Review of No Longer Invisible: Religion in University Education

Rishi Sriram, Baylor University

Available at: https://works.bepress.com/rishi_sriram/19/
revision of former beliefs. However, good tethers are like strong belief systems: their formulations have been calculated to absorb a reasonable range of anticipated alternatives that warrant the reliability of the original set of beliefs. Yet during true peer disagreement, even experts (with equivalent skills and knowledge) would be less epistemically confident regarding the adequacy of their formulations, although this does not necessarily lead to the abandonment of beliefs. Kraft applies this process of epistemic adjudication observable in ordinary disagreement to religious disagreements, and argues that religious diversity compels one to draw from internal and external sources of knowledge to maintain justified belief while negotiating legitimate challenges. This book is a must read for especially epistemologists, analytic philosophers, and ecumenists interested in the dynamics underlying religious disagreements.

Timothy Lim T. N.
Regent University School of Divinity


Schrijvers’s introduction to Lacoste provides readers with an exposition in the most meaningful sense of the term: as a positioning by way of contradistinction. He skillfully and lucidly elaborates the distinctive ways Lacoste’s thought stands apart, at once situating it within the field of French phenomenology and according to its sources, particularly Husserl and Heidegger. Schrijvers specifies the continuities and discontinuities between Lacoste’s affective ontology, Marion’s eroticism, and Levinasian ethics. He also notes Falque’s important disagreement with Lacoste regarding the status of the world and the nature of its metamorphosis. But the onus of the book falls to enumerating how Lacoste’s thought develops through an ongoing conversation with Heidegger. If it is true that Lacoste evolves over the course of his career through his critical dialogue with Heidegger, then the Heideggerian overcoming of the transcendentalist ego and the corresponding “decentering of the subject” constitute the primary focal points of this discourse. For it is precisely here that Lacoste resects his phenomenology of liturgical experience qua non-experience in contrast to phenomenologies of religion qua religious experience, to recall Schleiermacher, or feeling. Yet, it is striking how Lacoste’s notion of non-experience incorporates ideas espoused by Maréchal and Rahner. Given his criticisms of the transcendentalist tradition, his critical reception of these sources deserves further attention. It is to Schrijvers’s credit that these concerns arise for the reader. By putting Lacoste in conversation, Schrijvers has made it possible for a wide range of readers to converse with Lacoste, making this introduction as engaging as it is informative.

Nathan R. Strunk
McGill University

Theology


Abraham has long been known as a preeminent Wesley scholar and as a historical theologian whose work complements the work of Wesley historian R. P. Heitzenrater. Abraham has also preached and lectured tirelessly on the topic of Wesley. This short volume stems from a series of lectures he provided to a United Methodist Church in Singapore a short time ago. Abraham examines the intellectual journey Wesley took in his Aldersgate experience, and how he walked out on an English street with such certainty and confidence after hearing Luther’s preface to the epistle to the Romans. Abraham is very clear in constructing his argument. He divides his treatise into four chapters, each devoted to a component of his thesis. Using Wesley’s journals, Abraham discusses Wesley’s treatment of divine promises. Then he examines Wesley’s understanding of personal experiences of the divine, and finally he treats the power of God from a Wesleyan perspective. The greatest benefit of Abraham’s treatment is his utilization of Wesley’s journals. Abraham relies upon these primary sources to illuminate Wesley’s conversion experience and his notion of certainty. The title, however, is slightly misleading. While dealing with epistemology, and secondarily, the subject of philosophy of religion, there is little “Athens” in his treatment of Aldersgate. One may expect to find the Aristotelian or Neoplatonic foundations of Wesley’s understanding of certainty with such a title, but the focus here is clearly on Wesley. And that focus is not a negative; this book is a wonderful addition to any Wesleyan scholar’s shelf. Its dense and narrow exposition may, however, exclude general readers.

Lee M. Jefferson
Centre College


This volume focuses primarily on the practices of a number of Native American congregations related to the classical pentecostal denomination Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee), although there is also data from those affiliated with the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel and a few other independent groups. Alexander, an adjunct faculty member at the Pentecostal Theological Seminary (also in Cleveland, Tennessee), details how these congregations are adapting Native ceremonies for use in worship and other more or less liturgical contexts. He depends on the missiological and contextualization theories of evangelical scholars Charles Kraft and Paul Hiebert while drawing also from recent proposals in pentecostal and
pneumatological theology of religions. The volume concludes with some recommendations for transforming praxis directed primarily toward his own denominational leaders, although these are transferable to all churches with Native American ministries or interested in developing relations with Native American communities. This volume was originally a Doctor of Missiology thesis at Fuller Theological Seminary, and Cherohala Press is a new imprint of Center for Pentecostal Theology Press at the Pentecostal Theological Seminary (see http://www.pentecostal theology.org). It signals the emergence of a new paradigm of thinking in evangelical and pentecostal circles that engages with Native American realities in a more dialogical and less paternalistic manner, although time will tell to what degree developments in Native American theology will in turn impact evangelical and pentecostal theology itself, generally speaking.

Amos Yong
Regent University School of Divinity


This book—building on At the Crossroads of Social Transformation: An Eastern-European Theological Perspective (Lambert 2010)—announces the emergence of a new pentecostal voice on the theological horizon, one informed by Eastern European (and hence Orthodox) sensibilities, interdisciplinary range, and an expansive vision. Although published by the Center for Pentecostal Theology Press (which is informally affiliated with the Church of God in Cleveland, Tennessee), the “Spirit-inspired vision of social transformation” here is not just for pentecostals but for the church ecumenical, indeed for all who long for a new world order in which the gifts of the alien, the stranger, and the other can be celebrated and received as part of the healing of the world. The four major chapters of the book weave ecclesiological, sociopolitical, economic, and theological-cultural threads around a robustly pneumatological and trinitarianly rich argument centered in the Pentecost narrative (Acts 2) that orchestrates the message of how the many tongues, languages, ethnicities, cultures, and even hierarchies that constitute human difference will be not erased but redeemed through the church’s proclamation and embodiment of the possibilities for God’s new people and the eschatological household. Once the reader looks past some of the stylistic infelicities of the text (perhaps indicative of the kinks any relatively new publisher has to work out), what emerges is a pentecostal theology for the church and the world. Tongues and sanctification are no longer individualized but, however haltingly, call attention to and, however fragmentarily, concretely instantiate the city of God to come.

