics, looking specifically at the development of Marian devotion. The article demonstrates that in the context of the developing Irish nationalism that opposed the British rule, 'Irishness and Catholicism became more closely aligned' (p. 441). The translations of non-biblical religious publications, which included devotional texts, lives of saints, missals, and moralistic literature, helped Irish Catholics form a sense of national identity, but also to create links with a transnational religious community. 'The circulation of translated texts,' O'Connor contends, 'functioned as a powerful act of differentiation, a politicised action which offered new contact zones outside of the dominant hegemony, and access to alternative dialogues' (p. 439). Providing a case study of Mariology, the article shows that translations of texts circulating in continental Europe, mainly France and Italy, contributed to the popularisation of the cult of Mary in Ireland. Interestingly, those popular religious texts were not translated into Irish, but English. They contributed to the development of an English-language Catholic reading culture, which was an important part of 'Catholic attempts at assertion and control' in the political context of British colonisation, during which 'the literature of Protestantism has been dominant, and hostility to Catholicism rampant' (pp. 445-6). O'Connor concludes that the way in which translations of popular religious texts contributed to 'consolidating a Catholic reading public' in Ireland was paradoxical, because it 'encourag[ed] people to identify with a local grouping […] by reaching out beyond Ireland, to an international community' (p. 446). The nineteenth-century Irish identity was expanded by means of translations that widened the Irish connections to the translational Catholic community.

Israel's 'Translation, conversion and the containment of proliferation' looks at the role of translation in religious conversion, focusing on conversions to Christianity in South

Asia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It analyses the articulations of the processes of conversion from a translation studies perspective, interrogating the linguistic and conceptual aspects of translation and their effect on faith communities. Israel examines different conceptual metaphors of translation to explore alternative ways of thinking about linguistic and religious conversion. Focusing on Tamil and Hindi, Israel shows that literary translation 'was conceived as a *creative* act, where the translator makes visible something that was obscured by an unknown language' (p. 395). On the other hand, British missionaries and colonial administrators thought of translation as equivalence. These different conceptualisations of translation became important when sacred texts and religious concepts began to be translated in both directions. Israel focuses on three categories of translation projects: 1) translations of sacred texts from Indian languages and attempts to develop terminology to conceptualise the religions of India; 2) translations of the Bible and Protestant texts into South Asian languages; and 3) texts and translations produced by Indians who converted to Christianity. Discussing the third category, Israel argues that the writings of converts to Christianity are of particular interest as they illustrate 'a deliberate re-use of existing terminology, genre and theology to signal their right to retranslate, translate beyond and around the missionary task of Bible translation' and can be seen as challenging the notion of translation equivalence (p. 408). Thus, Israel concludes that considering 'alternative definitions for translation operative contemporaneously in cultures at the "receiving end" of Christian mission allow us […] to take into account the cultural constructedness of translation as equivalence' (pp. 408-9).

Wakankar's 'The incipience of the future: language and the work of humility in 19th-century Western India' examines the effects of Protestant Christianity on the religious language of Marathi speakers in nineteenth-century South Asia. It traces the impact of religious writings and conversions on 'the banal and the everyday' (p. 484), where the relation between subject and the other was reconceptualised with emphasis on the concept of humility. The article analyses three examples of such reconceptualisation: an autobiographical account of conversion; an analysis of everyday Marathi speech by a team missionary philologists; and sermons of Brahmin social reformers. Wakankar argues that 'the advent of Christianity affected the older register of the quotidian in the realm of interiority in a profound way' (p. 486). It reshaped the understanding of subjectivity, offering a reflection on surrender and self-humiliation. Those shifts happened first in the realm of language, and, as Wakankar concludes, 'prior to the development of literary forms such as the autobiography, that imply the insertion of this inward life into the public world' (p. 495). Thus, the article argues for a more sustained reflection on the role of language and translation in the construction of private and public spheres in which religious identity finds expression.

Arvind-Pal S. Mandair's 'Im/materialities: translation technologies and the (dis)enchantment of diasporic life-worlds' is the only article to move beyond the Islamic and Christian contexts and analyse the role of translation in Sikh diaspora communities. Mandair draws on Karin Littau's work on the materiality of translation to examine the multi-platform software *Sikhi-to-the-Max*, which is a tool widely used by Sikhs in communal and private spaces. Developed by Sikh American Tarsem Singh, it makes Sikh scripture widely available

by displaying three layers of text: the 'top layer of text consists of verses from *gurbani* (lit. the utterance of the Guru or Sikh scripture) also known as *gurshabad* (Word of the Guru) in classical Punjabi of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries'; the second layer is a literal translation into English; and the third layer is a 'terse exegetical commentary in modern colloquial Punjabi' (pp. 415-6). The article sets out to interrogate the interface between English, *gurbani* and modern Punjabi to arrive at a better understanding of the 'maintenance and transmission of religious and ethno-linguistic identity' (p. 419). Mandair examines the history of cultural encounters between the three languages to show that the effects of the British system of colonial education included the imposition of a monolingual understanding of religious and national identity, which by the 1920s 'produce[d] a form of modern Punjabi in Gurmukhi script which projected a self-image of the Sikhs as a monolingual and monotheistic people' (p. 425). The article discusses the impact of the impositions of Western paradigms of conceptualising religious, linguistic, and national identity on Sikhism, to conclude that 'the colonial era shift from heterological, multilingual *gurbani* to homological, monolingual modern Punjabi, is ultimately underwritten by the presumed sovereignty of English (its absolute unity) which makes possible the mechanism of generalized translation' (p. 431).

On the whole, the volume offers a significant contribution to the scholarship on religion and representation by expanding the methodological framework to include translation studies. It makes a strong case for a more sustained attention to language and cultural encounters that shape the landscape of religious studies in both local and global contexts. What nearly all contributions to the volume highlight is the legacy of English as the language of British imperialism and transnational missionary projects that not only contributed to the dissemination of Christianity on a global scale, but also had a formative impact on local beliefs, practices, and identities. Indeed, as Dakake, Israel, and Mandair argue, the very term 'religion' is too often employed in academic discourse as a neutral concept, while it ought to be conceptualised as a construct that was shaped through colonial encounters. In that process, as Israel points out, 'not only were religions "discovered" outside Europe compared to the religions as they were observed within Europe and categorized on an evolutionary scale, such comparisons also influenced the conceptualization of the term "religion" within European debates from the Enlightenment onwards' (p. 397). This, of course, has had a significant impact on the development of scholarly and popular discourses around religion and representation that continue to shape our present-day research and methodologies.

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