

RELIGION • THEOLOGY

“While there has been much ink spilled over Bonhoeffer’s religionless Christianity and Rahner’s anonymous Christianity, there has been surprisingly little reflection on Bonhoeffer’s account of unconscious Christianity. With thoroughness, care, and precision, Eleanor McLaughlin has done not only Bonhoeffer studies but also theology a great service in unpacking this important theme for the contemporary world. This is a remarkable achievement.” —**Tom Greggs**, FRSE, University of Aberdeen

“With this first book-length treatment of unconscious Christianity, Eleanor McLaughlin offers a carefully researched, compelling, and pathbreaking interpretation of what is perhaps Bonhoeffer’s most challenging theological legacy. Her careful reading not only clarifies what Bonhoeffer meant by unconscious Christianity but also opens up new directions for Bonhoeffer research and for all concerned about the Church’s witness in a secular age.” —**Jens Zimmermann**, Trinity Western University

In the last years of his life, Dietrich Bonhoeffer began work on an idea that he called *unbewußtes Christentum*, “unconscious Christianity.” While Bonhoeffer’s other ideas from this period have been extensively studied and are important in the field of theology and beyond, this concept has been almost completely ignored. For the first time in Bonhoeffer scholarship, Eleanor McLaughlin provides a definition of unconscious Christianity based on a close reading and analysis of the texts in which Bonhoeffer mentioned the term. From a variety of surviving texts, from a scribbled marginal note in his *Ethics* manuscript to the fiction he wrote in prison, she constructs a detailed definition of unconscious Christianity that sheds light not only on Bonhoeffer’s late work but his theological development as a whole.

**Eleanor McLaughlin** is lecturer in theology and ethics at Regent’s Park College, University of Oxford, and research associate at the Oxford Centre for Religion and Culture.

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UNCONSCIOUS CHRISTIANITY IN DIETRICH BONHOEFFER'S LATE THEOLOGY



# UNCONSCIOUS CHRISTIANITY IN DIETRICH BONHOEFFER'S LATE THEOLOGY

ENCOUNTERS WITH THE  
UNKNOWN CHRIST

Eleanor McLaughlin  
Foreword by Rowan Williams