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## Reveiw of Rocco D'Ambrosio, Will Pope Francis Pull it Off? The Challenge of Church Reform, translated by Barry Hudock

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Kilroy repeats the story that the queen was present in the Tower after Campion was racked and that ‘on the night before the trial, Campion was led out under a blanket for a secret interview with the Queen herself’ (p. 268). He cites sources for this story but one wonders how reliable they are. How much of it is simply hagiographical comment? Some claim that the queen tried to offer Campion a bishopric. But what sense did it make to offer an office in the Church to a man who had been racked and could not even use his arms?

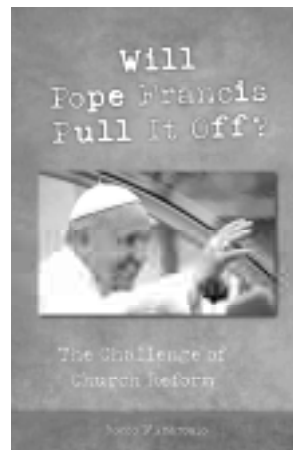
When dealing with the trial and its aftermath, Kilroy allows his admiration for Campion to shape his reading of documents that do fall into the hagiographical category. ‘When the verdict was given ... there must have been gasps of surprise’ (p. 327); ‘On the night of Campion’s execution there must have been many streets in London (and across the country) where weeping was the only sound’ (p. 346). How many people outside Middlesex even knew about Campion’s death on the day of his execution? The author continually cites eyewitness accounts without addressing how unreliable they can be. However, he is right in noting that the Protestant John Foxe, author of *Actes and Monuments* (popularly known as *Foxe’s Book of Martyrs*) asked the Council to be merciful to Campion. John Stow, Abraham Fleming, William Camden and Sir John Harington were also upset and disturbed by Campion’s execution.

This is a very good biography of Campion except in those sections where the author pushes the evidence too far.

**John LaRocca SJ**

**Rocco D’Ambrosio, *Will Pope Francis Pull It Off? The Challenge of Church Reform*, translated by Barry Hudock (Collegeville: Liturgical, 2017). 978 0 8146 4501 7, pp.104, £11.99.**

Early in 2017, a widely publicised pasquinade lampooned Pope Francis’s priorities in large handbills posted around Rome, listing supposed ‘victims’ of his efforts at reform, and asking whether they too were worthy of his hallmark summons to mercy. While the creative work of a few provocateurs perhaps garnered more international attention than was warranted, the incident served to confirm the yawning chasm that has come to exist between certain forces within the Church that Pope Francis inherited as pontiff and his dream of a revitalised, synodal ‘poor church for the poor’. It is precisely within



and out of this breach that Rocco D'Ambrosio's thin volume hopes to speak.

Instead of the ubiquitous caricatures put forward in the many potboiler and pseudo-psychological biographies that have proliferated in recent years trying to survey (or invent) Francis's agenda and secret desires, D'Ambrosio sets out to employ 'institutional analysis' to interrogate the successes and challenges of the Bergoglio pontificate, all with documented supporting evidence. D'Ambrosio's scope is tightly focused on what he sees as the unbending will of Francis in the face of strong resistance to the Pope's 'radical, intensive, and broad' (p.13) goals of reform. The author's subjective hopes for the success of this project are in no way disguised or *sotto voce*; the title (in both English and the original Italian) reverberates with D'Ambrosio's aspirations for the propitious future of the Church to come, if only Francis perseveres in his crusade to right the wrongs infecting the governing structures of the Roman Catholic Church since the time of the Borgias, if not since Constantine.

The eight succinct chapters explore ecclesiological themes of authority, power, and the hermeneutics of teaching and reception, but as read through the helpful institutional, communicative and social-structural analyses of a social scientist. The unique and expansive expertise of the author, who is obviously as fluent in magisterial and conciliar texts as he is in the writings of Mary Douglas and Carl Jung, provides an intriguing entrée into study of the Pope's hope for a coming ecclesial *metanoia*, as well as the complexities of achieving it at an enduring and systemic level. D'Ambrosio's thesis is that such transformation can and has been disputed, stunted, delayed or thwarted at many turns by forces stolidly hesitant to implement, or vehemently encamped against, any such changes.

The book is timely and well crafted, drawing heavily on the primary sources of the Pope's writings and public statements. It consciously seeks to include and address the perspectives of many: 'simple faithful, priests and bishops, nonbelievers, theologians, sociologists, psychologists, and more' (p.x). The author is adept at distilling a complicated issue into a marketable and approachable volume. There are strengths to the book's size and readability.

Yet, as a reader, I must confess that, when I had finished, I was left wanting not a better analysis, but more of it. I would encourage potential audiences to enjoy and utilise the significant contribution D'Ambrosio makes to the field. Students of various disciplines and at different academic levels will glean much from it, especially postgraduates and dedicated Church-watchers. But in the same breath, I would prepare readers to be ready to complement it with other sources and commentaries, particularly those focused on the unique sociological world of the Roman Curia. Even if an excellent introduction to the topic, so few pages simply whet the appetite for learning more. The book

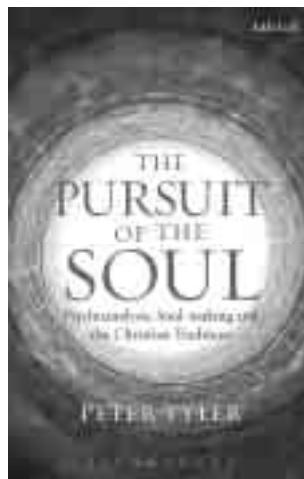
will certainly find a place on my shelf and in my classroom, but more as an introduction than as the fully mapped topography of the ongoing explorations into the life and work of this unique Jesuit pontiff.

I sympathize entirely with the author's claim that in seeking to understand elements of ecclesial life adequately, 'there is no place for simplistic or superficial thinking' (p.26). D'Ambrosio diligently avoids such generalisations or travesties. The book is simple, without being simplistic. His obviously intentional commitment to the more readable side of the popular-scholarly balance does, however, serve to challenge his audience. The reader must be ready to respond to D'Ambrosio's insights by digging a little deeper on his or her own. This compact primer seemingly urges those who engage with it to use it as one among many resources in unpacking a topic of great import and complexity. For this reason, I would both recommend it wholeheartedly and anticipate reading more substantial pieces by this gifted and clear writer in the future.

**Michael Canaris**

**Peter Tyler, *The Pursuit of the Soul: Psychoanalysis, Soul-Making and the Christian Tradition* (London: Continuum, 2016). 978 0 5671 4077 7, pp.208, £18.99.**

The term 'soul' is regarded with deep suspicion in much of the modern academic world. Psychology departments, although the very name of their discipline derives from the Greek word for 'soul', confine themselves to empirical investigations of the workings of the mind and regard talk of the soul as a hangover from a pre-scientific era. And philosophy departments, at least in the anglophone world, tend to regard souls as 'spooky' entities that have no place in the naturalistic world-view that most of them affirm ('naturalism' being understood as the ruling doctrine according to which there is no ultimate reality apart from that describable in the language of science).



Yet against all the odds, as Peter Tyler observes at the start of this book, the term 'soul' persists in contemporary discourse (p.5). The philosopher Edith Stein, writing in the middle of the twentieth century, was an early voice protesting against the modern programme of doing 'psychology without soul'

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