Amos Yong
Regent University School of Divinity


What is the best way to start a conversation about Christian faith and economics or discipleship and spiritual formation? Bell offers a simple answer: desire. He portrays desire in ontological language, as the fundamental moving power of being. He argues that at the innermost core of social existence, Christian faith, or response to the lure of the market is desire. The Christian faith and late capitalism are engaged in the struggle of shaping, organizing, and channeling desire. Christianity is forming people through practices of discipleship and liturgy so as to order their desires toward the good that is God, to an alternative lifestyle and economy against the logic and rhythms of globalized markets. The alternative path Bell advocates is not a route to withdrawal from or rejection of capitalism, but resistance to the totalizing impulses of the market. The key strength of this book is that it succinctly describes and thoroughly analyzes desire as the fundamental human power. First, Bell lays out how capital-ism organizes, disciplines or assembles human desires, “deforming” them to create warped “relations with oneself, others, and God.” Then he proceeds to show how the practices of the church can help to liberate human desires that are under the thralldom of capitalism for the divine economy of salvation. The key weakness is that his understanding of capitalism is restrictive; his vision of its reformation is metaphysical and non-convincing, and he “demonizes” the market to make his case. This issue notwithstanding, it is still a noteworthy book.

Nimi Wariboko
Andover Newton Theological School


In this text, fifteen authors share their reflections on twenty-first century evangelical Christianity. The thesis is that a new generation of evangelicals is redefining how the Christian faith can be lived out in the midst of a broken world. The composite portrait of evangelical Christianity presented is inspiring, involving fully engaged Christians pursuing justice in the world while staying rooted in a Bible-centered, evangelical faith. However, the content is not purely sentimental: both past failures and successes in the evangelical community are acknowledged, while looking ahead to a hopeful future. This book consists of an introduction, two chapters from the editors, twelve chapters from contributing authors, and a concluding chapter from the editors. The editors’ pieces frame the text with reflections on shalom and “the just and peaceable kingdom.” Each chapter
from a contributing author begins with a personal story before moving into a discussion of a theological theme. For those wishing to understand the priorities, passions, and vision of the newest generations of evangelicals, this book is an informative and inspiring read. This text would not, however, satisfy someone who is interested in gaining practical insight on living out the theological ideals presented, as there is essentially no application-oriented discussion.

Vanessa Williams  
Bethel Seminary, St. Paul


“I have resolved to stop comparing the best of my Anabaptist heritage with the worst of evangelicalism.” So writes J. Nelson Kraybill concerning the long history of division between these historic movements. The editors, far from idealists, solicit bold yet cordial contributors able to move beyond dismissive caricatures, invite critical self-evaluation, demonstrate unity without uniformity, and seek common witness before a watching world. The editors begin with the broadest possible definitions of evangelicals with their emphasis upon personal conversion and political engagement in America’s “culture wars” and Anabaptists as a Peace Church tradition with their emphasis upon separation from “the world” and a two-kingdom theology. Contributors come from both traditions often with significant cross-fertilization and “one foot” in both camps and they long to enlarge the best elements of their respective activist impulses. The ever-controversial difference concerning war warrants attention, but not the primary point of contention (telling in its own right). Instead, ardently debated issues include the soteriological detachment over penal substitution, Christus Victor, and exemplar themes; the ensuing implications for interaction and potential partnership in public witness and social justice; and political propositions for middle ground between the extreme ideologies of Francis Schaeffer and John Howard Yoder. These essayists, very aware of the real legacy of division between their traditions, call upon both to pursue “healing . . . [through] witness to the reality of the incarnation.” For this reason, readers of these and any tradition should find here a model for dialogue in an increasingly schismatic Christianity.

Martin W. Mittelstadt  
Evangel University


There is a certain irony for a book that argues for the importance of Christians knowing and understanding the “Foundational Testament” (Callen’s term for the OT) to attempt to do this completely through an Evangelical theological lens. To be fair, this popular level book accomplishes its stated subtitular goal of doing a Christian reading of the OT. Callen’s theological reading of the OT seems situated in a growing stream of Evangelical authors who have appeared to abandon historical–critical methodologies in favor of theological readings (such as Daniel Trier and possibly Merold Westphal). Evangelicals will find the author’s assessment of the OT’s theological streams—redemption, holiness, hope, and answers for suffering—both helpful and compelling. This theological approach will, for most Evangelicals, cover what the book lacks in critical scholarship. To his credit, Callen deals with several Evangelical “hot topics” such as the virgin birth and openness theology, offering some thoughtful insights. Readers hoping for new historical information on the OT will likely be disappointed; in fact, Callen rarely interacts with even basic scholarly sources when making his claims. Readers who do not read from an Evangelical context will likely not find many of the arguments in this book to be persuasive. Ultimately, this book will be most helpful for Evangelical preachers hoping to add theological content to their sermons from the Old Testament.

