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Editorial

Regent's Reviews does not always have an editorial, but I felt it was appropriate to mark the tenth year of the journal being a free download. (It existed in an earlier hard copy format through the 1990s and 2000s). In this ten years we have reviewed hundreds of books and its been good to see within that a good number of British Baptist authored works.

This latest edition is no different as we review a version of Craig Gardiner's doctoral thesis. It has taken Craig a while to get it published (reflecting the pressures of being a College Tutor), but we are glad to see it print, with a great front cover! Also in this edition is a review of *Journeying for Justice*, which charts some of the history and proposals in light of the 2007 Apology made by the Baptist Union Council, again it is good to see this collection of essays in print.

Also within the wide range of reviews this time, is an extended review by Jim Gordon of Veli-Matti Karkkainen's 5 volume systematic theology.

As Editor I'm grateful to the office team at Regent's Park College for their help in ensuring books reach reviewers and for all those regular (and new reviewers) who ensure their reviews arrive on time.

Andy Goodliff
Editor

Craig Gardiner, *Melodies of a New Monasticism: Bonhoeffer's Vision, Iona's Witness* (Cascade / SCM, 2018), 335pp.

'In the beginning was the song, the song was God and the song was given for all'

This book is about the formation of community. It does this by setting alongside each other previously unrelated subjects. The energy created by such unfamiliar association creates new worlds of enquiry and solution. This is first of three dynamics which shape the style and content of the book. Craig Gardiner brings together the lives of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and George MacLeod, their writings and the two communities they formed, namely Finkinwade and the Iona Community. The results are a comprehensive overview of what they did and said in the context of the formative era of their ministry, 1919-1944 and their consequences in the second half of the twentieth century.

He provides a thorough exploration of Bonhoeffer's vision for the training of ministers, the Church and his Christology as well as the contents of his correspondence both before and during his imprisonment until his death. This material has tantalised and inspired many ministries and much reflection during the ensuing century, many of whom were British Baptists. Craig maintains an objective distance from Bonhoeffer and keeps bringing us back to his most powerful question, "who is Christ for us today?"

His natural ebullience leads us into an enthusiastic exploration of the less academic writing of George MacLeod and the formation of the Iona Community during the 1930s. This community also had its roots in ministerial formation but also in the search for an answer to the increasing irrelevance to the everyday life of people of the churches in Scotland. As a member of that Community the author is well-placed to examine its patterns and policies up to recent times especially through the Member's Rule and their life together on the island of Iona and in family groups spread throughout the UK and beyond. He keeps at the centre of this exposition the words of a prayer of the Iona Community that God further the purpose of the Community so that 'new ways may be found to touch the hearts of all'. Note 'of all' not only a sub-group such as Christian.

So far so good. But this book is far more than a Reader for the exploration of Bonhoeffer and MacLeod.

The energy of the book is driven by three dynamics. As already mentioned one is Bisociation. The second and third arise from the dynamics of musical creation commonly heard in Fugue. They are *cantus firmus* and *polyphony*. *Cantus firmus* describes the signature note, the undersong to which the *polyphony*, an assortment of notes both in harmony and in dissonance responds. A collection of polyphonies may emerge from the *cantus firmus*. Like a bowl of spaghetti (my illustration) they move in all directions, are within reach of each other, never losing their identity for they are different and stay different united by the *cantus firmus*.

In this Craig follows Bonhoeffer for whom Christ was *cantus firmus* and any form of Christian community is a polyphony of response to Christ. Thus the Church is Christ existing as community and the Bonhoeffer question that must be asked of any such polyphony is 'who is Christ for us today?' We should note that 'us' describes not simply Christians but all humanity. For the test of any polyphony is the sort of human being that it might create.

The book then explores the melodies of Christ in the Church, choosing worship, ecumenism and healing ministry as distinctive polyphonies seen in the witness of the Iona Community.

Since Christ is Lord he is therefore Lord of the World as well as the Church so it possible to seek the melodies of Christ the *cantus firmus* in the world. As his melodies arise in the world, so the people of the Church will join others, who do not necessarily follow Christ but have a shared concern for example for peace, justice and creation care. These are among the melodies that Christ *cantus firmus* plays in the world.

