

Natalie Carnes. *Image and Presence: A Christological Reflection on Iconoclasm and Iconophilia*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018. 233 pages. \$20.

In *Image and Presence: A Christological Reflection on Iconoclasm and Iconophilia*, Natalie Carnes presents a theoretical foundation of images that complicates the stereotypical binary of iconophilia, the love of images, and iconoclasm, the destruction of images. Carnes reflects on Christian images of Christ, examining the varied ways in which Christ is made present through images. Her agenda is twofold. She is concerned with the ways in which destructive acts related to images can be a source of interreligious and ecumenical division, and she argues that images can unify us if we identify universal iconophilic and iconoclastic dimensions at play when images are encountered and when varied understandings of images are negotiated.

Each chapter of *Image and Presence* is focused on a particular image of God with some functioning as a unique representative of a broader genre of image. In chapter 1, Carnes reflects on Lorenzo di Credi's *Madonna and the Nursing Christ Child* as a representation of *Maria lactans* images. She argues that the suckling Christ child reveals an image of God fully incarnate amidst human desire yet working to draw human beings toward divine desires for the ordering of the world. Chapter 2 contains a reflection on Fra Angelico's *Annunciation of Cortona* as an image of the visibility and invisibility of God who is present yet transcendent. In chapter 3, Matthias Grünewald's *Isenheim Altarpiece* is representative of crucifixes and grounds a reflection on the iconoclasm of Christ, which she defines as "his breaking of brokenness" (119). Vladislav Andrejev's *Icon of the Myrrh-bearing Women* serves to introduce a reflection on the visibility and invisibility of God, examining how "the visible is being transfigured by the invisible" (151). In chapter 5, Nicolas Poussin's *The Adoration of the Golden Calf* provides an image of those who fail to wait for God's divine presence. Here Carnes argues that faithfulness to God demands an "iconoclasm of fidelity" (154). Here she partially retrieves language of iconoclasm as necessary in order for the faithful to be continually transformed into the image of God.

Carnes engages images of Christ from the East and the West, and she also engages contemporary images such as Andres Serrano's *Piss Christ*, *El Cristo Negro* of Esquipulas, and Mark Duke's *Our Lady of Ferguson*. She utilizes these images as she reveals how iconoclasm—and iconophilia—are at the heart of Christianity in the very person of Christ. She writes, "Iconoclasm needs iconophilia. And iconophilia, too, needs iconoclasm" (182). In retrieving iconoclasm as integral to Christology and the faithful Christian life, Carnes guides the reader to examine the complexity of our engagement with images in a manner that is parallel to the complexity of our encounter with Christ, the visible Image of God. This perspective emerges out of her conviction that the negotiation and encounter of images within and without the Church can serve as a means of both unification across the binary of "iconoclast" versus "iconophile" and recognition of shared human appreciation for images and the imaged.

While this book speaks to theory of image, spirituality, and Christology, it is also evocative from a liturgical and homiletical perspective. Carnes's work brushes up explicitly and implicitly with sacramental theory, particularly as it relates to the relationship of images to human encounter of God's presence. She directly engages the relationship between images and the Eucharist, and she reflects throughout upon the human experience of the arriving, abiding, rived, and rivening presence of God through the matter of this world, e.g. the person of Christ and images.

From a homiletical perspective, Carnes's work can be read with awareness and concern for how we must conceptualize and proclaim the image-laden, imaged, and imaginative Word of God even as it functions in relationship to other ecclesial and secular images. Might the role of Christian preaching be interpreted in relationship to iconoclasm and iconophilia? Might the preacher—in both iconoclastic traditions and iconophilic traditions—be simultaneously called to pastorally curate images through which persons can experience the divine and to disrupt or even destroy images that restrict participants' experience of the divine?

This book is an academic monograph that may not suit casual reading. While the total page count is 233 pages without the end materials, the work is 187 pages in length.

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