Timothy Senapatiratne  
Bethel Seminary, St. Paul, MN


This volume is a collection of modified articles that have appeared over a span of several decades in the Wesleyan Theological Journal. The warrant for the volume is that holiness should be seen as a topic that is immediately relevant to the challenges facing Christianity today. The volume hopes to appeal widely to serious Christian lay readers, and to this end, the editors have modified the original pieces by removing all footnotes, adding study questions, and re-titling each contribution so that all begin with the term “holiness” alongside a range of other topics. This last set is quite wide, encompassing many of the subdisciplines on display in the theological academy today. In this way, the editors hope to show the “breadth of holiness.” As with all edited volumes, a running concern is the degree to which the project holds together, especially since the twenty chapters were collected from preexistent articles rather than commissioned for the book project itself. In light of this challenge as well as the span of almost five decades that the collection represents, one wonders if the volume can possibly take into account the transitions, tensions, and competing visions of holiness that exist even within the Wesleyan Theological Society itself. Nevertheless, the book can serve as a helpful resource that can acquaint its readers with some of the most generative articles on holiness that have been produced by Wesleyan and Methodist scholars over the years in the Society’s official academic publication.

Daniel Castelo  
Seattle Pacific University

In this concise book, Castelo seeks to develop a “pragmatic theodicy” and, largely free of excessively stilted philosophical and metaphysical jargon, accomplishes that goal. Castelo presents an accessible response to theodical concerns that will satisfy most laity and even clergy, but may not directly engage philosophical or systematic theologians on the perennial issue of theodicy. Nevertheless, the book represents an important contribution to the literature in practical theology. Castelo evokes several relevant and compelling theological themes, including the nature of God’s power, the quintessence of relationality, and the distortion of the human will. However, these themes, which may have strengthened the central argument, are left relatively underdeveloped. Castelo utilizes strong vocabulary, including terms like “not-God” (the created order), “anti-God” (evil), and “anti-human” (sin). Ultimately, Castelo suggests that “theodicy proper” is folly, namely because human beings are not omniscient and cannot remove themselves far enough from the abovementioned realities to adequately explain suffering. For practical purposes, Castelo dismisses theodical theologizing in favor of a direct response to suffering (instead of attempting to explain it). In so doing, Castelo suggests that Christians should respond by practicing “lament” in the community of faith and learning to “feel” rather than explain. While such responses to theodical concerns may seem evasive, they should have real and practical effect in the life of the church. For in the end, it is not an explanation that heals wounds but a practical response of mercy and love: the substance of Castelo’s well-articulated argument.

Joshua D. Reichard
Youngstown, OH


Simon Chan, the Earnest Lau Professor of Systematic Theology at Trinity Theological College in Singapore, is a well-recognized scholar with two prior books on spiritual theology plus a third, Pentecostal Theology and the Christian Spiritual Tradition, as volume 21 in this same series as the book currently under review. Pentecostal Ecclesiology builds on and extends Chan’s previous work, in particular urging pentecostals to consider how a serious consideration of the ecclesiological vision of the Eastern Orthodox tradition can provide important resources to get beyond what he considers the anemic results of a pentecostal–evangelical rapprochement toward a creative, authentic, and robust pentecostal theology. This “essay” is a substantive contribution of a seasoned and mature theologian that is brim-

Offering a theological perspective on the role of technology in transforming human nature, this volume consists of thirteen chapters written by twelve different Christian thinkers. The text’s unifying thematic is transhumanism, a broad school of thought that views human nature as incomplete and able to be enhanced to transcend biological limits such as death. After a helpful introduction, the work first explores several historical antecedents to transhumanism, then moves to a theological critique of transhumanistic visions, and concludes by examining the challenges to theological reflection offered by this account of human nature. Useful to both undergraduate and graduate level students, an underlying argument throughout the chapters is that Christians may be hopeful about enhancement technology but also cautious, mindful of both historical failures and biblical accounts of transformative foundering. This view suggests the rich complexity within the volume, as it seeks to counter any simplistic theological rejection of human enhancement yet also any clear affirmation of transhumanism. Doing so, it offers an account of Christian thought that finds a parallel desire with that of transhumanism: both share a vision of humanity transformed. Though distinctive differences matter about the causes and aims of transformation, finding this shared impulse allows the work to provide a deeply engaging and critical guide to competing arguments about being human within the contemporary context.

Peder Jothen
St. Olaf College


What do Christian practices look like grounded in a missional theology? Although missional theology is in its embryonic stage, this thoughtful book looks to the Gospel and Our Culture Network and builds upon the works of Newbiggin and Hunsberger as well as Barth and Guder, to give us one of the most thorough provisional definitions of missional theology to date. Conner develops a robust definition by helping us understand the history, motive, matter, and manner of missional theology. With this missional grounding, he engages the contemporary Christian practices dialogue related to the Valparaiso Project, paying special attention to the work of Dorothy Bass and Craig Dykstra. Conner believes that the missional latency embedded in Dykstra’s work can be drawn out in such a way as to reorient the Christian practices around the nature and vocation of a missionary God and church. He persuasively builds a more vibrant and missional definition of Christian practices. By refusing to separate the act and being of God, the author does not fall to the unnecessary dichotomy of the inner and outer life of the church—worship and mission—but considers true worship missional and true mission worship; thus Christian practices witness to the kingdom of God in the world. This is a vital missional spirituality to read.

