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Review: Langer, Lorenz. Religious Offence and Human Rights: The Implications of Defamation of Religions. Cambridge Studies in International and Comparative Law. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. Ixii+419 pp. \$115.00 (cloth)

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recent monographs by Robert Taft and Parenti. For example, when citing the important Italo-Byzantine euchology *Grottaferrata Gb VII*, Krueger relies on the outdated nineteenth-century study by Frank Edward Brightman and thus considers this a ninth-century text (112), although he later cites it as tenth century (125). But a critical edition of this manuscript has been published (Gaetano Passarelli, *L'Euclologio Cryptense Γβ VII*, *Aváλεκτα Βλάπαδων* 36 [Thessaloniki: Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies, 1982]), and its dating was subsequently pushed forward to the late tenth or early eleventh century by André Jacob.

The author's writing style is both articulate and elegant, although imprecisions creep in from time to time. The fact that Romanos the Melodist has no empathy for Judas is hardly "strange" (41), since Judas does not fit the trope of repentant sinner discussed so well by the author himself. Likewise, references to the Divine Liturgy as a reenactment of Christ's last supper read Zwinglian. Byzantine mystagogical commentators interpreted the offering of the Divine Liturgy as a reenactment—or better, anamnesis—of all salvation history, not just one event within that history.

Shortcomings aside, the book represents an important contribution. It underscores the centrality of liturgical studies for understanding the culture of Byzantium and the medieval Christian world in general, and it raises fascinating questions that should be addressed by scholars in the future. How did the contrasting liturgical traditions of other important centers, like Rome, shape personal identity differently? Did major shifts in the liturgical life of Constantinople, such as the influence of Palestinian practices and the gradual loss of the cathedral tradition, affect the formation of the self at the imperial capital? Do the hymnographic models of self discussed by Krueger fit with the models of Christian identity proposed by liturgical rites of passage, such as baptism and marriage? How do Byzantine notions of ritual purity (which changed over time) tie into the discussion of liturgical subjectivity?

Krueger beautifully demonstrates the influential role liturgy played in the formation of the Byzantine self, and his accessible writing style will doubtless make this book useful for scholars and students alike. Furthermore, the value of this work extends beyond the historical period Krueger focuses on. Many of the liturgical rites he analyzes were celebrated well into the late Byzantine and post-Byzantine periods and continue to shape the identities of Eastern Orthodox peoples down to the present day. Thus, *Liturgical Subjects* can help scholars access a range of diverse themes of Christian identity. It provides a foundation for understanding the flowering of the Hesychast movement in late Byzantium, it penetrates the sentiments that lie behind the Russian *dusha* of nineteenth-century literature, and it shows early precedents of many currents within contemporary Eastern Orthodox theology.

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LANGER, LORENZ. *Religious Offence and Human Rights: The Implications of Defamation of Religions*. Cambridge Studies in International and Comparative Law. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. lxii+419 pp. \$115.00 (cloth).

In September 2005, the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* published a series of cartoons depicting the prophet Muhammad, including one in which a bomb was hidden under his turban. According to the paper's cultural editor, Flemming Rose, the cartoons were an exercise in free speech, a value prized in liberal democracies. For him, fear of retaliation from Muslims was leading to self-censorship among Danish authors and artists. Muslim groups protested the cartoons not only within Denmark but also around the world, some of which turned violent. To their minds, the prophet

(and members of their faith) had been defamed. Cases like this are neither isolated nor new; they have long obtained within religiously pluralistic societies. What sense should be made of them?

In this expansive and searching book, Lorenz Langer uses the Danish cartoon controversy to explore some of the tensions that arise at the intersection of law and religion. He is concerned specifically with examining the defamation of religion, a relatively new concept brought before (and nominally adopted by) the United Nations Committee on Human Rights that tethers free speech, human rights, and religious offense. According to Langer, the defamation of religion “provide[s] a conceptual framework for the grievances inflicted by the cartoons, and also a promising remedy” (7). By invoking the defamation of religion, Langer observes, outrage toward the cartoons moved beyond street-level protests to the legal and political arenas: the cartoons, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) claimed, were part of the persistent violation of the human rights of Muslims. But this claim is not without controversy. For others, the OIC’s invocation of defamation served to suppress free speech and was therefore illiberal. Human rights law, on this view, protects individuals, not religions themselves nor the sensitivities of their followers.

