Book Reviews

Eric Csapo, *Theories of Mythology*. Blackwell, Oxford, 2005, pp. xiii + 338, ISBN 0631232486 (pbk). Review doi: 10.1558/arsr.v21i1.93.

This is a highly useful and reasonably comprehensive book exploring theories of myth from the start of the nineteenth century until the present. Csapo argues that the academic interpretation of myth has 'progressed' from its beginnings in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and apart from 'solar mythology', there 'are no dead theories in this book' (p. xi). Csapo covers six areas: introducing myth; comparative approaches (though there is no discussion of Dumezil); psychology (basically Freud with no discussion of Jung); ritual theories; structuralism; and ideology. Within each section dominant figures are profiled (for example, James Frazer, Jane Harrison, Jean-Pierre Vernant) and criticisms of the theory under consideration are raised and answered. The question of what a 'myth' might be is answered functionally, and without reference to essential criteria. The whole book is admirably nuanced in terms of the impact of historical developments and changed social and political circumstances. Indeed, one of the complex issues explored is the extent to which a particular theory of myth is historically contextualised or 'ahistorical', and what that might mean in terms of its value and defensibility.

In Chapter 6, 'Ideology', attention is paid to the broadening of the use of the term 'myth' in recent years, with the author arguing that '[t]he most significant result of the critical convergence of structuralism, Marxism, and liberation-oriented cultural studies has been a general coalescence of the concept of myth with the concept of ideology' (p. 277). What has happened is that myth no longer referred to significant stories sourced from 'ancient' or 'primal' cultures, but could refer to significant stories of the modern and contemporary West. Very interesting issues are canvassed here, which are not just relevant to the study of myth: the postmodern assertion that there is no metanarrative, that 'there [is] nothing in control of the social system' (p. 283); the liberationist agenda of postcolonialists, queer theorists, feminists and other sub-Marxist intellectuals; the effect of late capitalist modes of consumption on the relations of the real and the symbolic; and ways of 'decrypting' or 'reading' ideology are covered in tantalisingly brief sections. The impression gained from reading this book is that Csapo is a master of the subject matter and could easily have written a study of twice the length. However, this book appears to be designed as an introductory text for undergraduates, which no doubt limited his horizons somewhat. This reviewer regrets that the book omits so many intriguing and important theorists, and that the discussion of those included is often so brief. That being expressed, the book is highly recommended: it is a very intelligent study, and beautifully clear and elegantly written.

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Celia E. Deane-Drummond, *The Ethics of Nature*. Blackwell, Malden, MA, 2004, pp. xiv + 256, ISBN 0631229388 (pbk). Review doi: 10.1558/arsr.v21i1.94.

In recent years Christians have been mining their tradition to rediscover positive approaches to the environment, and a growing body of literature in ecotheology is the result. Now ecotheologians are connecting with the broader literature of environmental ethics, with a wide range of questions.

Why should humans care about God's creation? In what ways are humans similar to and yet different from other animals? How should we treat non-human animals? Is it legitimate to clone animals or use stem-cells in research? Is the earth a self-regulating organism (Gaia)? And how should we overcome the dualism between spirit and matter—or between heaven and earth—which is often coupled damagingly with the dualism between male and female?

These are some of the questions addressed by Celia Deane-Drummond in *The Ethics of Nature*, which is a solid contribution to environmental ethics. It is the fourth volume in a series of interdisciplinary texts (Blackwell's *New Dimensions to Religious Ethics*) aimed at undergraduate and seminary students and contributing a Christian theological voice to contemporary moral questions, including, so far, community, sex, gender and nature.

Deane-Drummond is a leading voice in ecotheology. Professor of Theology and the Biological Sciences at Chester College in the UK, Deane-Drummond has doctorates in both biology and theology and is known for *A Handbook in Theology and Ecology* (London: SCM, 1996), *Creation through Wisdom: Theology and the New Biology* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 2000) and editing *Brave New World: Theology, Ethics and the Human Genome* (London: T. & T. Clark, 2003). She was editor of *Ecotheology* before its recent change in title to *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture*.

