

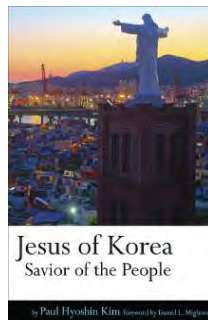
faith, this book also has much to say about spirituality and religious practice more broadly defined.



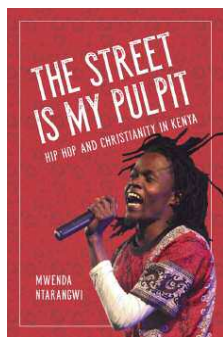
***Mother Figured: Marian Apparitions and the Making of a Filipino Universal*, by Deirdre de la Cruz** (University of Chicago Press, 320 pp., \$30.00 paperback). Containing one of the world's largest Catholic populations, the nation of the Philippines matters enormously for anyone interested in the future of Christianity worldwide. Although very diverse, Philippine Catholicism has a strong tradition of

passionate devotion to the Virgin Mary, and often she is portrayed in local styles. Pilgrimage and pilgrim shrines are key to understanding Philippine faith. It is valuable, then, to have this excellent ethnography of the country's Marian devotion. De la Cruz studies the phenomenon both in its past and present manifestations, with a strong sense of its contemporary adaptations. One of the major themes is how that faith has gone global through the use of new media, which reinforces the physical presence of Philippine diaspora communities around the globe. This is an excellent case study of the globalization of Christian faith.

***Jesus of Korea: Savior of the People*, by Paul Hyoshin Kim** (Fortress, 270 pp., \$29.00 paperback). The rapid expansion of Korean Christianity in the past 40 years has been a deeply impressive story, but what exactly sparked that spiritual explosion? The great change is often dated to the 1970s, but this readable work by the late theologian Paul Hyoshin Kim focuses on the interactions of Western missionaries and Korean converts in the years around 1900. These missionaries and converts transformed the Euro-American Jesus into a figure who spoke successfully to Korean concerns and traditions. The "American Christ gradually became embedded in the soil of Confucian Choson to become the Jesus of Korea." The intellectual exchanges during this transformation are moving. That they occurred at the height of imperial ambition worldwide makes those achievements all the more worthy of attention.



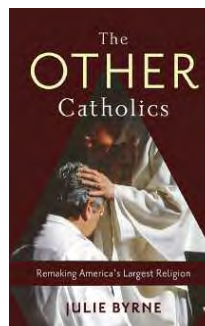
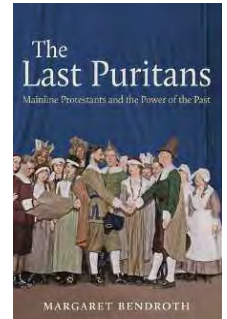
***The Street Is My Pulpit: Hip Hop and Christianity in Kenya*, by Mwenda Ntarangwi** (University of Illinois Press, 206 pp., \$25.00 paperback). Many of the growing centers of Christianity worldwide are megacities marked by wrenching poverty. Of necessity, Christian ministries often operate in a world of gangs and underclass cultures. Ntarangwi focuses on Juliani, a highly successful figure in Kenyan youth culture, to



describe the role of popular music in urban Christian outreach. This refreshing and highly informative book addresses a vital area of culture and worship that remains profoundly understudied in the West. May it spawn many imitators.

American religious history

***The Last Puritans: Mainline Protestants and the Power of the Past*, by Margaret Bendroth** (University of North Carolina Press, 258 pp., \$27.95 paperback). This smartly conceived, gracefully written work weaves four under-studied stories into one. The first is a fairly straightforward history of the Congregationalists (who later became part of the United Church of Christ), especially in the 19th and 20th centuries. The second forms a study of how religious practice primarily takes place not in denominational headquarters or in doctrinal wrangling by convention delegates but in the daily life of local congregations. The third constitutes a contribution to the relatively sparse academic literature on the growth of mainline denominations. The fourth is an imaginative exploration of how the memory of tradition—of Plymouth Rock, of First Church on the Village Green, and similar icons—has served as a perennial touchstone of self-definition, with both steadying and divisive results.



***The Other Catholics: Remaking America's Largest Religion*, by Julie Byrne** (Columbia University Press, 432 pp., \$29.95). Liberal independent Catholics not recognized by the Vatican number something like a million adherents scattered across thousands of meeting sites. They are united by commitments to apostolic succession, seven sacraments, and reverence for saints. But they also display a continually shifting array of unexpected emphases, often—though not always—including women's ordination, gay marriage, radical social justice, sacramental inclusiveness, liturgical innovation, and (Byrne quips) concerns about "how much woo-woo was too woo-woo." Reviewers have called this book brilliant, landmark, vivid, captivating, and (my favorite) rock solid. Drawing on deep research in archives as well as surveys, interviews, and ten years of field research and participant observations, the book is as important for the self-reflexive methods it reveals as for the remarkable story it tells.

Selected by Grant Wacker, who teaches Christian history at Duke Divinity School and is the author of America's Pastor: Billy Graham and the Shaping of a Nation (Harvard University Press).