In order to think through what (if anything) the defamation of religion might mean, and whether claiming it is an appropriate response to some offense, Langer makes several orienting moves. First, he offers definitions of many concepts that lack specificity in both the popular imagination and legal contexts, including, for example, culture, offense, religion, and speech. One salutary move Langer consistently makes in order to get his argument off the ground is to provide the reader with provisional definitions. When appropriate, he returns to and then explicates these definitions. Second, Langer appreciates, in a historical vein, the Danish cartoon controversy and other putatively offensive incidents that pertain to Islam as well as other faith traditions. He also rehearses in detail both popular and attempted legal reactions to such incidents. Third, he charts how the concept of defamation operated, in both regional and international contexts, prior to and after the publication of the cartoons. He concludes his orienting work with a narrative about the history of defamation as a legal concept and highlights the problems that attend it.

In the second part of his book, Langer moves into evaluative territory, noting that a “purely textual analysis of the legal norms regulating offensive expressions has added little to our understanding of religious offence” (259). He thus turns first toward explicating what the law and religion respectively are and how they ought to be understood in relation to one another. He then considers the importance of free speech in any society, highlighting that while each and every society privileges free speech, all of them “still impose some limits on it” (273). He is therefore concerned with appreciating the legal justifications—what he calls the “norm-rationale” (272)—for protecting and prohibiting speech within a society. In the penultimate chapter, Langer examines the ways in which religious commands have, historically, influenced different legal orders, including a helpful discussion about “insider” perspectives regarding religious offense in which he contrasts “Western” and Islamic views (324–34).

Langer thinks constructively and prescriptively (and also engagingly) in the book’s final chapter, “Religion, Its Defamation and International Law.” He notes the difficulties that attend properly defining defamation and balancing between freedom of expression and freedom of religion. These difficulties are exacerbated because international law, “as a universally applicable norm system,” is not suited to the particularist sensibilities of domestic legal systems (379). He concludes, however, with an idea that I wish he’d further developed and defended. Compared to religious grounds, he writes, “human rights offer a normative basis that is more permissive of differences, while nevertheless protecting a core that is based on egalitarian humanity rather

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than divine partiality” (379–80). Acknowledging that our world is increasingly interconnected and pluralistic, Langer claims that human rights advocates “cannot be concerned with protecting religious dogmata from attacks or insults” for the “introduction of these considerations would undermine and ultimately undo the universal scope that human rights aspire to” (380). What’s problematic about this view, inasmuch as it turns on egalitarian humanity, is that it reproduces a position for which liberalism has long been criticized: instead of being a neutral framework within which competing visions of the good can coexist, liberalism itself posits a robust but unarticulated understanding of the good. In proffering such a view, Langer is not alone; he joins a long list of liberal thinkers who have sought to adjudicate the relationship among democracy, freedom, and religion.

Langer’s book is part of a growing body of literature focused on the problems that often arise, especially in liberal democracies, when freedom of expression and freedom of religion conflict. Despite my dissatisfaction with some of his concluding arguments, Langer’s overall arc is not only thought-provoking but also helpful. He moves the reader, as only one example, through a thicket of legal cases and terminology, which is especially instructive if the reader isn’t trained as a jurist. Compared to other writers who delimit their analysis to conflicts within a particular state, moreover, Langer discusses cases that arise at both the international and regional levels. His book will be of interest to a range of scholars in religious studies, including those interested in the ways in which religion intersects with democratic theory, law, and human rights and also those interested in religion’s place in the public square.

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LASSALLE-KLEIN, ROBERT. *Blood and Ink: Ignacio Ellacuría, Jon Sobrino, and the Jesuit Martyrs of the University of Central America*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2014. xxiii+376 pp. \$34.00 (paper).

In the dark of night on November 11, 1989, members of the US-trained Atlacatl Battalion of the Salvadoran Army entered the compound of the Jesuit community at the University of Central America (UCA), roused the Jesuits from their beds, led them to a garden in the rear of their house, and blew out their brains. The burden of this book is that the murders occurred for a reason, namely, to quash “the threat posed by the work of Ignacio Ellacuría and his UCA colleagues to continued US support for the government of El Salvador and its suppression of Salvadoran civil society with its demands for economic, political, and social change” (xxi). That threat was not only political: its foundations were inscribed in the theological writings, the “ink” of the martyrs. Well before he was killed, Ellacuría had become “the pre-eminent public intellectual of the Salvadoran church” (89).

The Jesuits were called to El Salvador in the early 1960s to establish a bulwark against leftist ideology fomenting at the National University at the time. But no sooner did they arrive than change began to rattle the Catholic Church. The Second Vatican Council (1962–65) would thrust the church squarely in the midst of political realities, and Gustavo Gutiérrez’s “theology of liberation” would initiate a new way of imagining the *raison d’être* of the church itself. Meanwhile, the bishops of Latin America had organized as a body in search of a pastoral strategy for post-colonial Latin America. At Medellín in 1968 they proclaimed a preferential option for the poor that set the church up for conflict with conservative social and political forces as well as with a US ideology of development intended to stanch Communist fervor.