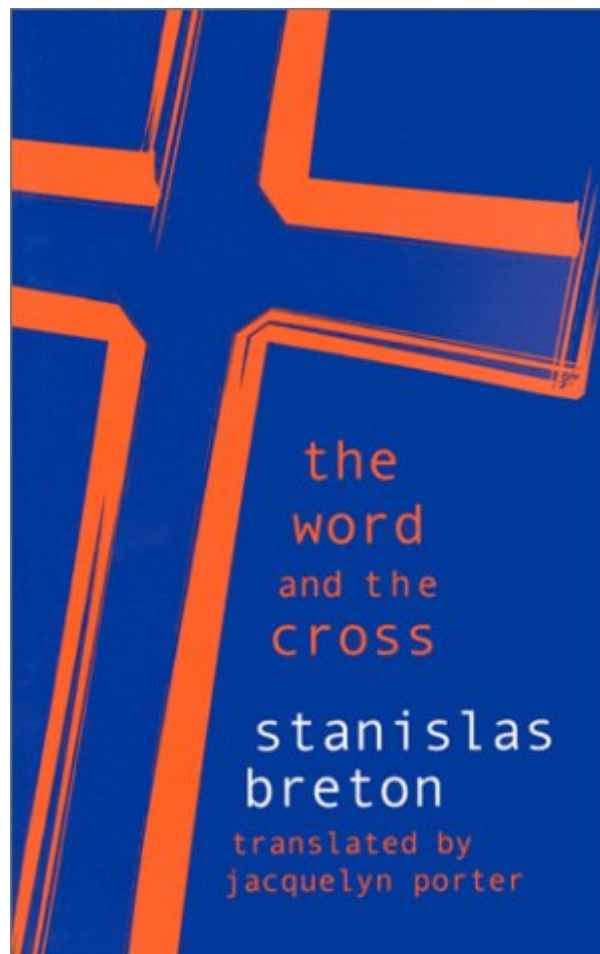
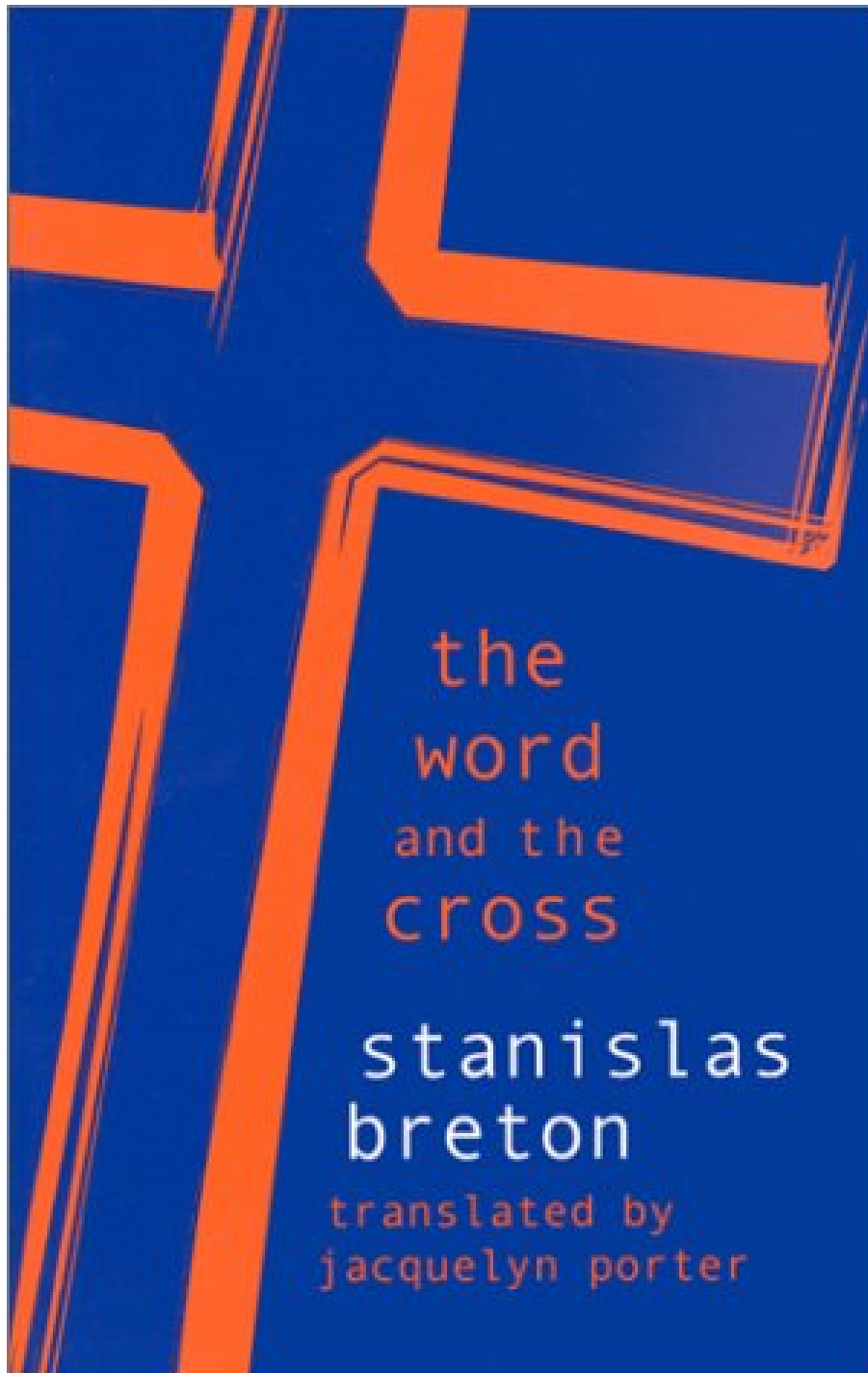


