

revealing an intersection of poetry, politics, and sexuality. He has rescued their poetry from narrow confines of interpretation. May this happen for more of our foremothers!

Eisenbichler has contributed greatly to our knowledge of women's thinking and writing. We know that women's voices had been obscured to near oblivion in the past. He has restored some important voices. Many scholars of recent decades have found a wealth of insight into women's spirituality and experience of the divine through the poetry of women. As with the poetry of Siensese Catherine of Siena, Aurelia Petrucci, Laudomia Forteguerri, and Virginia Salvi may deepen and broaden our understanding self-understanding and God-understanding.

Researchers and students of Women's studies, spirituality, literature and women's history, as well as late Renaissance and Italian history, will find this a useful resource. The appendix includes selected poetry by Siensese women. Italian with English translation. Notes, bibliography and indices are also included.

L. S.

Hope Sings, So Beautiful: Graced Encounters Across the Color Line by Christopher Pramuk. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2013. 213 pp., \$19.95, ISBN 978-0-8146-8210-4.

Hope Sings, So Beautiful may seem an unusual choice for a journal dedicated to women's spirituality in history. And yet, it is not. Women's spirituality is birthed in the midst of war, grinding poverty, high levels of illiteracy, violence of every expression as well as inner turmoil. And at first glance this appears to be a prayerful and challenging resource for reflecting on the hard questions of race, ethnicity and blind bigotry.

While being mindful not to project contemporary issues on the past – and yet women's spirituality in history would necessarily include women of the past several centuries when awareness around issues of race, slavery, and bigotry emerged – entering into the experience Pramuk offers might well awaken scholars to our own blindness toward the past. Might he offer a balancing effect to a field of study that can be dry?

Artists, poets, musicians and theologians from diverse ethnic and racial communities are tapped to help enrich and even stretch our religious imaginations and to step away from our tired "same old same old." Pramuk's penetrating prose explores the themes of Awakenings, Interruptions, Crucifixions, Silences, Streets, Presences, Differences, and Song Circles. With a beautiful aesthetic, he is effectively affirming and challenging.

What Pramuk offers students of women's spirituality in history is a practical reminder to explore our foremothers within the context of their culture, and women's response, or lack of response, to the issues of injustice in their day, and to notice the non-traditional ways that our foremothers approached justice (or charity) concerns from nontraditional avenues. As we approach the texts of our foremothers, what are we failing to notice? To what are we blind?

Art historians have made significant contributions to our understanding of medieval women, recognizing the theology behind illuminated texts and commissioned artwork. I know of several medievalists who have approached women's texts from a stance and experience of *lectio divina*, or meditative reading. This depth reading produced important insights. And thus I was struck, what might be unveiled if scholars entered the contemplative experience Pramuk offers here? How might our theology or religious discourse be interrupted?

Hope Sings So Beautiful is a fine resource for scholars and students of religious studies, women's studies, women's spirituality, race and gender studies and of women's texts. Notes and index are included.

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