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Review of Joseph Ogbonnaya, Ed., Perspectives on Psychic Conversion

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notes, in an insightful act of summation, that in Stein's personalism, "not only does the objective structure of human nature recapitulate the whole of the hierarchically ordered cosmos but each human individual has the potential to progressively encompass the whole of the created cosmos . . . as a finite personal representative of the divine in the created cosmos, a finite personal analogue of the infinite personal Creator" (259).

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Perspectives on Psychic Conversion. Edited by Joseph Ogbonnaya. Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2023. xxvi + 378 pages. \$29.00.

Joseph Ogbonnaya's edited volume *Perspectives on Psychic Conversion* offers a rich and multifaceted exploration of the concept of psychic conversion, building on Bernard Lonergan's triad of intellectual, moral, and religious conversions. The collection of seventeen essays provides a comprehensive examination of the role and implications of psychic conversion across various fields, making it a pivotal read for scholars and practitioners interested in theology, psychology, and social transformation.

The volume is divided into four parts, each addressing different dimensions and applications of psychic conversion. Part one lays the theoretical groundwork, with M. Shawn Copeland's opening chapter highlighting the potential of psychic conversion as a therapeutic tool for addressing social biases and injustices, particularly those related to race and gender in American society. Copeland's engagement with Kelly Brown Douglas's work on Black bodies and justice provides a compelling case for the necessity of integrating psychic conversion into social transformation efforts.

Joseph Ogbonnaya's own contribution in chapter 2 underscores the indispensability of Robert Doran's functional specialties for accessing Lonergan's cognitional theory and existential conversion. Ogbonnaya argues that recognizing the intrinsic connection between the psyche and the mind is crucial for a holistic understanding of meaning and value. This recognition complements Lonergan's intentionality analysis, bridging the gap left by his earlier work.

In chapter 3, John Dadosky further connects Lonergan's ideas to psychology, arguing for the legitimacy and necessity of Doran's concept of psychic conversion. Dadosky asserts that this fourth level of conversion finds its basis in Lonergan's discussions of affective

conversion, making a strong case for its integration into contemporary theological discourse.

Mary Josephine MacDonald's chapter 4 brings a creative theological anthropology into dialogue with neuroplasticity and psychology, responding to Lonergan's call for interdisciplinary collaboration. This chapter exemplifies how scientific insights can enrich theological understanding and practice.

Part two delves into the developments in understanding psychic conversion, particularly in relation to bias and attentiveness. Blaise Murray's exploration of bias and bigotry as impediments to human development is notable for its emphasis on the need for psychic conversion to overcome these barriers. Jonathan Heaps and Ryan Hemmer contribute to this discussion by examining terminological allergies and the role of the psyche in speculative method, respectively, each emphasizing the restorative power of psychic conversion.

In part three, the application of psychic conversion to spirituality and trauma is explored. Danielle Nussberger's chapter on spiritual direction employs the RAIN technique to facilitate psychic conversion, fostering communal and social transformation. Joseph K. Gordon's examination of biblical imagery and Gerard Whelan's insights into the Ignatian *Spiritual Exercises* further illustrate the transformative potential of psychic conversion in spiritual contexts.

Randy Rosenberg's discussion of trauma emphasizes the necessity of attending to the neural and psychic dimensions of human experience for healing and self-transcendence. His engagement with the works of Bessel van der Kolk and René Girard enriches the understanding of psychic conversion's role in addressing trauma.

Part four addresses contemporary issues such as racism, decolonization, and education. Cyril Orji's chapter on Replacement Theory and Jeremy Blackwood's exploration of antiblackness demonstrate how psychic conversion can address deep-seated societal biases. Mark Obeten's analysis of decolonization and Andrea Stapleton's evaluation of Catholic higher education highlight the importance of psychic conversion in promoting authentic development and self-transcendence in diverse contexts.

Perspectives on Psychic Conversion is a testament to the impact psychic conversion can have at both individual and societal levels. By situating psychic conversion within the broader framework of Bernard Lonergan's threefold process of intellectual, moral, and religious conversion, this collection not only expands the theoretical discourse but also provides practical insights for addressing contemporary challenges.

For scholars of theology, Ogbonnaya's volume is particularly valuable. The essays offer explorations into how psychic conversion intersects with theological concepts and practices, making it a

significant addition to contemporary theological studies. The book's engagement with Lonergan's work and its extension through Doran's contributions provide a theoretical framework that can enhance scholarly understanding and teaching of conversion processes. Psychologists and practitioners in related fields will find the interdisciplinary approach of this volume enlightening. The incorporation of psychological theories, such as neuroplasticity and Jungian psychology, into the discourse on psychic conversion highlights the relevance of this concept for understanding human behavior and mental processes. This makes the book a useful resource for those looking to integrate theological insights with psychological practices, particularly in the context of healing and personal development.

Overall, *Perspectives on Psychic Conversion* stands out as an invaluable resource that bridges theology, psychology, and social ethics. Its interdisciplinary approach and diverse applications make it a crucial text for anyone interested in the multifaceted nature of conversion and its implications for both personal and societal well-being. By addressing contemporary issues through the lens of psychic conversion, Ogbonnaya's volume offers a comprehensive and practical guide for scholars, practitioners, and educators alike.

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On Helping One's Neighbor: Severe Poverty and the Religious Ethics of Obligation. By Bharat Ranganathan. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2024. xxvi + 204 pages. \$110.00.

Jesus makes it abundantly clear throughout the Gospels that we are to love our neighbor and shows us how to help our neighbor through the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37). In *On Helping One's Neighbor: Severe Poverty and the Religious Ethics of Obligation*, Bharat Ranganathan retrieves this message through the lens of extreme poverty. The author argues that severe poverty is not merely an economic or social problem, but a moral failing which demands ethical reflection and action. Through Catholic ethics and moral philosophy, he shows the potential for Christian ethics to inform and enhance secular approaches to poverty alleviation. Ranganathan advocates for a more comprehensive understanding of ethical obligations toward the poor by transforming ethical principles into concrete actions and policies. The text encourages readers to reflect on their own moral responsibilities and the broader societal obligations to support those in need.