J. R. Woodward
University of Manchester


Crockett and Robbins offer a radical theological manifesto for a “New Materialism” influenced by (among others) Žižek, Heidegger, Deleuze, and Hegel. The authors’ starting point is a diagnosis of what they deem to be the predominant malaise of contemporary society: a combination of the corruption of democracy, environmental devastation, and corporate capitalism. To overcome this, what is necessary is a “deformation” of theology that draws on digital culture, art, politics, ethics, physics, neuroscience, and philosophical theology. In following this path, the authors are arguing for a new philosophical vision, which advocates the need for a postcapitalist world wherein being is clearly identified with energy as transformation. Ultimately, the authors’ emphasis on energy as a material and philosophical force suggests a new theological language that is freed from a narrowly defined religion, opting instead for the fecundity of the category of the event. In many respects, this fits the moniker of “radical theology” quite well: Crockett and Robbins are in conversation with Christianity, but their idea—like other recent radical theologies—challenges the reader to reach toward a more encompassing philosophical tradition. Unlike many examples of work inspired by continental philosophy, however, this work foregoes impenetrable prose in favor of a more lively style. It is also radical in its interdisciplinarity. The authors acknowledge the difficulty of treating so many disciplines in a single work, just as they note their own dependence on scholars outside religion. This depth of their interdisciplinary engagement makes some aspects of this work difficult to assess (e.g., the feasibility of an alternative theory of nuclear energy). Even so, it is a provocative read that should be of interest to scholars across many fields.

Forrest Clingerman
Ohio Northern University


Advancing on historical, biblical, and theological fronts, this landmark book will become a standard investigation of
the Lord’s Supper among pentecostals. It could not be more timely, since some wonder if pentecostals have developed, or could ever develop, a theology of any sacrament. After an extensive status quaestionis of pentecostals’ scholarly accounts of the Lord’s Supper in recent decades, Green performs a detailed study of the supper among the first pentecostals in the USA and UK, as attested in early periodicals. From the more recent literature, Green observes a marked turn by pentecostal theologians to the sacraments that has tended toward an emphasis either on drawing from insights of other Christian traditions or on articulating a distinctively pentecostal theology of sacraments. From the periodicals, he concludes (inter alia) that pentecostal celebrations of the Lord’s Supper were more than mere memorial sacs of Christ’s death. His account of New Testament passages interestingly devotes far more attention to John 6 than to the Last Supper materials, and some readers may find his expositions to be shaped by a Wirkungsgeschichte strategy occasionally colored unduly by early pentecostal spirituality. Sure to stimulate theological reflection is Green’s constructive proposal that pentecostals should affirm that Christ is “really, personally, and bodily present” in the Lord’s Supper, an affirmation ripe for ecumenical engagement and comparison, especially with the attestation of the Catechism of the Catholic Church that “the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity” of Christ is present in the bread and wine.

Christopher A. Stephenson
Lee University


Many Christian theological investigations of love center on divine love, spousal love, or “neighbor love.” This translation of Grenholm’s 2005 book represents a contribution to the still-embryonic field of Christian theological reflection on mother love. Grenholm focuses on the figure of Mary, with special reference to the annunciation, to develop an argument concerning the theological importance of vulnerability. The final chapters on power, asymmetry, and mutuality in developing an account of maternal love are the most promising. Here, Grenholm engages the iconic early twentieth-century Swedish theologian A. Nygren and a select group of feminist critics of his conception of hierarchy and the denigration of eros. However, Grenholm’s relatively thin engagement with the history of treatment of such issues, skipping over Outka and the broad range of feminist theologians who have conceived agape in the context of motherhood, limits the book’s scope and potential influence. That said, the book’s accessible and generally inviting style could render it a useful work for undergraduates or seminarians.

Mara Benjamin
St. Olaf College


This book is the result of a four-year “Religion in the Academy” research project examining the role of religion in higher education. Rather than attempting to defend or critique religion in university life, the authors seek to bring understanding of how religion and spirituality interact with teaching, learning, and student development. The authors provide a much-needed source for understanding how religion connects with higher learning and how to capitalize on, rather than ignore, such connections. The title of the book comes from the premise that religion is part of educating students and can no longer be treated as “invisible.” However, religion’s relationship to higher education is quite different from the historic, traditional relationship of the past. The most significant contributions of this book are the framework it provides for understanding religion (historic religion, public religion, and private religion), the connections and distinctions made between religion and spirituality, and the specific platforms by which religion can enter into educational conversations in helpful ways. Some examples in the book come from public research institutions, and these are especially interesting ways of illustrating the authors’ points. Although perhaps overly optimistic of the reception these ideas will receive in the academy, this book is a must read for anyone who cares about if and how religion should influence the contemporary goals of higher education.

Rishi Sriram
Baylor University


indicates a life of idolatry centered upon power or self-worth, while a life marked by generosity serves as the most direct expression of faith in God and love for fellow humans. Johnson remains adamant that "sharing possessions" not be reduced to specific models or numbers, but follows philosopher Gabriel Marcel concerning humanness as a healthy tension between "being" and "having." Johnson expands his original 1981 edition with up-to-date commentary following each chapter and an extended epilogue, where he challenges confessional readers to consider their disposition toward possessions via hospitality, stewardship, Sabbath living, and spiritual discernment.

*MARTIN W. MITTELSTADT  
Evangel University*


In this brilliant study, Lim walks his readers through the historical, philosophical, and theological complexities of seventeenth century Trinitarian debates. While the past few decades have seen a glut of books on the "renaissance of Trinitarian studies," much of this attention has been focused on either the patristic or modern periods. Few have given sufficient attention to the early modern period. Thankfully, Lim fills this gap. Navigating between the "orthodox" and "antitrinitarian" views, Lim avoids dehistoricizing these arguments. One of the most fascinating aspects of this study, and one of the most compelling, is Lim's argument that this is not really a struggle between faith and unbelief, but a dispute about hermeneutics. How does one read the ancient text, what authority does the history of the Church hold, etc. Too often it has been missed just how biblicalist the English Socinian advocates really are (e.g., John Biddle), and how underlying so much of the raging controversies were questions about reason, authority (personal, corporate, historical), and spirituality. A better understanding of these points helps not simply inform our historical understanding, but also sheds light on continuing theological discussions surrounding the Church's Trinitarian confession. This book is highly recommended.