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Review

"Breton's little text will undoubtedly spur much continuing thought on what it means for the Cross to be truly scandalous."

About the Author

Stanislas Breton, a French Philosopher who taught at the Institute Catholique (Lyon, Paris) and at the Ecole Normale Superieure, has published over 300 articles and books on phenomenology, poetics and neoplatonism, including *Etre, monde, imaginaire* (1976), *Le rien ou quelque chose* (1987) and *L'autre et ailleurs* (1995)

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In times that have challenged contemporary illusions, many seek to recover the Christian vocabulary of suffering, the cross, and a hope freed of triumphalism and exclusivity. Stanislas Breton presents the nothingness of the cross in its infirmity and paradoxical power. Blending the poetic with the philosophical, faith with interrogation, mystical and practical, ancient and new, he seeks to lift the cross from its imprisonment in ontologies of abundance and in a history of compromise. *The Word and the Cross* distills the meditation of a thinker in his prime on the possibility of the Christian and Christianity to find within a principle of a critique and source of renewal. Breton draws first upon Scripture, examining the way in which the cross has been present in our world, beginning with Paul's preaching of it as Logos, folly (*moria*), and power (*dunamis*). In a startlingly original interpretation, Breton first interrogates the emergence of the cross as Sign of Contradiction in the world of Greek and Jew and then traces its destiny in politics, in theology and in the poignant theater of the fools of Christ. Enriching scriptural exegesis with allusions to neoplatonism, Sufi mysticism, and diverse theologies, Breton offers a more profound understanding of kenosis that privileges the language of service and engagement. Passing beyond philosophies of dissonance and even the *via negativa*, he argues for a commitment to evangelical justice and human community that demands of the Christian and Christianity, as of all systems and religions, an inner principle of renewal and self-critique. The cross, as a Sign of Contradiction, functions as such a principle. Breton presents it on many levels: spiritual, philosophic, linguistic and poetic. With modesty and power, he focuses upon this mark of interrogation, preparing the way of the Word in our world. *The Word and the Cross* is the first translation in the United States of this major contemporary French thinker, introducing rich resources for further exploration.

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breton's base work for his later postmodern thought

By barryb

Breton's most famous work was "A radical philosophy of saint Paul", published in 2011 when his refined postmodern position was put forward. This work from 9 years prior reveals to the reader the pre-formative emergence of that postmodern thought. One of the big differences we see is the presentation of the existential emotive base to his thinking that was missing in 2011. Bultmann fills this position here and lends to additional work in the areas of articulating the feeling-percepts of the paradox of the logos of the cross; which then contribute to defining the motivational set of standing-purposes in the unconscious. Basically he says the cross calls for two judgments and two reversals to form our motivation. He even goes on to propose four standing-purposes of his own. Then transferring into consciousness leads to triad-presentations of the unity of community as: "word-spirit-purpose"; and the triad for the logos of the cross as: "being-thought-life". He presents the logic of the cross in an 8-step process to define positing. What you will find is an emerging process headed towards the neo-left stance that isn't quite "radical" yet. This book, therefore, will even satisfy conservatives. At times, he sounds like a professor at a Christian college instead of a postmodern philosopher. So there is probably a broader appeal here. I've read both books and I felt there was plenty of new content here to justify the purchase.

His way of using Bultmann as a pre-figure of postmodern thinking does make some good sense and he does not need to distort things that much. Breton is a solid thinker; a theologian rather than a philosopher. And, even nine years ago, he was very accomplished in his thought. I'm posting five stars for this aggressive work from 2002.

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