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Review: 'Where Have You Gone, Michelangelo: The Loss of Soul in Catholic Culture'

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gia Project, became the influential catalyst while he was studying at the Union Theological Seminary in New York. Supported by the National Council and by Union, the Southwest Georgia Project similarly outlasted the demise of the civil rights movement. In the late 1960s, the Office on South Africa was started by Union Seminary students. The Rev. Timothy Smith, a Union graduate, headed the office for two decades. It was one of the earliest divestment projects in the country and became one of the National Council's most successful organizing efforts. The divestment movement spread from there in the 1970s and 1980s among churches, colleges and universities, city and state governments, labor unions, and pension funds. The stories of these two important National Council projects remain largely untold.

Vassar College

LAWRENCE H. MAMIYA

Where Have You Gone, Michelangelo?: The Loss of Soul in Catholic Culture. By Thomas Day. New York: Crossroad, 1993. xii + 240 pages. \$19.95.

Thomas Day, associate professor of Music, at Salve Regina University, Newport, Rhode Island, provides a searing commentary on contemporary Roman Catholic liturgical practice, calling it "a weird variety show" (xi). This sequel to *Why Catholics Can't Sing* derides what Day identifies as current liturgical "style," including liturgical language, art and environment, and music. In the final chapter he names the pivotal problem as "centralization." The term refers to pastors, musicians, or liturgists, who control the style of worship at any given Mass or, in many cases, at every single liturgy in a particular parish.

By Day's account, their absolutist attitudes exclude any use of Latin and categorically reject the preservation of pre-Vatican II worship spaces. Devoid of humility, these "aging hippies" scorn the "crown jewels" of the Catholic musical inheritance such as simple chant and other accessible congregational music, as well as more elaborate liturgical music settings that choirs could sing and assemblies prayerfully enjoy. Most contemporary music, according to Day, exalts adolescent self-absorption in musical settings nearly impossible for the untrained voice. The hymns "Be Not Afraid" and "On Eagle's Wings" serve as Day's premier examples. The ubiquitous presence and power of the "liturgical egoists" who compose words and music threatens Catholic culture's "soul," defined in Day's concluding remarks as "the mystical source of creativity" (225).

The evidence supporting his indictment of liturgical style is primarily anecdotes exemplifying a variety of liturgical abominations. The author weaves these stories into a narrative expounding his viewpoint, backed by occasional references to secondary sources. Each chapter ends with a series of random observations tangentially related to the chapter's focus under the heading "For Further Meditation and Group Discussion." The style strives for cleverness as indicated by the architecture chapter's subtitle, "Edifice Wrecked."

Day brings to the fore the too-frequent egocentric displays of solo performers who serve as presiders and musicians. The casual disregard for rit-

ual's necessarily formal and traditional character also receives its due. Arguments for the liturgy in Latin alongside vernacular offer thought-provoking commentary on the Tridentine ability of the rite of the Eucharist to create a space for worship devoid of egocentric display. Day describes the latter coarsely as the "horse's ass factor." He also brings attention to the impact of the U.S. consumerist mentality in his critique of liturgical fads, most evident in music.

Neither the author's cleverness nor the entertaining anecdotes compensate for the lack of careful scholarly argument that reforming, restoring, and preserving liturgical practices deserve. This reviewer recalls an undergraduate encounter with Josef Jungmann's historical studies of liturgy. Even an undergraduate could recognize the author's care as he laid the groundwork for liturgical renewal. Day's penchant for sarcasm provides momentary smirks but, like the liturgical fads he decries, their overuse lead to annoyance rather than conviction.

Despite its serious drawbacks, the book merits consideration by liturgical ministers for the issues underlying the anecdotes. Scholars of U.S. Catholicism may find interesting Day's selective use of memory and his assumptions about Catholic culture. Libraries with collections of Catholic Americana or post-Vatican II reactions could find this text a suitable addition. Undergraduate libraries with limited budgets should weigh its possible popular appeal against its scholarly shortcomings.

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SANDRA YOCUM MIZE

Mystic Endowment: Religious Ethnography of the Warao Indians. By Johannes Wilbert. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993. xxi + 308 pages. \$34.95 (paper \$24.95).

This volume is a collection of ten articles written over the last twenty years by a scholar and field ethnologist who has devoted much of his life to the people he studies. As noted in the editor's foreword, the central focus is an "ecology of mind" that depicts the intricate relationship between the aboriginal religious worldview and the people's environmental, material, and social processes. One might see here an example of what Geertz has called "thick description" of religion as a cultural system—the mapping of the basic codes that interpret a way of life. Throughout the book there run descriptions of universal categories of religious phenomenology: sacred time, space, and personalities; personifications of nature; "power"; the image of the center; origin myths, and, so central to it all, that now universally applied Siberian word, shamanism. This latter concept carries with it critical elements that constantly challenge both the religious and secular understanding: ecstasy, visions, soul journeys, and mysterious healing. It also includes problematic areas for theological analysis, such as sorcery, hallucinogenic experience (chap. 4) based here on "excessive tobacco smoking" to the extent of out-of-body experiences, and the problem of a religious elitism (which Paul Radin once described as a type of "clergy-lay" conflict).