In this book Deane-Drummond develops her argument in *Creation through Wisdom* and argues for a virtue ethic in relation to nature. She leaves aside the two dominant approaches in ethics since the Enlightenment—the deontological, or duty-based, approach of philosophers such as Emmanuel Kant and the utilitarianism, or consequence-based approach, of J.S. Mill and Jeremy Bentham. Rather, Deane-Drummond draws on the Greek philosophers and Thomas Aquinas and joins a growing minority in arguing that the basis for ethics lies in human character or virtue. She favours prudence (practical wisdom) as the pre-eminent virtue, closely followed by justice, fortitude and temperance.

The debate on the basis for ethics is lively and, in my judgement, unresolved. The best one can do is to show how an ethical approach coheres with, appeals to and fits both empirical evidence and one's worldview. Deane-Drummond's worldview includes seeing nature as God's creation, in which there is both a high degree of interconnectedness and also a special role for humans due to their place in evolution and relationship to God. In other words, humans are both embedded in and yet conscious agents in creation. The wisdom we need in order to be prudent in relation to nature is, for Deane-Drummond, rooted in the wisdom of God. Wisdom, she argues, straddles both science and faith and acts as a bridge.

Deane-Drummond argues well that virtue ethics leads to a thoroughgoing ecological stance, though not all the way to biocentrism. She engages throughout the book in careful debate with a wide range of ecologists, generally taking what might be described as progressive but moderate stances on issues such as animal ethics, biotechnology, cloning, the psychology of environmental concern, Gaia, ecofeminism and the theological meaning of evolutionary theory. These issues form the central chapters of the book.

This is a serious argument for one theological approach to environmental ethics rather than an introduction to the field. Deane-Drummond spends much of her time distinguishing her views from other contemporary writers. The Bibliography alone is very useful and

the Index allows the reader to find material easily. The book is clearly a major contribution to the complex discussion of theology's relationship to biology and ecology, and will need to be taken into account by all serious scholars of theological ecology.

As an undergraduate text it seems rather dense and demanding, with many twists and turns and subtle distinctions. The writing is clear and logical, but the book enters a wide variety of academic conversations, which asks a lot of the reader. I found it hard to see the relevance of the chapter on psychology and moral agency, which was difficult to follow and perhaps tackled too much in too short a space.

Each ethical approach has its weaknesses, and some would argue that the weakness of virtue ethics is its generality and lack of rules for deciding between potentially competing virtues. Deane-Drummond does place practical wisdom at the apex of her cluster of virtues, which indicates some sort of hierarchy of values, but it still seems quite a jump from her very broadly stated virtues to her specific ethical stances. I found myself looking for some middle axioms.

Nevertheless, her advocacy of a theologically based virtue ethics overall is eloquent and persuasive. Readers will find in these pages a measured, progressive, scientifically informed and theologically aware perspective that pushes them beyond more conservative views on the environment and biotechnology but stops short of support for the Gaia theory, biocentrism and deep ecology.

The particular contribution of *The Ethics of Nature* is its application of virtue ethics to environmental questions. Most of the recent work on virtue ethics focuses on the moral questions that arise between humans; this is a serious extension of the virtue approach, especially wisdom ethics, into the relationship between humans and the rest of creation.

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Chris Fleming, *René Girard: Violence and Mimesis*. Polity Press, Cambridge, 2004, pp. 211, ISBN 0745629474. Review doi: 10.1558/arsr.v21i1.96.

Like other Polity readers on key contemporary thinkers, this volume offers a welcome and highly accessible critical introduction to the work and thought of the French cultural theorist René Girard. Although the book is conceived as an extended invitation to Girard's work, it also offers a valuable study of the key notions of Girard's thought, giving an interesting account of the so-called mimetic and victimage mechanism: 'The notion of "mechanism" well encapsulates the intended *morphogenetic* scope of the proposed explanation. Girard's hypothesis is morphogenetic in that it attempts to furnish a hypothetical account of the *origin* of cultural forms' (p. 53).

