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# Dancing with a Ghost: Exploring Indian Reality

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could treat Newman's achievement in detail and Ker has no intention of making such an attempt. One must take care, then, in wishing for more than is possible or what is intended as a brief, readable, and useful guide, but the lack of any real discussion of the *Apologia* is surprising, particularly since Ker insists regularly on Newman's work as framed by "occasions" and as personalist. He is aware of the book's problems in this regard, however, indicating in the opening lines, the omission of discussion of Newman's poetry (although he might have commented on it at least briefly in his final chapter), political thought, and historical studies.

It is unfortunate that Ker felt constrained to omit the last two issues in particular. It was the problem of the relationship of the Established Church with the State which first spurred members of the Oxford Movement to frame their theological principles, and if it was not history which led Newman into the Catholic Church, at the least it can be said that he entered in the context of his historical studies. This shortcoming is not as serious as it initially appears however. Every reader of Newman's historical work is immediately aware of how intimately that author's theological concerns are bound to his historical writing and it is therefore fitting that Newman's *Arians of the Fourth Century* and his *Development of Christian Doctrine* are treated under the section on Newman as theologian.

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## **Dancing with a Ghost: Exploring Indian Reality**

Rupert Ross

Markham, ON: Octopus Publishing Group, 1992

xxvii + 195 pages \$15.95

Ross Rupert, a non-Native, writes with a sensitivity to his limitations as an "outsider" to native culture and reality. He is also well aware that what is true of his experience with the Cree and Ojibway peoples of northwestern Ontario may require some modification when applied to other aboriginal peoples farther west or on the coasts. He notes, however, that reaction to an earlier, shorter version of this same book by Native peoples seems to confirm the presence of a similar, common core among all Canadian Native peoples from Labrador to the Yukon.

The author writes out of his experience as a fishing guide and as an assistant crown attorney from the District of Kenora, Ontario. The title of this paperback reflects something of the challenge of his undertaking. One may indeed read too much into one or two local incidents when one is looking for cross-cultural differences. Attempting to bring together one's observations of Native habits and mindset is like "dancing with a ghost": it requires addressing things of which one has only caught a fleeting glimpse.

In an early chapter devoted to the ethics or rules “glimpsed” as central to traditional Native life and conduct, the author sets forth such basics as the ethic of non-interference; the ethic of not showing anger; the ethic of how and how not to praise and show appreciation; the ethic of thinking things through thoroughly before actually trying them out; and the ethic of doing things only when the time is right. On the background of this perspective the author shows how Native philosophy more often than not places Native people in direct conflict with the general Canadian cultural environment and especially with the Canadian justice system. In contrast to the Canadian court system which seeks to incarcerate, separate, and prevent the accused from causing society any further harm, the Native practice is to utilize non-confrontative consultation and discussion aimed at rehabilitating, reconciling, and restoring the accused to community. Whereas traditional Canadian culture might focus on the negative inevitabilities of human nature, the writer observes how Native culture puts much more emphasis on the positive and potential in Native men and women in keeping with their “doctrine of original sanctity” (ch. 10).

I enjoyed reading this book. I believe it helped me gain insight into the mystery and otherness of Native culture and reality. The book does a credible job at explaining how the present dilemma and conflict between non-Native and Native cultures came to be. There are suggestions too as to how both sides might move forward from the present. In my mind, the writer has accomplished his objective: “If I have done nothing else in this book, I hope to have established beyond controversy that there was and still is a strong, complex, sophisticated and enduring Native culture which deserves our recognition and our study” (187). I wholeheartedly recommend the reading of this brief but engaging book, especially for our clergy and students preparing for ministry in Canada.

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**Passion for Justice: Retrieving the Legacies of Walter Rauschenbusch, John A. Ryan and Reinhold Niebuhr**  
Harlan Beckley  
Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992  
391 pages

Harlan Beckley's *Passion for Justice* is an important book in a number of respects, both in its framework of social ethics and beyond. I elected to review this book because of my historical interests and my sympathies with the three figures under discussion. My awareness of Niebuhr involves reading and study covering a thirty-year period, and I have been an admirer of Rauschenbusch for over two decades. Like most Protestants my