

claims to the contrary. As Swedes, they supported Gustav Vasa's political claims, and backed them with historical scholarship and rhetoric, but as Roman Catholic leaders they sought to reverse Vasa's ecclesiastical reforms.

The two works of Johannes and Olaus Magnus stand, then, not only as examples of their own personal accomplishments, but as a monument to a culture that disappeared with the Protestant Reformation in Scandinavia, namely pre-Reformation Swedish Roman Catholicism. As such, they are elegant documents of those who lost out with the coming of Lutheranism to the North, and provide a remembrance of the other side of that struggle. These works also prodded Gustav Vasa and Swedish Protestant leaders into their own program of history and rhetoric, as well as providing sources for later Swedish historians. The *Gothic History* and the *History of the Nordic Peoples* have not always fared well at the hands of later scholars, but Johannesson maintains that criticism of their historical objectivity and accuracy misunderstands these works and their rhetorical intentions.

We are indebted to Johannesson, and to his translator James Larson, for this fascinating look into the lives and works of these two figures of the Scandinavian Counter-Reformation.

ST. OLAF COLLEGE

Mark Granquist

NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA

*Religion as a Province of Meaning: The Kantian Foundations of Modern Theology.* By Adina Davidovich. Harvard Theological Studies. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993. xiii + 338 pp. \$18.00.

This book is a creative contribution to a long-standing project: to articulate a vision of religion that can lead to an appropriate construal of a normative science of religion. Many philosophers of religion and Christian theologians are committed to this task, but it remains elusive and controversial. It is elusive because the critiques of the very possibility of religious knowledge are manifold, and weaving a path between them while trying to incorporate their insights is a treacherous undertaking. It is controversial because those critiques are penetrating ones and, from a different direction, because of religious objections to a normative science of religion.

Nevertheless, Adina Davidovich, Harvard Divinity School, joins

the fray with *Religion as a Province of Meaning*, and does so by way of a novel interpretation of Immanuel Kant, one of the thinkers customarily associated with rebuking pretensions to a normative science of religion.

Davidovich argues that the *Critique of Judgment* is Kant's systematic effort to grapple with the consequences of the distinction he had previously drawn between theoretical and practical reason. Kant's problem was how to comprehend the sense of purpose and freedom presupposed in moral action from a scientific point of view, which inevitably discerns only the unwavering lawfulness of nature. His contention in the second *Critique* had been that a universal moral judge is presupposed in the experience of the moral imperative. In the third *Critique*, according to Davidovich, Kant argues that the hypothetical postulate, or regulative ideal, of a moral designer is called for in analyzing any reflective judgment, and not merely the judgments of practical reason. Consequently, the deepest products of reason are essentially religious.

Religious consciousness, in Davidovich's rendering, cannot be reduced to anything more fundamental because it has a distinctive function: it marks out the realm within which judgments of purpose and value are united with judgments of the mindless regularity of nature, and so it is a kind of reflective hope by which humanity strives after a vision of the united ground of life and thought. In part two, Davidovich explores the interpretations of religion offered by Otto and Tillich as extensions of Kant's approach. For instance, Tillich's identification of religion as the depth dimension of human existence, and his correlative definition of theonomy (vs. autonomy and heteronomy), resonate strongly with her reading of Kant.

Whether or not her interpretation of Kant will finally stand, Davidovich appears to have succeeded in clarifying a sense in which religious consciousness can be seen as distinctive and irreducible. This in turn offers a way of understanding religion itself as an inalienable aspect of every kind of cultural activity, and legitimizes organized religion as the locus for preserving the hope of unity in the midst of self-alienated human culture. Organized religion may be in sorry shape, but the vision of religion as a province of meaning—as Davidovich aptly calls it—sponsors continual reform, rather than dissolving religion out of loyalty to autonomous human rationality.

Perhaps the deepest question about Davidovich's project is the

extent to which she succeeds in illuminating whether and how there can be a normative science of religion. Notwithstanding the cognitive-emotional unity of religious consciousness, nothing in Kant's third *Critique* changes the result of the first *Critique* that God can never be made the object of *theoretical* knowledge. On Davidovich's reading, Kant's understanding of religious consciousness can be the object of systematic reflection, as can the positive religions. But a *normative* science of religion whose concern is with a form of consciousness centered on a hypothetically postulated regulative ideal (i.e. God) is perplexing at best. It may even make some theologians wistful for the "good old days" of a normative science of religion whose object was God, pure and simple, known by divine self-revelation in history. Such an enterprise may be only pseudo-science, in that it seems to require the subjection of human autonomy to the reception of divine revelation, and it may tend to be blandly arrogant rather than critically normative, but at least its object purports to be *God*.

Whether a satisfactory normative science of religion can be built on Kantian foundations remains an open question. But where both the Ritschlians and the transcendental Thomists dramatically modified Kant's system in appropriating his thought to a normative science of religion, Davidovich has produced an intriguing case that at least one kind of normative science of religion founded on Kant needs nothing more than a careful reading of his third *Critique*.

SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY, BOSTON

Wesley J. Wildman

UNIVERSITY

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

*Novis linguis loqui*" Martin Luthers Disputation über Joh 1.14 "verbum caro factum est" aus dem Jahr 1539. By Stefan Streiff. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993. (Forschungen zur systematischen und ökumenischen Theologie, 70). 251 pp. DM 68.

In recent years much heat and occasionally some light has been generated by arguments over theological bondage to so-called "Eurocentric" theology. The gist of the controversies is well-expressed by the title of Robert E. Hood's book *Must God Remain Greek?* (subtitled *Afro Cultures and God-Talk*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990). Streiff's study reminds us that better acquaintance with Lu-



#### Copyright and Use:

**As an ATLAS user, you may print, download, or send articles for individual use according to fair use as defined by U.S. and international copyright law and as otherwise authorized under your respective ATLAS subscriber agreement.**

**No content may be copied or emailed to multiple sites or publicly posted without the copyright holder(s)' express written permission. Any use, decompiling, reproduction, or distribution of this journal in excess of fair use provisions may be a violation of copyright law.**

This journal is made available to you through the ATLAS collection with permission from the copyright holder(s). The copyright holder for an entire issue of a journal typically is the journal owner, who also may own the copyright in each article. However, for certain articles, the author of the article may maintain the copyright in the article. Please contact the copyright holder(s) to request permission to use an article or specific work for any use not covered by the fair use provisions of the copyright laws or covered by your respective ATLAS subscriber agreement. For information regarding the copyright holder(s), please refer to the copyright information in the journal, if available, or contact ATLA to request contact information for the copyright holder(s).

#### About ATLAS:

The ATLA Serials (ATLAS®) collection contains electronic versions of previously published religion and theology journals reproduced with permission. The ATLAS collection is owned and managed by the American Theological Library Association (ATLA) and received initial funding from Lilly Endowment Inc.

The design and final form of this electronic document is the property of the American Theological Library Association.