It is indeed difficult to provide the reader with an overall view of Girard's theory, partly because of an intrinsic circularity within his thought. That is, an element of the theory can be fully understood only through the consideration of the whole mechanism. What is more, the diachronic reading that has to start from Girard's early works of the 1960s devoted to the structure of the modern novel does not coincide with the synchronic reading that should start from Girard's reflections on the process of 'hominization', which appeared only in *Des choses cachées depuis la fondation du monde* (1978). So, I see why Fleming decided to follow a diachronic logic, which moves from Girard's early analysis of the nature of mimetic desire to his most recent works, but also to intersect the exposition with quotations from more recent books or papers, when these help to better understand the analyzed notions or dynamics.

The book is set in five chapters: (1) Mimetic Desire; (2) Sacrificial Crisis and Surrogate Victimage; (3) Myth, Tragedy, History; (4) Non-Sacrificial Violence: The Judeo-Christian Scriptures; (5) Conclusion. In the first chapter, Fleming familiarizes the reader with Girard's theorization of mimetic desire, as well as with Girard's critical engagement with psychoanalysis. Here he traces an in-depth account of mimetism (which I have too often seen elsewhere presented in an over-simplified way). Chapters 2 and 3 are devoted to Girard's reading of myth and tragedy and his application of the hypothesis of surrogate victimage. This analysis allows for an investigation of the significance of the 'hominization' (the birth of the human): 'Girard argues that, beyond a certain threshold of mimesis, animal societies are no longer possible…the protohuman had, Girard suggests, become "too mimetic" to remain an animal' (p. 73). Remarkable in this section is the attention given to the notion of 'innocence' of the victim, who, being involved in the mimetic crisis as everyone else is, is 'guilty' like everyone else. The victim is a scapegoat because he is chosen arbitrarily, that is, he is no more guilty than his persecutors. So, it is preferable to speak of the 'unexceptionality of his guilt' rather than of 'his innocence' (p. 98). Chapter 4 provides a valuable overview of the Girardian analysis of the Judeo-Christian Scriptures, making clear that the Bible has to be considered 'not simply a critique or desymbolization of myth, but an ongoing process of *auto-critique*' (p. 123). Importantly, this chapter clarifies some misunderstandings that often occur regarding this aspect of Girard's thought. First, it is only in the Gospels that the truth of the victim is entirely revealed, as Christ undergoes a collective lynching but refuses the role of the scapegoat. Thus, the Gospels represent 'not simply some "ethical stance", but a *cognitive insight*' (p. 135). This is the reason why Girard has often been criticized for having represented Christ more as a 'great epistemologist' than as the saviour of humanity (although for Girard the two roles can coincide) and he has been accused of Gnosticism. Secondly, Fleming accurately points out the difference between the evangelical message and historical Christianity, which 'became one of the principal mechanisms for hiding its own revelation' (p. 144). The fifth

and final chapter focuses on some of the applications of Girard's work (especially those of Eric Gans, Jean-Pierre Dupuy and Michel Serres). This is a very interesting and well-argued piece.

Broadly speaking, the book has the merit of tracking the genealogy of some notions, and thus sheds light on certain aspects of Girard's thought that might otherwise appear mysterious. Furthermore, the book thoroughly clarifies the intellectual relation of Girard with other thinkers (Jacques Derrida, Mircea Eliade, Marcel Mauss, Paul Ricoeur, Philippe Sollers, Charles Taylor and Gianni Vattimo) and with his major critics (Paul Dumouchel, Jean-Pierre Dupuy and Jean-Micheal Oughourlian), taking into consideration the main objections to the mimetic theory as well as the main developments of Girard's thought, like the self-referential paradox, which Henri Atlan and Jean-Pierre Dupuy recognize as the heart of all mimetic figures (p. 38). The treatment of the subject is generally sympathetic, as Fleming himself states in the Introduction. However, Fleming does not spare critique when necessary, as when he underlines the haphazard nature of Girard's attempts to interpret mimetically the work of twentieth-century playwrights, such as Edward Albee and Samuel Beckett (p. 96). Moreover, the book occasionally suggests that one consider the mimetic theory as a hermeneutic key to interpret our times, as when Fleming underlines that nowadays 'scapegoats are invariably viewed as victimizers *par excellence*' (p. 50). In addition, the book offers fifteen pages of selected bibliographical references. Unfortunately, as an introduction to Girard's thought (although an in-depth introduction), the book is not designed to cover some issues that figure in current debates about Girard's work. First is the question of the *evolution* of the mimetic theory. Girard has recently reconsidered the existence of a (previously rejected by him) 'sacrifice of love'.[1] Another issue is Girard's 'argument' for the existence of God. Girard argues that the fact that there is an authentic knowledge of violence in the Gospels shows that this knowledge cannot be merely human and that Christ, therefore, cannot simply be a man.[2]

