

uals; his reminder that we must always, each day, start fresh from where we are; passages from the Psalms that penetrate our everyday routines. Framed by Merton's photos of the basic tools of domestic life—ladles and ladders, a woodcutter's trestle, a wagon wheel—the Psalms of the Hebrew Scriptures take on an irresistible lyrical resilience.

As a personal narrator, Esther de Waal is enthusiastic, knowledgeable, invigorating and confident in her reading of Merton. But she is also intrusive. In the end, I wish in her writing she had heeded an insight she offers readers early in the book: "There is such a danger that I talk about God, and enjoy talking about God, and do not stop and in the silence of my heart listen to Him speaking."

Perhaps if she had allowed Merton's words to speak more directly to her audience and had surrendered her own desire to talk about him, *A Seven Day Journey with Thomas Merton* might have proved a more rewarding prayer companion. As Henri Nouwen says of Merton in the foreword, ". . . this ordinary man was a true guide to the heart of God and the heart of this world."

E. Glenn Hinson, editor. *Spirituality in Ecumenical Perspective*. Louisville, Kentucky: John Knox, 1993. 200 pages. \$14.99 paperback.

Reviewed by Elaine Prevallet, S.L.

E. Glenn Hinson's *Spirituality in Ecumenical Perspective* is a collection of essays presented "In honor of Douglas and Dorothy Steere, beloved friends." The contributors are members of the Ecumenical Institute of Spirituality, a group begun shortly after the Second Vatican Council by two men, Benedictine liturgist Godfrey Diekmann and Douglas Steere, Quaker observer at the council. Steere believed in the value of a "functional ecumenism that begins with all of us encouraging each other to practice our own religious tradition to the hilt and to share our experiences with each other in every creative way we can devise" (9). To this end, he initiated annual gatherings such as this group in the United States and a Zen-Christian group in Japan, so that persons from various traditions could reflect together on issues of

spirituality. A more important goal, however, was to provide the opportunity for committed persons of various traditions to share their experience, to know one another as friends. Many of the authors in this collection express their appreciation for Steere's ecumenical sensitivity, his deep and insightful work in the area of religious thought, and the extent and quality of his friendship. The book is a touching testimony to a great and greatly loved man.

Glenn Hinson begins the collection with a fine essay setting side by side the ecumenical spirituality of Thomas Merton and Douglas Steere, seeing them both in the light of the contemplative tradition. Merton wrote,

At least this much can and must be said: the "universality" and "catholicity" which are essential to the Church necessarily imply an ability and a readiness to enter into dialogue with all that is pure, wise, profound and humane in every kind of culture. . . . A Christian culture that is not capable of such a dialogue would show, by that very fact, that it lacked catholicity (4).

"We must contain all divided worlds in ourselves and transcend them in Christ," he said (8). Steere perceived the Society of Friends to be a kind of "third stream," that is, neither Catholic nor Protestant "but part of the Christian mystical stream that has nurtured them all" (9). Friends are thus "naturally oriented to start at the right end of this ecumenical endeavor—namely, to begin from within and to draw the whole ecumenical process in this direction" (10). The freedom and openness of these two pioneers and their willingness to engage in "functional ecumenism," Hinson explains, results from their connection with the contemplative element at the very center of their traditions, or, more accurately, from "the love that those who take this route may experience at the center" (12).

In another essay later in the book, "Letters for Spiritual Guidance," Hinson reflects on Baron von Hugel and Douglas Steere as two masterful spiritual guides who often exercised their gift through correspondence. Quoting from the letters and writings of each, Hinson finds several commonalities: awareness that the work belongs to God, the capacity to be vulnerable, acceptance of individuals where and as they are, an ability to affirm the positive, and finally, patience, the willingness to "be there" for another. In both of these essays Hinson has selected quotations that both document and inspire, giving helpful in-

sight into the work of these great-souled men, each of whom has provided light for spiritual seekers.

Tilden Edwards has written an instructive and stimulating piece entitled "Spiritual Perspectives on Peacemaking," in which he describes becoming a peacemaker as a process in which we are drawn to "gradually loosen our grip on narrowing identities" held apart from a more expansive and deeper awareness of self-in-God (143). His essay includes reflections on the inner process, along with a critique of the historical responses of the Church, and then moves to some requirements and practical suggestions for peacemaking. Edwards' approach, combining as it does both inner and outer dimensions of peacemaking, is exceptionally timely and helpful.

Only two of the twelve essays are written by women, but Mary Lou Van Buren's contribution, "Spirituality in the Dialogue of Religions," though short, seemed to me one of the freshest and liveliest. Reflecting on the advent of planetary consciousness in our time, Van Buren outlines *points of meeting*: spirit, common humanity, connection with nature, and conscience. *Points of struggle* must also be recognized, positive and negative; among them, exclusiveness, will to power and idolatry, as well as integrity, courage to listen, hospitality of mind and heart, and humility. Learning to greet one another with affection and appreciation, learning exchange and acceptance of another's gifts ("sharing as offering"), are fundamental for genuine meeting. The global community that is in-the-making requires gratitude for the truth at the core of each tradition. Van Buren concludes with a metaphor for ecumenism of the future:

The way jazz musicians play together is instructive. They play with and to each other, bringing their artistry to the improvising moment. Each takes a turn while the others watch and listen, and then at the right moment they slip into playing together. The delight of the creative moment, the laughter and the applauding of one another spills over into the audience. I have been in an audience that itself rose to its feet while increasing its appreciative applause and then sat while its applause subsided, over and over again, as part of the musical dialogue. Each builds on the other. Each is unique. In solo and in company they make music (61-62).

Perhaps because this essay moves beyond the Christian and U.S. cultural ecumenical setting and opens onto the larger sense of need for

planetary unity, which will have to characterize all ecumenicity of the future, it seemed to me an especially valuable contribution to this collection.

Other essays deal with the themes of work, action and contemplation, theological framework, listening, discernment, eucharist, centering prayer, spiritual reading. The collection is ecumenical in the sense that most authors draw in some manner on Douglas Steere's writing and/or on Quaker practice and use them as points of comparison with their own tradition. It is ecumenical also because the writers represent Episcopal and Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, and Baptist traditions. Overarching is the theme of tribute to Douglas Steere, a man whose great spirit and hospitable heart have touched each one of the contributors. My only regret is that there is not some way to pay equal tribute, in this collection, to Dorothy Steere, without whom, by Douglas' own admission, he could not have done what he has done. Glenn Hinson's dedication is completely accurate: Dorothy and Douglas are "beloved friends" to innumerable people throughout the world. This collection may help us carry their legacy into the future.

Mark R. Schwehn. *Exiles from Eden: Religion and the Academic Vocation in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993. xi + 143 pages. \$19.95 cloth.

Reviewed by Roy D. Fuller.

The title of this work emanates from a metaphor used by Clifford Geertz to describe the career of academics. Geertz observed that, for the most part, academics start their careers in research universities and then move to schools that are "lower down or further out." Geertz calls this phenomenon the "exile from Eden syndrome." Mark Schwehn has adopted this metaphor in this volume, which concerns itself with the relationship between religion and the academic vocation. Schwehn, on self-imposed exile from the University of Chicago to Valparaiso, has offered a work that must be taken seriously, as it exposes the hollow core that is at the heart of much higher education in America.