*KELLY M. KAPIC  
Covenant College*

**THE FUTURE OF POLITICAL THEOLOGY: RELIGIOUS AND THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES.**


This collection of essays (which is linked to the International Research Network on Religion and Democracy) ambitiously attempts both to consolidate recent trends in the field of political theology and to articulate ways to define the future of political theology. All of this is conducted in stimulating conversation with philosophical thought, the history of political theory, current feminist expressions of political theory (including an insightful essay by Roja Fazaeli on contemporary debates on women's rights in Iran), and with Judaic, Islamic, and Buddhist theologies. The editors assemble a contingent of some of the finest (mostly European) thinkers in the philosophy of religion—including Graham Ward, Catherine Pickstock, and Lieven Boeve—to test some of the fundamental assumptions of post modern political theory. Although some of the essays, particularly those identified as exercises in Christian theology, would be strengthened by closer examination of the role of liturgical practices in the formation of the political conscience, this volume's attempt to locate a visible presence for political theology in the public realm is provocative, important, and will no doubt garner the careful attention it deserves.

*ASHLEY COCKSWORTH  
The Queen's Foundation, Birmingham, UK*


"Yoder forced his readers to pick a side: either non-violence or violence; either faithfulness or unfaithfulness. One had to resist his position or embrace it." As scholarship concerning the monumental efforts of John Howard Yoder continues to accumulate, Martens boldly ascribes to Yoder the label "heterodox," not for Yoder's insistent pacifism, but for Yoder's wanting christology and ecclesiology. For Martens, the oft-debated Yoderian pacifism takes a surprising secondary role to accusations regarding Yoder's reduction of Christian discipleship to secular ethics. Moreover, Martens's issue with Yoder's unrelenting passion for a more faithful Christian existence rests primarily not upon Yoder's social or political platforms, but larger theological issues that he excludes or renders irrelevant, namely, a christology with no apparent need for a unique and salvific Jesus and an ensuing ecclesiology that marginalizes sacramental practices. Martens respectfully assumes the role of polemicist and should elicit strong reaction from Yoderian specialists as suggested by the atypical endorsement of Stanley Hauweras: "I confess I remain unconvinced by some of Martens's conclusions. Nonetheless, this is a book that should be taken seriously." Students and disciples of Yoder (and the larger Anabaptist tradition) will have to wrestle with Martens's critique and sort through Yoder's profound conclusions regarding the paradigmatic life of Jesus for all disciples versus and/or in concert with the unique personhood and salvific implications of Jesus the suffering Christ. Given Yoder's persistent criticism of other would-be orthodoxies, readers of this book will find Yoder's theological and practical contributions and legacy under the microscope.

*MARTIN W. MITTELSTADT  
Evangel University*

A theologically sophisticated but gripping narrative in a rare genre: the biography of a book. Marty begins appropriately with what is known of Bonhoeffer’s confinement in Nazi prisons, 1942–45, and moves to Eberhard Bethge’s role in collecting, editing, and publishing the letters. Chapter 3 introduces the decisive theological turn in April 1944 as Bonhoeffer raised new questions (“Who is Jesus Christ for us today?”) and coined enigmatic phrases long pondered in academic and pastoral circles: “religionless Christianity,” “a world that has come of age,” “even if there were no God,” “the man for others,” and “arcane disciplines.” This created controversy over what Bonhoeffer was thinking and whether he was making a decisive break with his earlier commitments. Among the first to see a secular Bonhoeffer in the later letters were a small group of East German Protestant academics seeking a vision of Christianity compatible with Marxism. Similarly, in North America the book figured prominently in the 1960s debate over the “death of God.” But strangely, Letters and Papers also elicited support from many liberal and conservative Protestants and Roman Catholics who saw continuity with Bonhoeffer’s earlier work. Drawing upon conversations with Bethge and members of the International Bonhoeffer Society and bending toward continuity, Marty concludes with a compelling discussion of Bonhoeffer’s changing perspectives on God, christology, and ecclesiology. This is a demanding but engaging read for faculty, students, pastors, and laity.

John C. Shelley
Furman University


McCall’s primary concern is to critique the teaching (of Moltmann, but also many who follow him) that at the death of Christ there was a rupture in the Trinity. McCall argues that the Father only forsook Jesus in the sense that he allowed him to die, but he maintains that the unity of the Trinity could never be broken. McCall explains how the Trinity “matters” because it shows that God does not forsake those he loves, with the result that for believers there is no condemnation, no defeat, and no despair. Along the way McCall includes helpful discussions of atonement theology, Trinitarian theology, divine love and wrath, impassibility, simplicity, determinism, justification, and sanctification. McCall implicitly critiques some versions of penal substitution (although he never explicitly mentions penal substitution), preferring the Christus victor theory and viewing Jesus’s death as a sin offering. McCall presents a clear description of the issues at stake (even for nonspecialists), while both drawing on historic sources and giving readers a good sense of the contemporary discussion. One minor weakness of the book, however, is that when discussing justification, McCall advocates the forensic view without engaging with current biblical or theological critiques of this view. Overall, McCall offers readers a theological delight that is sure to inspire many scholars, preachers, and lay readers.