In conclusion, this is an interesting and fresh study. The arguments are presented at a comfortable pace. Fleming is gentle yet incisive in his survey of most of the important contemporary debates concerning mimetic theory, and sustains Girard's lines of reasoning with the weight of scholarly excellence. As the academia in the English-speaking world is not very familiar with Girard's work (especially in philosophy and religious studies), this volume comes as a timely publication. It is well written, most accurate, communicative and engaging. For those interested in Girard's work (as it deals with a theme of such immediate and universal human significance), but who do not know mimetic theory, I would recommend the book. Furthermore, its well-ordered structure, well-presented arguments and its new insight into what has been, until now, a relatively sparse field of study, make this publication valuable for academic specialists, who should keep this volume on their shelf as a useful reference tool. It is to be hoped that researchers may be inspired by the avenues of further study suggested in this important and meaningful contribution to the scholarship of Girard's work.

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1. For instance, *in Quand ces choses commenceront… Entretiens avec Michel Treguer* (Paris: Arléa, 1994), 194.
2. Girard, *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987), 219.

David F. Ford with Rachel Muers (eds.), *The Modern Theologians: An Introduction to Christian Theology Since 1918*. Blackwell, Oxford, 2005, pp. v + 818, ISBN 13:9781405102773; 10:1405102772 (pbk). Review doi: 10.1558/arsr.v21i1.98.

Despite *The Modern Theologians* being a worthwhile introductory encounter to an array of Christian thinkers and theological endeavour, as an introduction to Christian theology since 1918 it has two key problems. The first problem is that this volume tries to cover too much, and by attempting so much it does not do enough. Whilst entire chapters are given over to individual European theologians, for example, one chapter alone is given to the entire range of Latin American liberation theologians, and another one to the theologians of Eastern Orthodoxy. Such theologically rich domains are addressed from the Western European theological centre, as theological terrains engaged with by that centre. How strange that a work which is attempting to introduce the reader to the range of theology post-1918 seems so unaware of the decentring paradigms that have prevailed for much of the latter part of the same century.

Such neglect, or imbalance, reveals the dominance of the Western European perspective, its post-1918 history of struggle and its character of Modernism, from which the editors have collated. Or maybe they are simply more familiar with the most prominent theologians presented in this volume. I suspect too that the sheer array of theological perspectives may confuse many of the intended audience. So many perspectives require more than a mere cursory understanding of 'theology' (and of literary and of cultural theories), and of the development of Modernism throughout the century as it devolved into the variety of postmodern perspectives towards the latter part. A theological maturity is needed with which to engage with such a variety and such an evolution, and this means more than a mere intellectual adeptness. This is another indicator of a particular insensitivity expressed by this collection.

The second problem is that the sheer bulk of *The Modern Theologians*, over 800 pages, reveals a somewhat artificial attempt at inclusiveness, and one which is arbitrarily governed by the endeavour to gather as much 'theology' as possible into one text, even if some of the chapters and themes addressed hardly merit the title of 'theology'. Does a theologian have an appreciation for music? Well a chapter of how 'theology' relates to music is included. What about theological themes in film? Well then a chapter given to how 'theology' engages with film, regardless of the quality of the theological reflections of the films addressed (Mel Gibson's 'The Passion' is elevated to theological work). These are two examples of a failure by the editors to draw boundaries for themselves; instead they chase every seeming theological rabbit down what at times turn into very shallow holes indeed.

