

response. Kate Jackson-Meyer's call for a clergy abuse truth and reconciliation may sound like a far-off dream for some, yet Jackson-Meyer convincingly makes her case, arguing, "Whatever one's position is, it seems undeniable that it is necessary for the episcopacy to listen to survivors and to create pathways for reconciliation and healing should some desire to explore those options" (231). Puen, Mescher, and Jackson-Meyer's contributions illustrate the interdisciplinary, creative, and theologically grounded constructive contributions of this volume.

Every library, church, and theology department should have this book in its resource collection. Chapters are accessible and quick to read, making them easily adaptable to classroom use as well as faith formation and reading groups. Furthermore, every theologian and minister should have this book in their personal library, consulting it as we individually and collectively discern how to be a church in the face of the abuse crisis.

ANNIE SELAK

Georgetown University, USA
Annie.Selak@georgetown.edu

The Faiths of Others: A History of Interreligious Dialogue. By Thomas Albert Howard. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2021. ix + 341 pages. \$38.00.

doi:10.1017/hor.2024.21

How did interreligious dialogue arise? More precisely, how over the last 150 years did "dialogue" become a concerted ideal carried forward by religious organizations, nonsectarian nonprofits, government agencies, and universities around the world?

In *The Faiths of Others*, Thomas Howard seeks to explain how and where contemporary institutionalized interreligious dialogue gained discursive status. As the introduction notes, the popularity of "interreligious" or "interfaith" work marks a departure from the often hostile, skeptical, or uninterested postures that religious communities took toward one another in past centuries. Yet interreligious dialogue remains a topic "heavily theologized but scantily historicized" (3).

This book historicizes the interfaith movement via three major gatherings in European and American cities. Granted, chapter 1, "Harbingers," acknowledges that interreligious engagement is not new and provides examples across ancient, medieval, and early modern history where religious communities competed, celebrated, conscripted, or collaborated with one another. But the

core chapters show how the rise of interreligious dialogue partook in distinctly modern reformulations of religious value, political relations, and institutional reputation-building on the global stage.

First, chapter 2, “Chicago,” identifies the 1893 World Parliament of Religions as the launch of the global interfaith movement, made possible by the emergence of religious liberty as a political ideal and motivated by liberal European and North American Christian desires to affirm what the Chicago lawyer and Parliament visionary Charles Bonney called the “substantial unity of many religions and the good deeds of the Religious Life.” Next, chapter 3, “London,” covers the 1924 Conference on Some Living Religions within the [British] Empire. Howard notes how this conference reflected ambitions and tensions of empire. It carried an imperial hope for religion to serve as a glue to hold the empire together as a site of meeting between “East and West,” but it also offered a platform for religious representatives to speak for themselves, and it catalyzed the establishment of organizations studying religions that would resist both theological universalism and colonial instrumentalization. Finally, chapter 4, “Rome,” documents the Catholic Church’s later entry into the conversation—namely, the Second Vatican Council and the drafting of *Nostra Aetate* in 1965. Howard situates the decree in the wake of the Shoah to document church leaders’ struggle to address antisemitism amid Middle Eastern conflicts, and then surveys subsequent magisterial documents and dialogic initiatives where the Roman Catholic Church sought to serve as an agent of global peacebuilding in the late twentieth century onward.

To his credit, Howard is up front about his choice to frame the book around major American and European conventions. He has chosen to focus on geographic “centers, not peripheries,” and so the book leaves interfaith endeavors in the global east or south to relatively brief treatments in the introductory and concluding chapters. So, too, Howard has opted to map the confluences of religious, political, and civic power, so we see little from marginalized voices within religious communities (women, the economically poor, religiously low caste, or racially oppressed). In Howard’s telling, the story of the modern interfaith movement is one of religious and political male elites meeting in western metropolises. Yet that seems to be the point.

Howard’s effort to historicize interfaith dialogue serves to inoculate us against uncritically adopting the “achingly idealistic and well intentioned” discourses of dialogue-promoters themselves, when in fact the positive reception and transformative impact of dialogue is often “elusive” (236, 251). His investigation seems informed by a disappointment or impatience with the tendency of dialogue initiatives to dabble in only the shallowest of theological thinking and to preach only to choirs of those who already want harmony: “Many interfaith events have become predictably anodyne affairs, trafficking

in bland bromides about the importance of peace and coexistence and having little actual impact" (247). Indeed, innumerable interreligious congresses have proceeded since 1893, yet today the world remains far *more* divided by nationalist retrenchments, economic disparity, and religious sectarianism than the organizers of the first World Parliament of Religions would have predicted! In a concluding section called "But Does Interreligious Dialogue Work?," Howard notes nine factors making it hard to declare success. Yet at the same time, Howard never reductively writes off interreligious dialogue as simply the machinations of Christian universalism, colonial power, or NGO industry marketing. Especially in the conclusion, Howard carefully affirms the sincerity, meaningful achievements, and ongoing potential of interfaith initiatives.

In sum, Howard's historical work offers a compelling account of how interreligious dialogue has succeeded as a discursive movement while still struggling to overcome the colonial heritage and intellectual limits of the world religions paradigm.

STEPHANIE M. WONG

Villanova University, USA

stephanie.wong@villanova.edu

Just Marriage. By Andrew Kim. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2023. xxiii + 119 pages. \$22.00.

doi:10.1017/hor.2024.16

In *Just Marriage*, Andrew Kim operates with two presuppositions. First, in sacramental marriages, there should be a presumption for endurance. Arguing against a cultural belief that marriages should be ended whenever they are not fulfilling, Kim says that Christians should stay together in almost every circumstance. However, staying together is not easy because, his second presupposition, there is a "sword between the sexes" (18). Thus, staying together means negotiating conflict.

These presuppositions lead to the primary argument of *Just Marriage*: just war criteria help to address conflict in marriage. For right intention, chapter 1, couples should intend forgiveness and reconciliation. For just cause, chapter 2, couples must discern the appropriate time to initiate conflict. Coupled with the right intentions, one spouse may begin a conflict to prevent a future, greater conflict. Think of this situation as one spouse addressing a problem before it builds to something worse. Before engaging in conflict, though, spouses