

vantage in a competitive system and are likely to continue to lose. Tanner has many recommendations for change, most of which are not new to those who read in this field.

Finally, a stylistic note: This is a tough read. Tanner's writing can be complex and confusing. If unacquainted with radical orthodoxy or narrative theology, her entire approach may be difficult to capture.

—Kent Van Til
Hope College, Holland, Michigan

The New Globalization: Reclaiming the Lost Ground of Our Christian Social Tradition

Richard W. Gillett

Cleveland, Ohio: The Pilgrim Press, 2005 (219 pages)

Richard Gillett, a retired Anglican priest and activist, writes out of the Episcopal social tradition, which ends up sounding much like an attempt to reformulate the social gospel to apply to the global economy. He attempts to cover much ground and does so at the risk of oversimplifying very complex issues. For example, he presents brief sketches, which he admits are not exhaustive, of the history of poverty, the evolution of work, Christian social commitment, and church involvement in the economic order. The call to apply Christian ethics to economics and the admonition to the church's social mission are well taken and help provide a necessary check on the corrosive aspects of individualism. He approaches the global economy from the view of the working poor and clearly wants the reader to identify with them. Toward the end of the book, he outlines strategies for advocacy for the working poor around the world.

The book is a bit disjointed, though the thesis of using Christian ethics to moderate the harmful effects of globalization is clear throughout the book. It relies heavily on anecdotal evidence that comes from the stories of the author's involvement in social ethics as a parish priest. It has many references to the 1960s and 1970s and turn-of-the-century (twentieth) social gospel literature. In addition, its focus on labor and unions makes it seem a bit out of date.

Gillett is coming to the subject of globalization with a clear agenda that is critical of the market system (the medieval guild seems to be his ideal for work). He leaves the reader with the impression that there is no debate over the merits of globalization (for example, the work of unabashed globalization advocate Thomas Friedman is dismissed in a couple of paragraphs). In my judgment, he is overly market skeptical. He seems to have little appreciation for how the market has lifted masses out of poverty all over the world where it has been tried. He is also overly critical of the classic liberal tradition that emerged out of the Reformation. Though he is right to point out the corrosive effects of individualism, there is no sense of the other contributions of the Reformers to the explosion of economic growth and prosperity that followed the break from the static social order of the middle ages. Though he never comes out and admits it, he seems to

take a zero-sum-game view of modern economic life. He cites the notion that the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer and suggests that the former is causing the latter. That reflects a view of economic life that was truer in biblical times and is true in certain parts of the developing world, but to assume that such an economic worldview characterizes the modern information economy betrays a misunderstanding of economics.

There is also no sense that there is serious debate about many of the aspects of globalization. For instance, he asserts that Third World debt ought to be forgiven, with no mention of the voluminous debate about that complex issue. Further, he condemns child labor, without any mention of the debate over that in the business ethics literature. He is very critical of plant closures and downsizing, assuming that those are necessarily immoral and contrary to Christian ethics. Further, the reader gets no sense that there are serious schools of thought that hold that the market is consistent with a Christian ethic. There is no recognition that there are serious thinkers who hold to an entrepreneurial vocation and that the market nurtures important virtues such as initiative, inventiveness, hard work, thrift, and responsibility. He cites the earlier Catholic encyclicals as support for his view, but there is little mention of the later work of John Paul II and his support for the market system. The underlying assumption throughout the book is that the market is a problem that needs radical fixing and that most aspects of the global economy are contrary to the Christian social tradition.

This volume is a good representative of the mainline religious critique of globalization. However, it should not be viewed as representative of the entire discussion, but read in conjunction with other works to present a more balanced view of the global economy.

—Scott B. Rae

*Talbot School of Theology, Biola University,
La Mirada, California*

God and the Evil of Scarcity: Moral Foundations of Economic Agency

Albino Barrera, O.P.

Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press,
2005 (287 pages)

[Editor's Note: *This book was previously reviewed by Giacomo Costa in this journal (9:1, pp. 182–84). The editor received a request to evaluate the accuracy of that review, and so the book and the previous review were submitted to executive board member Ricardo Crespo. The following is his evaluation.*]

Giacomo Costa, Professor at the University of Pisa, Italy, begins his review of *God and the Evil of Scarcity* by developing some insights about theodicy as being understood as a rational inquiry about the sense and explanation of evil in a world created by God. This discussion consumes half of the review.