The rubrical net cast by Ford in particular is identified in a welcome and informative Introduction. In this introduction the reader is soon made aware that the title of *The Modern Theologians* isn't as innocent as it seems at first glance. Ford has a very particular interpretation of 'modern' to which, we can presume, the theologians, the 'theologies' and possibly the contributors themselves, have been subject so to be included in *The Modern Theologians*. Ford asks the reader to 'imagine a line punctuated by five types of theology'. The extremities of this line are marked by declared poles of, on the one hand, a repetition of a traditional notion of theology or of Christianity by which all reality is conformed. On the other hand is a complete dependence of theology upon criteria alien to Christian understanding, and making itself subservient to such (conceivably hostile) criteria. Between these two extremes are three ascending types of 'theology', which to varying degrees engage with reality from a sure sense of Christian identity. This is as good a net of criteria as any, I suppose, but hardly one that should be left unchallenged, and probably

the reason why so much 'theology' has been captured in this volume. I'd be personally curious to discover what contemporary 'theology' Ford would subsume under the first and last of his five types.

The editors of this third edition of *The Modern Theologians* have added much that was missing in previous editions. New and updated treatments of themes previously covered have been included. There is also a new section on what are described as 'six classic theologians of the twentieth century'. This section is of particular worth; adding the facts of their struggles to the mix of their theologies. The chapter on Henri de Lubac I found to be particularly engaging, both for the encounter with his thought, but also for the context of treachery in which his thought struggled to rise. There are also expanded treatments of natural sciences, of gender, of Roman Catholic theology since Vatican 2; African, Asian and Evangelical theology are addressed as well. Finally there are completely new chapters on such a broad range of topics as spirituality, pastoral theology, philosophical theology, postcolonial biblical interpretation, Pentecostal theology, what has been given the name of 'Islam and Christian theology', 'Buddhism and Christian theology' and theology and film. This is more than enough for any eclectic undergraduate to get their theological teeth into.

No doubt there will be subsequent editions as the centring discursive rubric of European 'theology' and of Ford's 'five types of theology' are made to stretch ever further into the frontiers; centrifugally embracing yet more of a range of oftentimes mutually hostile theological perspectives and arranging them in neat consecutive chapters. *The Modern Theologians* is a convenient and well-intentioned resource, but do these very 'shopping mall' attributes drain the vitality of some of the theologies collected? Does such a centrifugal approach in effect trivialise the theologies collated, the dominance of the centre overshadowing the integrity of the frontiers?

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Gareth Jones (ed.), *The Blackwell Companion to Modern Theology*. Blackwell, Oxford, 2004, 608pp., ISBN 063120685X (pbk). Review doi: 10.1558/arsr.v21i1.100.

This is a puzzling book, as in many ways it ought to be. Its subject matter, of itself, is mysterious, as is appropriate; but so too is the approach taken by those who have put this collection together. Blackwells have begun publishing 'companions' to a whole range of subjects, including a spectrum of religious traditions, in this instance perhaps to match the excellent series Cambridge has brought out on specific topics within contemporary theology.

One might begin by asking what it means to offer a *companion*? Certainly this is a book which needs to travel around with its reader, for a sustained period of time, simply to get through it! It is a dense book, which merits time for reflection (587 pages). It is a comprehensive collection of essays, which will undoubtedly be a great resource to students and scholars. There is an excellent index and each section has well-balanced bibliographies. It could not be called an introduction, though if a person did begin with this volume they would have an excellent sense of the scope, significance and challenge of the recent century of study in theology. We might think of a 'companion' as one with whom one journeys or even lives. A companion accompanies, and this volume does indeed go along with the study of modern theology and provides a resource and much insight for the journey.

What, then, of the subject, 'modern theology'? Gareth Green's introduction immediately addresses the difficulties of that question. Much more attention is spent on the term 'modern' than on 'theology'. (From the outset, the term 'theology' is presumed to refer exclusively to Christian theology.) This brings us directly to the substance of the book. Modernity itself is explained in terms of its own sense of *structure* and *logic*: modernity is a period of time during which scholarship interpreted and codified the previous eras. So this book, in its various sections, identifies the key figures of its own era, defines the central doctrines of the Christian faith, and later identifies a series of challenges for theology undertaken in this way to address.