Some might wonder what the point is in using the metaphors of *cantus firmus* and *polyphony* in this way. This question goes to the heart of the author's search for authentic Christian community. He writes that the intention of the book is to articulate a theology of community through the metaphors of music especially polyphony. He is proposing that such community is not to be found in all being the same but when the centre holds then being different and staying different creates community. The centre, *cantus firmus* is Christ. Such a community is responding to the divine voice in creation. The *cantus firmus* cannot be silent and will always search for a place and a people to be heard.

In the heart of the book are three chapters entitled Worldly Monasticism, The Colony of Heaven and Performing the Discipline of Counterpoint. The former two raise the crucial question of the relationship of the Church to the World and the relationship of Christ to the Church. The latter reflects on the need for the Christian to be of the world but not in it and argues for the reformation of the early Christian practice of *Disciplina Arcani*. This would mean the nurture of the human spirit within the shared experience of the Church without the need to justify this to the world. I was reminded of Paul's appeal in Romans chapter 12 that his readers be not conformed to this world but to *cantus firmus* of Christ. Whilst Christians live out their responsibility in the reality of the world the Discipline of Counterpoint ensures that they do not absorb unquestioningly the god-free culture and ethic of their host society. The purpose of the polyphony of Christ is to call humanity into participative performance with the melodies of the divine being made known in the world. The Christian community is called into a life that is consciously and responsibly lived out of God's love for others and within the reality of the world. So for instance discipleship courses need to prepare participants to play the melodies of the church not only for the sake of the church but the world also.

Both Bonhoeffer and MacLeod were world affirming rather than world-denying for Christ plays in a thousand places and is anticipated in the words of this prayer from the Jewish people:

*How wonderful are your works, O Lord
In your goodness you have made us able to hear the music of the world
A divine song sings through all creation.*

John Rackley, Leicester

Andrew C Thompson (ed.), *The Oxford History of Protestant Dissenting Traditions: volume II The Long Eighteenth Century 1689-c1828* (Oxford: OUP, 2018) pp.464.

After the T & T Clark *Companion to Nonconformity* published five years ago, this projected five volume series from OUP is a splendid commitment from a major publisher. Volume 2 bridges the Act of Toleration to the repeal of the Test & Corporation Acts, which removed some of the legal inequalities under which Dissenters had lived. This historical interest in the living traditions of dissent is the more welcome as the current religious context sees traditional dissent declining in profile, numbers and influence. Drawing upon authors from both sides of the Atlantic, this collection illuminates the world of the Dissenters through their thinking, acting and sense of identity.

The book deals with history and identity as illustrated by five major traditions – Presbyterian, Independent, Baptist, Quaker and Methodist. Karen Smith presents an excellent overview of Baptists. Then follows a geographical tour around Ireland, Wales and Scotland as well as the New World, and there is inevitably some ground shared with later essays. The place of awakening revival and missionary activity is examined and the social and political arenas are explored, using discussion of political representation and slavery as examples. The final section addresses what church life involved for a dissenter – scripture, sermon and hymns, education, buildings and the printed word. Each chapter is accompanied by a select bibliography for further reading.

In this period, Dissenters enjoyed a vigorous and identifiable sub-culture, framed by legislation that barred them from certain roles and spheres of activity in the world of politics, education and society and which reinforced a sense of discrimination. But there was a richness in their life together and a sense of belonging. Family links characterised church allegiance. In our time, when the heirs of these pioneers struggle for influence and recognition, it is good to be reminded of what made them distinctive, if only to try to understand how the world has changed.

The inclusion of Methodists may be questioned. The cover picture shows George Whitfield preaching, nicely illustrating the ambiguity. The Wesleys and Whitfield lived and died Anglican clergy, although a separate organisation was subsequently inevitable. However, there is no significant section on the emerging

Unitarian stream, well established by 1828, which included in the movement not only former Anglicans, but also Presbyterians and some General Baptists. It may seem unfair to question the presence of Methodists, yet it is the shared mindset of exclusion that shaped the consciousness of Dissenters, and not simply their doctrine and practice. This may seem an obvious point to make but some contemporary examination of Dissent is tempted to compress the differences and concentrate on what they shared as much as what they held as distinctive. Their separatedness was more than an accident of history.

