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Divine Empathy: A Theology of God, by Edward Farley

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with a space and an identity for their work in the movement (122). Although some women, like Guida Diehl, gained positions of prominence, they were relegated to the margins of the church's activities.

Among the more outrageous efforts of the German Christians were the attempts to dejudaize Christianity. When the Nuremberg Laws were promulgated in 1935, the German Christians responded with their own anti-Semitic rhetoric. They preached the wholly fallacious doctrine that Jesus was not a Jew and the gospel's message was hatred towards Jews. In 1939 they founded the Institute for Research into and Elimination of Jewish Influence in German Church Life. In March 1939 representatives of eleven regional churches issued the Godesberg Declaration, which promoted the view that the Christian faith is "the unbridgeable religious opposite of Judaism" (149). Thus directly and indirectly the German Christian movement underwrote and even promoted Nazi policies designed to destroy the Jews.

B. is to be congratulated for this scholarly, well-balanced account of the German Christian movement, which comes as a welcome addition to studies dealing with the Holocaust.

Loyola Marymount University, L.A. RICHARD W. ROLFS, S.J.

DIVINE EMPATHY: A THEOLOGY OF GOD. By Edward Farley. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996. Pp. xvi + 320.

In keeping with his earlier theological works, Farley's latest book tackles a classical theological discussion in idiosyncratic and revisionist manner. This work, inevitably to be accounted F.'s "magnum opus," takes up the challenge of a theology of God starting from the "facticity of redemption." In F.'s view, the five ways in which the question of God is typically posed (through the retrieval of tradition, historical-cultural analysis, "world-puzzlement," praxis, and fundamental ontology) are all dependent on the prior experience of "the redemptive coming-forth of God as God" (21). Hence F. believes it is here that the theology of God should begin.

His project proceeds in three phases. In the first, F. conducts a dialogue with both the classical Catholic theology of God and various forms of anti-theism. The second phase essays a way of speaking about God, a "symbolics" in F.'s terminology, that respects the fact that knowing God in God's "redemptive coming forth" is not knowing God as an object, being, or entity of which attributes can simply be predicated. The third and lengthiest task is the attempt to say how God and the world are related, or, in F.'s terms, how God acts in the world. F.'s conclusion is that the divine creativity and the redemptive activity of God in the world are both to be understood as empathetic, i.e., as oriented to "the promotion of the reality, freedom and cooperative interrelation of entities" (303). The event of Jesus Christ is for Christians the specific location or "through-which" of this facticity of redemption.

As the tripartite division of the text suggests, F.'s manner of pro-

ceeding is by way of a phenomenology of the experience of God's redemptive activity. In the individual's experience of emancipation from the chains of various idolatries, redemption in fact occurs. God is not known directly in this experience, since God is not the kind of reality that human beings can know directly, but God "comes forth" in this event of emancipation as the "only thing that could found the being of the human being so as to break the hold of idolatry" (72). Structurally, this is not unlike the method of a cosmological argument; isolate the redemptive/creative activity at work in the world, and "this we call God." But as F.'s text unfolds, there seems to be more in common with Schleiermacher than with Aquinas. The experience of God's redemptive activity occurs in a way not at all dissimilar from that in which analysis of the feeling of absolute dependence initiates the logic of the *Glaubenslehre*. This may leave some readers dissatisfied, since naming the power that makes emancipation possible is not quite the same thing as showing the necessity of God, any more than a "feeling of absolute dependence" is itself proof of the existence of any entity upon which this feeling rests. But then, for F., the moment of classical theism is past.

F.'s establishment of a theological middle ground between classical approaches and their radically postmodern critiques is most evident in his second section, where he structures a "symbolics of God." F. agrees with the classical attribute tradition that we can indeed say some things about God, but is persuaded by the anti-attribute opponents that this cannot be done by way of ontotheology. Attention must be to the "facticity of redemption." Stepping away from the "way of eminence" of classical ontotheology, F. argues that what can be said about God symbolically ("ciphers" is his preferred term) emerges through reflection on what God must be like to be the agent of redemption. In other words, F. replaces the traditional conviction that through revelation God is known as redeemer by the significantly different proposal that it is through redemption that God is revealed. But the process has a comfortingly familiar outcome, as it leads to the identification of "three inclusive names for God: Redeemer (or Spirit), Creativity and the Holy" (124). Indeed, it is generally true of this work that despite the methodological radicalism, the content of Christian faith is largely left unchanged.

If it is true that the God of F.'s book is the God of the Christian tradition, this should not lead to undervaluing the work's novelty and force. Those who in the past have found F.'s work difficult to read have done so, I believe, because of the way in which his extraordinary discernment and intelligence leads him into the practice of constant qualification. In this present book that stylistic foible becomes a positive strength. As he turns away from one well-trod theological avenue after another, F. is clearly engaged in a species of negative theology. But where scriptural authority and ontotheological positivism are denied, his redescription of the facticity of redemption allows something alto-

gether less tangible to return. Those committed to one or other house of authority will be uncomfortable with the process and the conclusions. For the rest of us, F.'s work suggests not only how unnecessary those authorities are, but how without them God emerges in the experience of redemption—at once both less surely known and yet more reassuringly encountered.

Fairfield University, Connecticut PAUL LAKELAND

DIVINE DISCOURSE: PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE CLAIM THAT GOD SPEAKS. By Nicholas Wolterstorff. New York: Cambridge University, 1995. Pp. x + 326. $59.95; $18.95.

In this fine work, based on the Wilde Lectures delivered at Oxford in 1993, Wolterstorff offers a comprehensive examination of the philosophical issues related to the religious claim that God speaks. He discusses in succession the declaration that God speaks, the interpretation of texts believed to be God's speech, and the justification for believing that God speaks.

W.'s brief is simple: divine discourse, commonplace as it is taken to be by the world's major religions, receives very little philosophical attention. This is so because, while many theologians have discussed the importance of the Word of God, few have examined issues of principal interest to a philosopher. More importantly, divine speech has too often been reduced to the more comprehensive term, revelation. W. argues, however, that divine discourse is unique and must be taken on its own terms. In light of this assertion, he proceeds to examine the claim that God speaks with reference to contemporary philosophical and hermeneutical issues.

The first part, which is the strongest, constitutes a careful analysis of both the natural act of speaking and the predication of speech to God. W. adduces Austin's familiar distinction between locutionary acts (uttering sounds or writing words) and illocutionary acts (declaring, promising, commanding, etc.) as the fulcrum for his argument. In certain routine cases of double agency, one person performs locutionary actions while another performs illocutionary ones. This is the case, e.g., when an ambassador is deputized to represent the head of state or when a trusted aide assumes the voice of a government official. In each case, the former actually speaks but the latter's intentions are expressed. In a similar way, God appropriates human discourse in order to speak. Particular agents represent him in the biblical testaments, agents through whom God performs illocutionary acts. A constant interlocutor here is Barth who resists conceding that human speech may be appropriated for divine discourse. For Barth, the dictum that God and God alone speaks for God does not allow for this kind of attribution. W. argues, however, that his own theory in no way compromises the divine sovereignty and freedom that Barth is determined to protect.