Before dealing with these sections in more detail, it is worth noting some of the basic effects of this 'modern' perspective. Here we have a comprehensive sketch of 'modern theology', purportedly. What is presented is overwhelmingly Euro-centric and male. All the key figures discussed are European males, and mostly by First World males. There is also an overwhelming focus on the twentieth century, though a few eighteenth- and nineteenth-century figures get their place. This is representative of what was called 'modern theology', though one suspects that in this volume there is an implicit claim that modern theology is still the main game. Again, in common with 'modernist' thinking, there is virtually no recognition of *context* as a fundamental determinant of thinking or experience. Such modern theology is written as if the reader or writer could be anywhere, Madrid, Manipur or Melbourne, it makes no difference. The sense of logic, the focus on words (no pictures here, this is 'theology'!) and the commitment to a clear and 'universal' understanding are all features of this modern perspective. Only at the end is there a recognition by the editor and the structure of the book that this 'system' is breaking down. Experience, the life of human beings in the world, is allowed into the picture: in terms of challenges to be addressed in contemporary theology, such as the existence of other religions, the movements for justice (amongst the majority of the earth's people!) including feminism, issues of race and eco-justice. One wonders just how different 'modern' theology might have been, had these voices and movements, which are hardly new, been allowed to participate in the conversation. In addition, one has to say that this overall selection of 'modern theology' has a decided bias towards the 'Reformed' or neo-orthodox stream, as is perhaps true of the era.

The book has five main sections, each containing a number of essays by prominent scholars in the area. The first is a section titled 'Theology and…', where the nature of theology is explained in relation to allied disciplines or elements, such as the practice of faith, biblical studies, philosophy, culture, social theory, history and theological anthropology. Here immediately we see the way theology in this era, at least as presented here, defines its distinctive subject matter. God is the 'wholly other'. The understanding of human life is a related discipline, 'theological anthropology', and not the beginning point or inherently the work of theology. Notwithstanding, these are fine essays and sketches of these fields. John Barton's brief but well-balanced essay on biblical studies indicates the major approaches to criticism and the state of 'Old Testament' and 'New Testament' studies today.

Next comes a section on history, where modern theology interprets the past. Here we find essays on Patristics, Medieval Theology, Reformation and Modernity. The very names tell us something about the approach. In a brief survey of the period from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries, Garrett Green offers his usual insightful approach to the modern era and its perspectives. He has some excellent books in this area, but whereas his own work helpfully uses art and cultural movements to express the nature of the era, here we have only words. The movement known as 'Enlightenment' is explained, as is the focus on the human-centred understanding of reality. This is part of the puzzle of 'modern theology'. At once it is so human centred (within its limited perspective on humanity) and yet it defines 'theology' as knowledge from and about a reality so 'other' to humanity that this knowledge seems impossible.

The central section of the book addresses 'Themes', which are crucial Christian doctrines or ideas and how they are understood within modern theology. Here the book draws on some of the 'big names' in contemporary scholarship. The essay on 'Trinity' is written by Bruce Marshall, that on 'Incarnation' by John Webster. Esther Reed (the first woman contributor, after 227 pages) writes on 'Redemption', and Andrew Chester on 'Eschatology'. Finally, Gavin D'Costa surveys 'Church and Sacraments'. Here we see one of the very good features of the book. Along with well-known scholars from the prestigious universities, we find younger scholars and people just coming into the field. One such, in the section to follow, is a fine young Australian scholar, Mark Lindsay. By way of illustration of this crucial section, Bruce Marshall's paper on the Trinity identifies two basic approaches to the subject in the modern era: that of Schleiermacher, who argued that the idea of the Trinity is not central to Christian faith, and the more recent 'renewal' of Trinitarian thinking, in which this is perhaps 'the' Christian idea. A well-balanced survey of some of the recent contributions is presented, in a way that would indeed be helpful to those not familiar with the area.