Andrew K. Gabriel
Horizon College and Seminary, Saskatoon


This massive tome succeeds in fulfilling the authors’ intention to provide an introduction to Edwards’s theology. It is meticulous in rooting out every facet of Edwards’s thought and the debates within scholarship over its features and content, yet remains steadfastly focused on the role of a guide that highlights the features and points the way forward. Divided into three parts, the book moves from a focus on context to an exploration of various loci within Edwards’s theology, informed by the structure of Edwards’s A History of Redemption, and concludes with an effort to trace out Edwards’s influence and ongoing relevance. Threaded throughout the book are foundational themes that interlace to supply the basic texture of Edwards’s thought: Trinitarian communication, creaturely participation, necessitarian dispositionalism, theocentric voluntarism, and harmonious constitutionalism. Viewing Edwards as a bridge among various Christian streams, the final chapter shows how the open system Edwards developed and his emphasis on spiritual experience with a view to participation in divine life can forge links between charismatics and non-charismatics, Protestants and Catholics, liberal and conservative, and eastern and western forms of Christianity. What emerges from the sure hands of McClymond and McDermott is the deep originality and ongoing importance of the Edwardian synthesis for Christian thought as a whole, not simply the Reformed tradition in which it is firmly planted. It is difficult to imagine another introduction surpassing this one in the breadth of its exploration of Edwards, his interpreters, and his influence. All who wish to explore Edwards’s theology must now begin here.

Dale Counter
Regent University


At least three distinct achievements guarantee this volume will be a starting point and required reading for the foreseeable future for all interested in pentecostal eschatology. First, McQueen provides a fairly comprehensive status quaestiones of historical and contemporary
writing on the topic, by and large fairly and accurately presented. This is a boon for those wanting to know from whence the scholarly literature has derived and present trajectories. Second, almost half the book provides close readings of early pentecostal literature that chart the eschatological ideas; the author’s survey suggests that the Finished Work stream generally adhered to a classical dispensationalist framework while the Wesleyan Holiness milieu was both much more diverse and open from the beginning to exploring the contours of a unique eschatological vision informed by pentecostal spirituality, sensibilities, and concerns. Third, the constructive proposal builds off the latter arc through a narrative reading the book of Revelation, especially the last two chapters, from the perspective of the pentecostal five-fold gospel of Jesus as savior, sanctifier, Spirit baptizer, healer, and coming king wherein each moment is intertwined with the others. The edge to the argument invites contemporary pentecostals to consider as normative not early pentecostal doctrinal teachings about the “end times” but their discerning spirituality. This does not deny the future horizons of biblical prophecy but emphasizes a vigilant eschatological and prophetic life in the Spirit between the times of the-comings of Christ. Beyond the pentecostal academy, dispensationalist theologians also ought to take note of this book.

Amos Yong
Regent University School of Divinity


This book makes the case for the importance of ideas. What started out in the early Middle Ages as a handful of ascetic preachers protesting the venality and simony of the clergy became interpreted over the centuries by an increasingly better educated clergy as an ideology of heresy. Sometimes it was part of a competition for power between church and state or between state and state, with each side accusing the other of heresy. Once it was defined as a conspiracy, it could be found everywhere. Once it became clear that the best defense was to accuse others, any single charge of heresy multiplied geometrically. One heresy became a hydra head of many heresies. And the war on heresy spread from France and Italy, where it had started, to the Holy Roman Empire, the Low Countries, Switzerland, and elsewhere. Until recently, historians accepted the construction of an organized and unified movement of heresy as it was reconstructed retrospectively by the people who eventually repressed it. But Moore works chronologically through the evidence, and it becomes clear that it was no such thing. It took hundreds of years to lift simple piety and traditional resistance to innovation into what was perceived as a movement. The more learned, the more likely you were able to see this movement. One suspects that the same happens today: the more you have been taught to look for “heresies,” the more you find them. Moore has written a fascinating mirror for our own times. Both under-

Olson’s book is a basic introduction to the history of Christian thought. Stretching over the apostolic and postmodern eras, it covers a wide range of issues and periods pivotal to the development of Christian theology. His work notably departs from other introductory texts in its structure. Olson imaginatively constructs twenty-nine conversations among forty prominent thinkers. In one conversation, for instance, Olson creates a dialogue among Cyril, Apollinaris, Nestorius, and Eutyches on the nature(s) of Christ. Preceded by a brief setting, each conversation is followed by an analysis and a suggestion for further reading. Such a method of presentation, born out of Olson’s own pedagogical practice, does indeed produce an accessible medium for those with little or no acquaintance with Christian theology. Faithfully covering an immense breadth of issues while remaining engaging is a challenge for any author. Although Olson accomplishes the latter, his work has various limitations, which consequently restrict its use as a principal text in a classroom. First, the beliefs of the thinkers presented are at times overly basic and lack subtlety. Second, the limited number of suggestions for further reading, though valuable, sometimes includes dated studies. Finally, Olson’s own theological positions surface despite his stated attempt to remain faithful to each thinker’s ideas; this is most clearly evident in his analysis of Augustine whose doctrine Olson does not fully or fairly nuance. Limitations aside, God in Dispute could make for an entertaining supplemental text, especially for pedagogical variation in a classroom.

Bradley M. Peper
Nashville, TN


In this latest installment in Ashgate’s well-respected Barth Studies Series, Resch provides a reliable, comprehensive, and fascinating investigation of Karl Barth’s rich but often neglected interpretation of the virgin birth. In his defense of the virgin birth, Barth swam against the stream of most twentieth-century Protestant Interpretations of the doctrine (including his father’s), for which he attracted both critique and praise. Resch is a master of his material. He makes some original and exciting connections in Barth’s thought and carefully corrects a number of poor readings of Barth, particularly in his account of Mary, the Holy Spirit, and the founding of human agency. There is considerable interaction with Barth’s writings (including tracing how his
interpretation of the doctrine developed throughout his career) and current Barth scholarship in both English and German (which is no small feat). Noticeable by its absence, however, is any substantive engagement with various feminist critiques of the virgin birth. But this should not detract from what is a valuable book on Barth and an excellent contribution to the interpretation of the doctrine of the virgin birth.

