

If there is something missing from this collection of papers, it is sufficient attention to the role of religion in Röpke's thought. Religion was a very important subject for Röpke, partly as a sociological fact but also because Röpke was very much a believing Christian, especially in the second half of his life. This topic requires closer study and is very relevant for the subject matter addressed by this book.

Was Röpke a liberal or a conservative? I suspect that by the end of his life Röpke would have avoided excessive attachment to either label. His interest was in preserving freedom, reason, and the sources of the Western tradition in a world that was becoming deeply hostile to all of these things. It is to the credit of the editors and contributors to this collection of essays that they have produced a book that will surely spur further discussion of the thought and ongoing relevance of a sophisticated and synthetic twentieth-century public economist and social philosopher.

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Holy Humanitarians: American Evangelicals and Global Aid

Heather D. Curtis

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2018 (370 pages)

Holy Humanitarians is a curious social biography that tells the story of an “evangelical,” Louis Klopsch, and his magazine the *Christian Herald*, as an anchor for accessing larger questions about evangelicalism, both then and now. The goal, in the author's words, is to tell the largely forgotten story of Louis Klopsch and his media campaign to make “Christian America” the “Almoner of the World” and in so doing to make visible “the theological principles, economic assumptions, racial biases, nationalist aspirations, gendered suppositions, and religious convictions that have shaped the meaning, practice, and trajectory of evangelical charity in the United States over the course of the twentieth century” (293). On the first, she is undoubtedly successful, but on the second the record is more mixed. Theological, economic, racial, political/national, gendered, and generically religious convictions do come through the text, but more as a feature of biography, and not therefore always straightforwardly or coherently. The author flags at least five large-scale tensions for the reader in the course of this book, worth visiting as part of one of the great origin stories of the American evangelical aid complex.

The first perennial tension that Curtis draws out is that among evangelicals themselves on the nature and priority of charity, particularly emphasizes on material charity and preaching of the gospel. A clear feature of Christian social teaching has long been captured in popular readings of the Great Commission. The *Christian Herald* was, after all, founded by an “ardent premillennialist who continued to prioritize evangelism over philanthropy in the British version of the newspaper” (63). The complication arose in whether in the

making of disciples, charity, philanthropy, and development should also be commanded. The *Christian Herald*, and Louis Klopsch, certainly saw no such tension. “By aiding the afflicted of every nation, they contended, participants in the *Christian Herald*’s relief campaigns would help foster solidarity among God’s children all around the world and in so doing help usher in Christ’s kingdom of universal peace and goodwill” (13). This became a special test during the crisis in Turkey, in which Christian charity via the *Herald* was focused even on the nonbeliever. Klopsch argued that “every loaf of bread given ‘In His Name’ served as an evangel of peace between Christian and Muslims” (65), an argument sorely tested by a genocide of Armenians, including Armenian Christians, a profound injustice that lives large even in Turkish foreign relations to this day.

This speaks to a second tension between humanitarianism and justice. It is now well established in the developmental social science that charity can be profoundly ineffective, and sometimes downright toxic, in environments that suffer violence, lawlessness—in a word—injustice. The anchor of the now well-loved International Justice Mission classic, *The Locust Effect*, is something like the need for a simultaneous realization of norms. There can be no charity where it is robbed out from under the poor. There can be no growth where assets are not owned and courts do not foreclose. There can be no charity and development, in other words, without the supporting structures of justice. Hence, the perennial temptation of American evangelicals flexing their emerging superpower status: if charity depends on justice, then maybe a “Christian nation” should get busy providing some? This is what Curtis describes as a “new strategy for evangelical engagement with American foreign policy” (109). Arguing not only for humanitarianism but for what we would now call humanitarian intervention, Klopsch called it a “sin and a shame to hold aloof from quarrels ... when interference by force would be a righteous course” (109). The contemporary ear cringes at infelicitous turns of phrase like extending the reign of Christ through “holy warfare” or “crusades of mercy” or even a “Gospel of human rights” (109–10). Humanitarianism so easily slips into imperialism, we find.

This drives home a tension of the third kind: that of a sort of American evangelical political theology (I am not convinced such a thing exists). It is undeniable that Christ’s commission was given not to the American state, but to Christian believers and the church, and yet when secular powers have the structural capacity to do enormous good, to facilitate, at the very least, that commission, should a Christian not insist that they do so? Perhaps most vexing is the delightful rivalry that the *Christian Herald* and the American Red Cross fight throughout Curtis’s biography, as Klopsch and others insist that Christian charity is not the proper provenance of the secular state but of Christians, and that for the same reason this is why American foreign policy should make him and the *Christian Herald*, not the American Red Cross, the foreign aid organization of the State Department’s choice. Who are the proper organizations to carry out this work of charity, and where, after all, are the appropriate limits between ecclesial work commanded by the Christian God and humanitarian work demanded (at times) by the secular state?