Section Four presents 'Key Figures', all European and all male. There are eight essays, one of them, for reasons I find hard to comprehend, dealing with two figures. There are essays on Kant, Hegel, Schleiermacher, Barth, Rahner, Bonhoeffer, Bultmann and Tillich together, and von Balthasar. Here we find the approach of the book clearly demonstrated. Kant is *the* challenge to modern theology, and Hegel represents one of the fundamental responses. Kant's critique essentially shifted the nature of religion 'inward' and makes the idea of 'divine revelation' as the fundamental authority in faith and life problematic. All theology in the modern European context has been in some way a response to this challenge. Hegel offered a comprehensive, historical-theological response, arguing for history itself as the medium of revelation. The failure of his system to gain credibility did not, however, diminish his influence. Rather, other approaches developed the dialectical character of this thinking. Not all of these followed the atheistic line of Marx. The influence of Kierkegaard, as an existential response to Hegel, is sadly missing here. One

cannot comprehend the work of Barth and the other 'dialectical' and neo-orthodox thinkers without attention to Kierkegaard.

In their own right, these are helpful essays. John de Gruchy is amongst the finest of Bonhoeffer scholars, and briefly but deftly introduces the significance of Bonhoeffer's short but brilliant career. Mark Lindsay, who has researched the critical question of Jewish–Christian relations within Barth's theology, offers a helpful insight into Barth's massive corpus of writing and his towering significance as 'another Aquinas'. One can always quibble with any of these survey introductions, but it is difficult for me to comprehend why Tillich and Bultmann are grouped together in one short essay. Of all the thinkers in the last century, these two drew upon elements of the existentialist movement in ways that radically re-shaped their method in theology. Linking them together betrays the Barthian bias of this whole work: they were seen as the misguided ones, who allowed experience to remain as a source for theology. But Tillich, especially, was the thinker who attempted a 'theology of culture' and sought to find an appropriate place for both revelation and reason, the re-joining (as he put it) of these two elements which essentially belong together. His thought represents an especially modern approach to theology and yet gave rise to a huge breadth of new scholarship and vitality, welcoming the experience of a whole range of peoples and cultures, and merits much more appropriate recognition as such.

As already mentioned, the final section of the book identifies challenges for modern approaches to theology. There are essays on Christianity and Other Religions, Economics and Social Justice, Feminism (no mention of Men's Movements here), Rediscovery of Mysticism, Eco-theology, Drama, Film and Postmodernity, Race and Science. Every one of these essays offers a fine presentation of movements within cultures. This section is an implicit recognition that essentially modern theology and modernity as such is, in fact, a self-critical phenomenon, in that it gives rise to new challenges and new approaches. Postmodernity has arisen from modernity.

What remains a critical concern for this reader, however, is the question of whether these 'contemporary issues' are in fact to be allowed to influence and form the nature of theology, or whether they are seen as matters to which 'theology proper' is to be 'applied'. It is this latter approach, so characteristic of the neo-orthodox schools which claim to be Barthian, which has seen the systematic separation of theology from cultural movements and the life of faith separated from the societies in which we live. Privatized religion and its abandonment of the public sphere have been the result. In recent times, not content with the claim of Fundamentalist Christians to be the only voice in the public sphere, theologians have sought to redress this failing. We can do so, however, only if our approach to theology is more willing to allow the struggles and achievements of humanity and the life of the planet to be part of the substance of theology, not simply 'issues' to be addressed.

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Alister E. McGrath and Darren C. Marks (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Protestantism*. Blackwell, Malden, MA, 2004, 512 pp., ISBN 0631232788. Review doi: 10.1558/arsr.v21i1.103.

Who, suddenly called upon to lecture on an unfamiliar topic or introduce a new area to a beginning graduate student, has not reached gratefully for the relevant *Blackwell Companion*? The series has a justifiable reputation for high-quality articles by leading scholars, which both survey their field and often develop an original case, without detracting from the primary function of providing a reliable overview.

The expanding religion list is a welcome addition. The traditions-based religion volumes' editors face a more challenging task than those of, say, *Companions* to specific disciplines or subdisciplines (for example, ethics or political philosophy) in that they have to chart not only the state of scholarship on particular academic questions, but also the communities who live out the traditions covered in their pages.

