

embedded in Buddhist breathing praxis or engage with Mahāyāna philosophy or the Zen tradition's understanding of them.

To address Buddhist breathing in the classroom, I recommend providing excerpts from Thich Nhat Hahn's masterful book devoted to this subject, *Breathe! You Are Alive: Sutra on the Full Awareness of Breathing* (Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press, 1996). Here, Nhat Hanh translates and comments on the early, canonical Buddhist meditation manual, *Sutra on the Full Awareness of Breathing*, which instructs meditators on employing breath to examine their physical sensations and investigate doctrines such as impermanence, no-self, attachment.

Although Piccione's cover mentions Zen, the author omits Buddhist doctrines related to breath meditation. His imagined reader is a devout Christian. There could have been fertile discussion in this interreligious area, such as that explored by Rōshi Robert Kennedy, SJ, in his *Zen Gifts to Christians* (New York: Continuum, 2000). Zen practice is tied to the Mahāyāna Buddha nature theory that locates the potential for enlightenment in every human being; it is indifferent to feeling a higher being's love. To discern how to negotiate the theological difference between Zen and Trinitarian spirituality using the breath, educators could include the section "Sitting with the Buddha" from Nhat Hanh's *How to Sit*.

Piccione's book gives readers concrete guidelines of Christian breathing meditation interwoven in Trinitarian spirituality. With complementary readings, this work can be used in class to examine Christian contemplation practice influenced by techniques derived from Buddhism.

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If God Still Breathes, Why Can't It? Black Lives Matter and Biblical Authority. By Angela N. Parker. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2021. xvi + 117. \$16.99 (paper).

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The title of Angela N. Parker's book makes clear that it is no conventional book on scriptural interpretation. As a work in Womanist biblical scholarship, Parker's book explains how normative modes of biblical exegesis, with its underlying "White cultural worldview" (chapter 3), is like a knee pressing on her neck, rendering the Bible more akin to the arbitrary violence of discriminatory policing rather than the life-giving breath of God that it should be. If unjust state power is what choked George Floyd to death, it is

what Parker terms “biblical authoritarianism” or “bibliolatry” (chapter 2), as wielded especially by particular strands of Christianity (White evangelicalism is her primary interlocutor) that chokes Christians of color such as herself.

The relevancy of Parker’s book, however, moves well beyond the parallels it draws between Floyd’s murder and the White privilege and racism that undergird the theological academy and its accepted methods of biblical interpretation. Though published in 2021, Parker’s book reads as an unnerving harbinger to what transpired on January 27, 2023. On that date, the Memphis, TN, police department released body camera footage of five of its officers assaulting Tyre Nichols, an innocent twenty-nine-year-old Black man, who, while being brutally beaten, can be heard pleading, “I’m just trying to get home.”

It is hardly possible to read Parker’s book without thinking about Nichols’s pleading. Parker’s careful interpretation of Galatians 2:16 shows how a Womanist approach illumines Jesus’s essential desire for all persons to “make it home” (chapter 4). More specifically, Parker proposes, if “faith in Jesus Christ” is rendered as “walking in the faith of Jesus Christ,” then we can better see that “the work of the Galatian community was to walk each other home.” Our calling today is to do the same, but that demands that we refuse all that gets in the way of us making it home. That will entail confronting how White racism and notions of biblical inerrancy and infallibility (the doctrinal enablers of biblical authoritarianism) reinforce each other as “agents of gaslighting” (chapter 3), by which Parker means the tendency to disavow how persons of color might read the Bible in light of their experiences and limit them to only reading the Bible within prevailing norms of biblical interpretation. These long-standing norms determine “who has the authority to ask certain questions of Scripture” (chapter 1), and it is “White male biblical scholars” “who normally have the most power over deciding the ‘proper’ readings of Scripture” (chapter 2). Only when we disabuse ourselves from the idea that there is one authoritative mode of biblical interpretation (chapter 4)—and, correlatively, affirm that the embodied experiences of persons of color *are* authoritative when it comes to discerning the Holy Spirit’s work through scripture (chapter 2)—can we begin to approach the Bible as a genuine companion on our journey home.

Nichols never made it home. As his death continues to reverberate throughout the United States, we do well to read Parker’s book if we hope for the Bible (and, more broadly, the church) to speak to this moment and be a part of the solution rather than an enabler of injustice. The power of her slim book, written as “part memoir, part biblical scholarship,” is how it functions as a mirror: revealing to the church and, therefore, compelling the church to reckon with how it employs its doctrines, particularly those

pertaining to biblical interpretation, as “protective strategies” to maintain the power and privileges of its White members, especially White theologians. What may be more difficult to wrestle with, because of how Parker prophetically anticipates all that which Nichol’s death signifies, is how such protective strategies may indeed coincide with a culture of domination that is so tightly woven into our institutions of “law and order.” It is this very culture, whether within or without the church, that continues to deny so many persons, especially Black persons and other persons of color, from making it home. Reading Parker’s fierce and courageous book is one critical way of beginning to dismantle this sinful culture.

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Augustine on Memory. By Kevin G. Grove. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021. xii + 265 pages. \$99.00.

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In the forty-eight years when I taught college students, I was able to teach Augustine’s *Confessions*, at least in part, about every two years. Influenced by French structuralism, I would point out the binary oppositions that drive the book. Prominent among them was that between time and eternity, and I would note that there seemed to be two mediators between them. One is memory, which gathers the life of Augustine, scattered across time, into a unity before the eternal God. The other is Jesus Christ, the eternal Word incarnate in time. I would ask my students, What is the link between memory and Christ for Augustine? I never answered this question to my satisfaction, and if my students did, they didn’t tell me.

In *Augustine on Memory*, Kevin Grove offers a solution, one that reflects the progress of Augustine scholarship in recent decades. At the start of my career, Anglophone scholarship on Augustine tended to dwell on the treatises and neglect the works written for preaching, many of which had not been translated into English. There was a sharp divide between philosophy, where Augustine on memory was studied, and patristics, where Augustine’s Christology was studied. Treatments of Augustine on memory tended to jump from the *Confessions* (397 CE) to the latter books of *De Trinitate*, which Grove reasonably dates to 419–427. Grove’s main argument develops a connection between them through close analysis of several *Enarrationes in Psalmos* (*Expositions of the Psalms*), which Augustine most likely preached, or composed for preaching, in the intervening years. Like the classroom for a