Disagreements about how to manifest good intentions in practice were endemic *inside* evangelicalism too, Curtis shows. Even in the *Christian Herald* “American evangelicals

remained deeply divided about the nature of property and proper modes of philanthropy despite the editors' efforts to create consensus" (46). During the famine in India, Rev. Marcus Fuller, for example, argued that "instead of encouraging India's famine sufferers to rely on free handouts, relief agencies ought to provide employment through building and irrigation programs that would enable participants to earn money to purchase grain donated from the United States" (161). "We want to give as little gratuitous help as possible," explained Fuller's wife Jennie. Instead, they labored to "help the people to help themselves" (161). To the attentive developmental ear, this is a controversy straight out of debt restructuring one hundred years later. What is the proper way to offer Christian charity without slipping into imperialism or paternalism? What are effective measures of economic growth and ultimately self-reliance? Evangelicalism, as it turns out, has far from one view on the subject. It is, perhaps, not even clear that evangelicalism is a strong-enough reed to support such socioeconomically robust debate.

Internal strife was itself a perennial feature, from Charles Sheldon's biting critiques of military intervention, to the proper mechanisms (Sheldon also advanced "Christian Socialism") or organizations (the sometimes petty rivalry with the American Red Cross) to effectively deliver on aid, to the sting of hypocrisy that others challenged the *Herald* with as it labored abroad while neglecting major structural issues at home. In a biting section on "Evangelical Charity in the Age of Jim Crow" Curtis flags the endemic tension of self-flagellation for evils at home while combating them abroad. Curtis's conclusion is one of her more transparent judgments in the text, arguing that evangelicals traded cultural position for justice, a commentary that leaps off the page for its contemporary allusion (212).

But for all of these tensions, I am not sure if theological, economic, nationalist, gendered, and so on, presuppositions figure clearly in the book. It is presumed, for example, that Christian principles compel a certain humanitarianism and that only the details truly divide. But what was the theological *content* of a vision that drove American Christians to offer charity to Turkish Muslims? Some mention is made of the universal blood of humankind descended from Adam, or the Golden Rule, or that political chameleon of a parable, the good Samaritan. But it is a rather long way from first-century Palestine to nineteenth-century Westphalian America. It is, for example, hard to imagine destitute Palestinian Christians in the first century taking offerings for pagan Parthians suffering under Roman raid, and yet this is just the kind of theology of benevolence that developed during this period. This benevolence is at once a product of America's emerging superpower status, as well as the theology that enabled and was created by it. The political theology is only more fraught, to say nothing of emerging differences over the social gospel—what Abraham Kuyper called "the social question" or what Pope Leo XIII called the "new things" (*Rerum Novarum*). It is not even clear what Christian denominations most of the major players in the book belong to. The reader is left unsure why and under what conditions all of these players would be considered "evangelical," though evangelicalism has its own contemporary baggage. The book is, in other words, a turn against a kind of abstract,

intellectual history toward a kind of “history as practice,” the “big ideas” to be gleaned between the pages of activity, with an expectation less of coherence than conviction.

Curtis describes the book as a “cautionary tale,” one that is unquestionably full of “mixed motivations” and uneven, even harmful, consequences. It is certainly those things. But it is also a cautionary tale about the movement in how history is told. In social science terms what we have here is a convincing and constructive anecdote, but not data, which would require more care with definitions of terms, and more causal investigation. It is a useful book, to be sure, and interesting so far as it goes, but it is also a historiography told from “the other side” of Charles Taylor’s *A Secular Age*, one more concerned with social practice than the intellectual and religious worlds that made those practices intelligible. I appreciate what this kind of history can bring us, but it is also suspiciously incomplete.

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The Viennese Students of Civilization: The Meaning and Context of Austrian Economics Reconsidered

Erwin Dekker

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Erwin Dekker has written a wonderful book examining key figures in the tradition of Austrian economics—Ludwig von Mises, Joseph Schumpeter, Friedrich Hayek, as well as close allies such as Karl Popper—in order to situate them within the context of *fin de siècle* Vienna from which they sprang and to highlight the many intriguing connections between their economic thought and other areas of inquiry. Intellectual culture in late Habsburg Vienna was not characterized by sharp disciplinary boundaries, nor was it confined within an academic context. As Dekker illustrates, Viennese intellectuals of all kinds congregated in a range of overlapping circles; they frequently knew one another and interacted regularly both in print and in person. One of the delights of Dekker’s book is his impressive ability to tease out links between the ideas of the Austrian economists and the work of literary figures like Joseph Roth and Hermann Broch, philosophers like Wittgenstein, psychologists like Freud, social critics like Karl Kraus, and medical scientists like Joseph Dietl.

Dekker argues that the Austrian economists are best understood—borrowing the label of his title—as “Viennese students of civilization.” Each of the three key words in this phrase is significant. First, the Austrian economists are Viennese; that is, they arise out of a particular cultural and intellectual environment shaped in particular by the decline of the Habsburg Empire. Second, they are students. This is in contrast to a certain conception of the social scientist, popular in the early twentieth century, as a neutral technician able to supply the necessary means for achieving whatever policy goals are in view. By contrast, the student, motivated by a certain skepticism about our ability to engineer