The *Blackwell Companion to Protestantism* addresses this task by dividing its forty-one chapters into three parts. 'The Formation of Protestant Identity: History and Ideology' covers formative figures (Luther, Calvin, Schleiermacher, Barth, Edwards) and geographical regions (Europe, North America, Asia and Australia, Africa). In 'Protestantism and Present Identity: Relations and Influence', nearly all the chapter titles begin 'Protestantism and…', explaining its relationship to movements and themes as varied as the Bible, the arts, racism, Judaism, missions and spirituality. 'The Future of Protestantism' considers the dynamic potential of ecumenism, evangelicalism, pentecostalism and postmodernity, with a concluding chapter on 'the Non-Western Protestant World'.

Inevitably, not all topics are covered in the same detail. The one- or two-page contributions on Protestantism in France, Italy and Wales, for example, read more like encyclopedia entries than chapters. Meanwhile, a single chapter addresses the whole of Africa, from the liberation-inspired theologies associated with figures such as Desmond Tutu of South Africa, to the Pentecostalism of movements such as the Musama Disco Christo Church of Ghana. With impressive economy, John S. Pobee analyses themes across African theology (e.g. African Feminist–Womanist theology) as well as summarising mission and post-mission history. Meanwhile, Australia, New Zealand and Oceania share a single chapter, a pressure reflected in the fact that Pacific Islands churches get just two sentences.

The editors explain in the Introduction that they consciously set out to have indigenous voices speaking for the various geographical regions, and, despite the unevennesses just mentioned, the local perspective is one of the collection's strengths.

Cynthia L. Rigby's contribution on 'Protestantism and Feminism' concludes with the hope that 'Someday, articulating the relationship between Protestantism and feminism… will no longer be necessary' because 'Protestantism will take on the aims of feminism to such a degree that it would be redundant to refer to oneself as a "Protestant feminist"… In the meantime…Protestant feminists stand at the heart of Protestant traditions, working alongside their Protestant brothers and sisters in the struggle to discern and to realize what it means to be Christian believers' (p. 340).

But, in this volume, Rigby works alongside thirty-eight brothers and no sisters. A couple of the brothers (Pobee on Africa, John Corrigan on the USA) mention their feminist and womanist sisters' influence on the tradition; but for the most part, Protestantism turns out to have been a movement entirely of men.

The almost total absence of women from any but the one chapter directly devoted to them underscores a more general problem. By that move, and by inviting what the editors call 'indigenous authors' to address the various regions, they inadvertently paint a very particular collective picture of the Protestant traditions they aim to chart. The regions are

described by voices from those regions; women are discussed by a female author; every other topic—all 23 non-regional chapters—is discussed by North American and British men.

Does this matter? Well, despite some exceptions (e.g. the very helpful chapter on Pentecostalism, which points to the importance not just of racial integration in early American Pentecostalism, but also the numerous non-Western Pentecostal movements of independent origin), many thematic chapters read as if the topics dealt with by the 'indigenous' authors have little bearing on their discussion.

In a volume of this scope, this worry about lack of cross-fertilisation may sound like unfair carping. Should one really expect the chapter on fundamentalism, say, to spend scarce pages discussing gender? And yet—and yet—having noted in passing that activist fundamentalists in the USA 'have not just voted for "prolife, profamily" candidates; they have also actively worked against the Equal Rights Amendment, gay rights, and, most important, abortion rights' (p. 352), can we really understand the movement's dynamism strictly in terms of controversies about biblical inerrancy and premillennialist dispensationalism? Can we make sense of fundamentalism as a movement without understanding not just the intellectual controversies, but also the mass mobilisation of chastity-pledging youth, obedience-pledging wives and leadership-pledging husbands from which it draws so much emotional force? Does not even the fervour for creation rather than evolution derive at least some of its force from the fact that creation underscores male headship and produces a profoundly gendered worldview, whereas evolution is understood by creationists as opening the way to endorsing greater sexual equality?

Perhaps we should not be surprised that a book about Protestantism, by Protestant scholars, shows a tendency to reduce its themes to doctrinal or intellectual controversies. And this volume contains much that is very helpful in understanding the ways in which such controversies have shaped the beliefs, values, spirituality and life experience of Protestants around the world. Overall, I was left with the impression of a bold attempt to grasp the diversity of a culturally and theologically diverse movement; and of a volume which had finally failed backed away from taking its own insight into that diversity with sufficient seriousness.

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