

# In this number

MARJO-RIITTA ANTIKAINEN

## From Outsiders to Colleagues: The Recruitment of Women into the Theological Faculty of Helsinki, 1952–2000

In this article, I examine into which subjects and offices and for what reasons women first entered the Faculty of Theology at the University of Helsinki. The time span of my study is from when the first woman received a doctorate at the faculty, Eira Paunu, until the point at which women were present in every department as docents and professors. Compared to the university's other faculties, women were recruited into theology especially slowly. Originally, this was because ordination was a requirement for a theology doctorate until 1948. Since women could not be ordained as priests, they could not pursue doctoral studies and, thus, not be qualified to work as docents or professors. The Faculty of Theology was thus the last to count women among their docents and professors at the University of Helsinki. The first female theology professors were recruited in 1980s and have continued working in the faculty into the 2010s.

TIINA MAHLAMÄKI & TERHI UTRIAINEN

## Enchanted Agency among Finnish Esoteric Women

This article traces and explores esoteric agency among Finnish women, understanding agency as the capacity for a subject to make meaningful differences in her lifeworld, which consists of relations with the this-worldly and sometimes also the otherworldly. The article analyses the esoteric factors and features in the life, first, of the Anthroposophist and writer Kerstin Bergroth (1886–1975) and, second, of Finnish women in the present who have developed an interest in angel spirituality. Our analysis draws from scholarship on Western Esotericism in identifying how Finnish women from different generations enact participatory and even enchanted agency in the often complex spaces where secular society, Lutheran culture, and esoteric influences and worldviews coexist.

VERA LA MELA

## Reciprocal Love as the Foundation for Chiara Lubich's Theology of Collective Spirituality

Chiara Lubich, one of the most prominent Catholic thinkers of the late 20th century, posits reciprocal love as the foundation for her theology of unity in collective spirituality. Her Spirituality of Unity is followed by a worldwide and cross-denominational Focolare Movement, founded by Lubich in

1943. This article analyses the semantic and literary meanings of love—and especially reciprocal love—in Lubich's first publication, *Tutti uno* (1979), where she introduces her theology of spirituality systematically. The article further explores the communitarian effects of reciprocal love, particularly in terms of collective sanctification.

ELINA VUOLA

## Religion, Intersectionality, and Gender Studies: Perspectives from Global Feminist Theology

This article offers a critical discussion on how gender studies have approached religion. With some regional variation, issues related to religion and gender have either been ignored or treated stereotypically. Feminists of the global south tend to pay more attention to religion than those from the global north. I illustrate this problem through a close reading of intersectionality in feminist research in religion, especially feminist theology. Based on the historical evidence, I argue that what is today called intersectionality has in fact been explicitly present in early feminist theology since the 1970s. The emphasis, then, that feminist liberation theologians place on the interstructuring of gender, class, and race/ethnicity is due to their cooperation with liberation and feminist theologians from the global south—for example, through the Ecumenical Association of Third-World Theologians. This article thus offers a critical re-reading of the history of feminist theorizing from the perspective of religious feminists, academic feminist theologians, and liberation theologians from both the global north and south. My aim is ultimately to correct the long-held misunderstanding of the history of feminist theorizing as purely “secular”.

SERAFIM SEPPÄLÄ

## The Words of the Desert Mothers and Their Interpretations

The three desert mothers—Synclitica, Theodora, and Sarah, known from the fifth-century compilations of Apophthegmata—have been subject to considerable interest throughout history and in recent decades, albeit often presented as the “forgotten” mothers. This article surveys four thematically linked teachings from among their Apophthegmata which are much commented on in scholarly literature. After comparing their interpretations in the works of five different modern authors (Catholic, Orthodox, Episcopal, academic, and popular scholarly works), I argue that these writers have understood the teachings of the desert mothers in remarkably different ways, depending on their paradigms and backgrounds, and used them for divergent aims.