This is a good resource to begin to explore the significance of the different traditions that shaped what were, until the early C20th, ecclesiological bodies confident in dissenting convictions, linked in mutually supportive national networks and with a significant number of adherents. I suspect that the cover price of £95.00 may deter purchase and probably mean that those interested will leaf through its pages in the hushed atmosphere of a library. Nonetheless the complete series will provide a significant marker of this part of the story of faith in these nations.

Stephen Copson, Central Baptist Association

Veli-Matti Karkkainen, *A Constructive Christian Theology for the Pluralistic World* (5 Vols.) (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 2013-2017)

A review article covering two earlier volumes in this series was published in *Regent's Reviews* Oct 2014. In that review I gave a fairly full description of Karkkainen's project, methodology and overall goal, using the first two volumes as illustrations of how Karkkainen's methodology works out in practice. Readers may wish to re-visit that review now, or later.

As this project has unfolded and moved to completion in five rich and substantial volumes, it is now possible to appreciate the significance and range of one of the most stimulating, provocative and innovative engagements with systematic theology in the 21st Century.

Stimulating because each volume is a tour de force of argumentation from, and analysis of, an enormous range of material, drawing from the multiple tributaries of Christian tradition. The author throughout lives up to the promise of the subtitle to the entire series, "A Constructive Christian Theology for the Pluralistic World." As well as ranging widely and often digging deeply into Christian theology, biblical studies, philosophy, ethics and cultural studies, Karkkainen is enviably informed about the major religious traditions and able to create and conduct inter-faith conversations on key issues of difference and similarity with humility and grace.

This makes his systematic theology provocative, though not in the less helpful sense of polemical argument or gratuitous dismissal of other viewpoints. On the contrary. As an example of Karkkainen's measured critique of the Asiatic religions and Christianity, he points out how both cultures create and fail to

respond to the ecological crisis facing the planet. And this in the context of exploring the Baghavat Gita on salvation, interacting with Moltmann, Pannenberg, Kathryn Tanner and various other Christian theologians and Hindu thinkers.

It is such broad and generous conversations that make this systematic theology innovative, a deliberate and sustained attempt to explicate Christian truth, and to do so as one firmly rooted in the evangelical tradition, while also being an ecumenical theologian of global significance and a capacious intellectual reach. To do that, and to include in that conversation for our learning and theirs, the insights and worldviews of the other great major religious traditions is a remarkable achievement. I'm not sure there is another theologian writing on this scale who could provide in one person a nexus for such rich and enriching connections of intellectual and theological endeavour.

Karkkainen is deeply informed about the global diversity and historic varieties which make up the rich tapestry, perhaps kaleidoscope, of the Christian traditions. In his aim of writing constructively for a pluralistic world 'shaped by cultural, ethnic, socio-political, economic and religious diversity', he has been an attentive and patient listener to that world. The volumes roughly follow the outlines of classical theology, but they are enriched and their perspectives widened by including for theological reflection such topics as, for example, race, environment, ethnicity, violence and colonialism.

In the final volume, *Hope and Community*, Karkkainen reiterates his personal definition of systematic theology, and his understanding of the task he has undertaken:

Systematic / constructive theology is an integrative discipline that continuously searches for a coherent, balanced understanding of Christian truth and faith in the light of Christian tradition (biblical and historical) and in the context of historical and contemporary thought, cultures and living faiths. It aims at a coherent, inclusive, dialogical, and hospitable vision. *Christ and Reconciliation*, page 13.

This definition has set the parameters, and extended the horizons of this systematic theology, so that we now have five volumes seeking to offer a coherent vision of the meaning and challenges of Christian faith in a pluralistic world. Karkkainen is resistant to the idea of theology as a 'system' and therefore disclaims his own theology as a 'systematic' theology. Having reached the final volume he reasserts that his aim throughout is to write a "constructive theology [which] seeks a coherent and balanced understanding. Regarding the theory of truth it follows coherence theory." (1) What that means is a move away from foundationalist epistemology, towards ways of articulating and relating statements so that they are coherent with and 'fit' theological statements with 'reality'.