Ashley Cocksworth
The Queen’s Foundation, Birmingham, UK


Like the bulk of an iceberg, the majority of our worldview lurks below the surface and out of plain sight. Since this statement rings true for anyone acquainted with cross-cultural travel, how much more should we expect a discernible difference by which Western readers (mis)read the non-Western scripture. In three parts, Randolph and O’Brien utilize the iceberg metaphor to assess critical cultural differences for their impact upon biblical interpretation. First, comes the glaring and obvious. Though readers realize visible differences between West and non-West or first and twenty-first century contexts, interpretation requires more than the translation of a word(s) into a new language and mere awareness of social mores (dress, customs, ethnicity) for proper application. Second, readers must recognize sociological implications of less obvious differences such as collectivism versus individualism, the values of honor and shame (e.g., private and public life), and concepts of time (the complexities of kairos and chronos). Finally, some differences lie “deep below the surface” of cultural consciousness. Whether rules over relationships or correctness over community, respective Western and non-Western worldviews may differ on appropriate conduct, discretion, and exceptions. Randolph and O’Brien write with grace and clarity. Though evangelical, they steer clear of moral or political agendas and give no hint of anti-Western sentiments; they even suggest someone write a complementary sequel: Misreading Scripture with Eastern Eyes. Their extensive range of biblical and contemporary samples makes this an excellent resource for confessional Bible study contexts or an entry-level textbook in undergraduate courses on biblical interpretation.

Martin W. Mittelstadt
Evangel University


This little book offers a constructive attempt on the part of a Catholic author to move beyond the impasse between Catholics and Evangelicals on the contentious issue of purgatory. In a very clear and irenic style Salkeld seeks to clear away a range of Evangelical (and often Catholic) misconceptions about purgatory. The biblical, theological, doxological (prayer for the dead), and historical roots of the doctrine are briefly and helpfully explored. The goal is to show that once clearly understood (and shorn of unhelpful medieval revisions that the Reformers rightly rejected), it is closer to Evangelical views of judgment than most have realized. Salkeld does a wonderful job of explaining purgatory in ways that show how its logic does not threaten the theology of grace and is even consistent with Evangelicalism’s own best theological insights. He wisely does not claim more for the biblical texts than they can support. Rather, he shows that while the Scripture does not teach purgatory the theological trajectories within it can be developed in ways that lead in that direction. His own constructive contribution to the ongoing development of the doctrine is to bring Volf’s insights on last judgment and postmortem transformation and reconciliation into dialogue with the theology of purgatory with the intention of further nuancing Catholic thought and revealing possible analogies in Evangelical theology. This is an excellent example of ecumenical theology to be recommended to clergy, theologians, and the ordinary thinking person in the pew.

Robin A. Parry
Worcester, UK


Formulating accounts of the world that balance relationship between God’s goodness, human freedom, and the existence of evil has been, and remains, a continuing task for Christian theology. Scott’s theologically astute and historically informed book explores the account of these topics given by Origen in the third century. He posits that Origen does not explain evil as much as he gives Christians a way to navigate it as they journey back to God. In addition, in a way that is rare for historical theology, Scott carefully ponderes the contemporary promise and pitfalls of appropriating Origen’s vision. The book’s opening chapter frames theodicy as Christians attempt to use theology and tradi- tion to “navigate” life before God amid evil. Subsequent chapters treat Origen’s thinking about the origins of evil, the fall of Satan, and the ways in which God will achieve final redemption. Scott skillfully and carefully explores the issues raised by the fragmentary nature of Origen’s surviving corpus, admitting that we have biased, limited, or no access to some of Origen’s writings on the issue. The book also argues that Origen was probably a universalist, but that when preaching to those he considered “spiritually immature,” he retained the teaching about hell. The texts show Origen admitting his teaching was shaped by his
perception of his audience’s spiritual maturity. Hence, it is possible that his teachings on the possibility of universal salvation were only mentioned in teachings for those who he believed would not misuse it. Scott closes with a critique of Origen’s project and the pitfalls of adopting it in a modern context. By advancing an argument about Origen’s theology, and by exploring the problems and possibilities of utilizing patristic theologies in contemporary contexts, students in both theology and patristics will find the book informative and worthwhile.

Aaron Klink
Duke University


With the recent renaissance in the field of missiology, after a few decades of confusion and decline, the field is faced with several issues regarding its methodology and scope. Taking a thematic approach over the popular theological method adapted by most introductions of missiology in the past, this concise volume is an excellent, scholarly starter to complex questions arising in the postcolonial and postmodern context of Christian mission. It also provides new insights into biblical, theological, and historical roots of mission studies, and how the field dynamically integrates with other disciplines such as anthropology and world religions. Dealing not only with methods and theory but also with the practical aspects such as strategy, means, and modes of mission today, the book successfully achieves its aim of evoking enthusiasm for and rethinking in the academic, multidisciplinary field of missiology and concludes with an appeal for its reconfiguration to be relevant in the future. The book includes a comprehensive survey of missiological literature of the past century, but neglects the missiology of the Eastern Orthodox tradition. All teachers and students of mission studies will find it an asset in their library, as it provides a broad introduction to their field and ready reference to its past literature.

Vinod John
Asbury Theological Seminary


Soergel explores how Reformation-era German Christians used theological and religious frameworks to assess the significance of odd natural occurrences, such as the birth of deformed animals, conjoined twins, and meteor showers. It opens by exploring the history and nature of wonder books before proceeding to Martin Luther’s views about miracles, natural signs, and nature in general. Luther dismissed Catholic claims of healings and miraculous events around saints and other holy relics, holding that the devil could do such things, and that Christians needed to focus on God’s scriptural promises. Still, Luther found confirmation for his belief that he was living in the end times in natural events and occurrences. The book argues that the late Luther saw God’s work not only in extraordinary events but also in God’s routine preservation of life and the natural order. Immediately after Luther’s death, various Lutheran parties often looked to natural events as proof of God’s approval for their particular interpretation. The book then explores two specific wonder books, the first by Lutheran Job Fincel, which Sorgel sees as arguing that the world was about to undergo a great transformation. The second wonder book explored in detail is that of Caspar Gottwurm, whom Sorgel shows used Lutheran theology to interpret the significance of events. Later chapters show that as the Lutheran controversies died down, later chroniclers turned to pastoral consolation in the wake of disasters. Sorgel employs numerous illustrations from wonder books to vividly make points and show examples. Scholars of Reformation history, so-called “popular religion” (a term that the book problematizes), and Lutheran theology will find this volume interesting and worthwhile.

Aaron Klink
Duke University


In this book, Kenton L. Sparks revamps his God’s Word in Human Words (Baker Academic, 2008) into a textbook on theological interpretation for college and seminary courses. While Sparks upholds an orthodox Christology of the mysterious hypostatic union of divinity and humanity in the one person of Christ, he prefers the concept of “providential adoption” (vis-à-vis hypostatic union or accommodation) to describe the relationship of God and humanity in the production of the biblical literature: Scripture is God’s word because he providentially adopted fallen human beings to compose what ancient people would write. Accordingly, Sparks treats the biblical text as God’s Word without ignoring its ethical diversity. In consideration to his practical realism, Sparks articulates a “trajectory theology” that endeavors to hear the divine voice through Scripture “beyond” its texts of terror that await the eschaton to be fully resolved. According to Sparks, both humanity and Scripture need redemption, though the remedy for the latter’s “vile and morally compromised” texts—the texts of the “genocide” of the Canaanites are his preferred example of “the dark side of Scripture”—is also found in Scripture. For his project, he offers nine interpretive principles that function in the context of the voices of the Holy Spirit, cosmos, tradition, and experience. Likely to spur on further debate, Sparks
offers a philosophically informed textbook on theological interpretation. Though its implications for the historiography of, for example, biblical Israel remain to be explored, the book nevertheless repays careful attention.

Kevin L. Spawn
Regent University School of Divinity


David Steinmetz has long been known as a preeminent Reformation and early modern church historian. This collection of papers, lectures, and articles cements his reputation as an essayist and as the dean of church historians. The title of this work derives from his controversial thesis that there cannot be a singular interpretation of scripture utilizing the historical critical method. For Steinmetz, memory of the past is essential to shaping the church of the present, and that necessitates “the long view” approach, witnessing church history in context and rejecting that the primitive meaning of the text is the only valid interpretation. The early essays in this volume are perhaps more detailed for the scholar, as they are devoted to biblical interpretation. Steinmetz’s mastery of the Reformation and early modern period is evident in his essays on the Catholic Luther, prophecy in the early Reformation, and his personal reflection on Oberman’s study of Calvin. There are also valuable editorials on religion in the public square, the nature of forgiveness in light of tragedy, and even on Mother Teresa. One critique would be that his chapter on marriage and celibacy could include more recent scholarship, such as the work of D. G. Hunter. Still, this book is a wonderful read, and while it may appeal to church historians, its audience is quite universal. In fact, any reader interested in the contemporary church would benefit from the “long view” approach that Steinmetz’s influential career has espoused, as it is a prescriptive remedy to the collective amnesia of the church today.

Lee M. Jefferson
Centre College


Randy Woodley recommends that viewing a shalom construct through indigenous eyes offers a fresh way of doing theology in the community of creation. The author suggests that the Native American Harmony Way, as represented in the traditions of varied Indian tribes and the ancient Semitic concept of shalom, are both holistic in nature, and that both suggest a way of life that creates the kind of relationships that can bring about healing for indigenous peoples and possible restoration for the fractured lives of Euro-Americans. Woodley here constructs a theology that appre-ciates and unites all God’s creation. He achieves this by utilizing detailed exegesis in the First and Second Testaments, historical theological examples, stories from ancient tribal elders, and current Native American theological voices. The author engages theories of domination, utilitarianism, and dualism by articulating an indigenous worldview that confronts the temporal and dualistic Euro-Western worldview that undergirded Western exploitation, domination, and environmental devastation. In his comparisons of Euro-American and Native American religious reality, Woodley highlights the effects of Euro-American dualism that separates action from belief. Native American theology, and this work, comes at a critical time when the church needs to listen to fresh indigenous voices with their place-purpose theology, boundary protocols, and spatiality, while we all partner together to build a true theology of place before it’s too late.

Corky Alexander
Pentecostal Theological Seminary

Ethics


Alison’s theological project centers on an anthropology of desire, the meaning of violence and the sacred, and the newness of a life lived undergoing the process of redemption. He self-identifies as a “somewhat conservative Catholic” who is homosexual, ordained, and intellectually indebted to René Girard. Alison’s latest work is a collection of sixteen lectures, presentations, and letters covering topics from ecclesiology to Mariology, ethics to exegesis. The vocabulary and thought structure make the book accessible to lay readers and undergraduates, yet it offers ample material to engage the academic theologian. The chapters are self-contained and best read individually according to the reader’s interest as the book’s overall thematic connections are occasionally unclear. It is to be valued for its topical breadth, concise arguments, and convenient divisibility which may serve well in classroom use. Its style and structure do not allow for in-depth scholarly inquiry; those seeking extended presentations of Alison’s method may find his other books more helpful. However, the book proves thought provoking for readers of all levels. Broken Hearts and New Creations is Alison at his best, applying a unique perspective and finding inspirational, challenging, and often ancient insight in areas presumed to be well-traveled theological ground.

Jacob Kohlhaas
Duquesne University