Given the contested nature of theological truth claims, Karkkainen, quoting Leron Shults avers:

‘a post-foundationalist approach to epistemology seeks “to engage in interdisciplinary dialogue within our postmodern culture while *both* maintaining a commitment to intersubjective, transcommunal theological argumentation for the truth of Christian faith, *and* recognizing the provisionality of our historically embedded understandings and culturally conditioned explanations of the Christian tradition and religious experience.” (2)

Such an approach demonstrates intellectual humility and hospitality in the presence of those whom we seek to persuade of the truth of Christian theological claims. And it is that humble and hospitable disposition of mind and spirit that in my view places Karkkainen’s five volumes amongst the most important attempts to take with utmost seriousness *both* the global diversity of Christianity *and* the cultural pluralism of our world in all its interconnectedness.

As to the individual volumes, each is written as a coherent whole. As well as being a sustained articulation of a constructive Christian theology for a pluralistic world, each is a stand-alone volume, exploring as described above major paired pillars of a Christian theological structure. Indeed Karkkainen is positively encouraging of readers to choose first the volumes most relevant to the questions and challenges they face in their particular historical and cultural context. The five volumes in order of publication are: 1. *Christ and Reconciliation* (2013); 2. *Trinity and Revelation* (2014); 3. *Creation and Humanity* (2015); 4. *Spirit and Salvation* (2016); 5. *Hope and Community* (2017).

Each volume is over 500 pages of which bibliography is at least over 50 pages. There are author indices which show the footprints of the writer, the biggest belonging to Augustine, Aquinas, Calvin, Luther, Schleiermacher, Barth, Pannenberg, Moltmann and Miroslav Volf; but it would be a mistake to assume influence proportionate to citation. Other thinkers such as Kathryn Tanner, T F Torrance, Walter Wink, and Amos Yong give a sense of the breadth of thought and perspective represented in these “transcommunal argumentations for the truth of Christian faith.” The subject indices are very useful, and have avoided the mere accumulation of all references, making it possible to follow the more substantial treatments of subjects within the volumes. There is no cumulative index to the set, which is an observation, not a criticism. The footnotes are what they should be in a work like this, extensive, relevant to the text, creating and supporting the intellectual framework of the argument with supplementary information and resources.

Reading these volumes reminded me of another occasion years ago when I encountered a similar mind-stretching sojourn through Christian theology and contemporary global cultural realities. It was in 1976, and the book was Hans Küng’s *On Being a Christian*. In later volumes Küng also went on to explore the connections and contested claims between Christianity and the major world faiths, and to begin the talk of global responsibility for a distressed planet, and the necessity of inter faith dialogue in good faith.

It is difficult to overestimate the achievement on display in these volumes. They have been released annually since 2013. They have clearly been gestating for much longer, and by the time they came to be written Karkkainen had published widely and frequently in areas of comparative pneumatology, Trinitarian theology, Christology. These and other books subtitled 'A Global Introduction', signalled his commitment to hearing and incorporating voices from the diverse contexts of global Christianity as encountered in Asia, Latin America, Africa, each of them expressed in non-western cultures with non-western conceptualities. In those decades of teaching on three continents, and in various institutions, he has broken up much of the soil and sowed seeds of thought ready for garnering their harvest into his magnum opus.

Because the volumes can be read as stand alone treatments of their specific overarching theological theme, readers interested in engaging with Karkkainen's treatment needn't invest the time and money in the whole set to begin with. Any of the volumes will invite the reader to take part in a deep, at times unsettling, but always challenging and courteous conversation, conducted within an ecclesial global ecumenism with doors respectfully open to the ever widening world of cultural and religious pluralism. In each volume Karkkainen writes out of deep roots anchored in Christian faith. Within the dialogue he desires to encourage and enable with other religions and secular and postmodern construals of the world, he is seeking mutual understanding, humility to listen with an ethic of respect, commitment on all sides to convictional integrity, and for Christians a missional mindset of hospitality to others.

In a late chapter of volume 5, 'Missional Existence as Hospitable Dialogue', the heart, mind and spirit of Christian mission in a pluralistic, postmodern and post-foundationalist world is laid out in some detail, as Karkkainen conceives it. In such dialogue, "questioning and confidence mutually shape and inform each other and the personal search and the communal search for truth critically cohere." (445). The goal is not "indubitable Cartesian certainty after modernity". Indeed the pursuit of truth through dialogue does not have to "expect final arrival...ultimately, the search for the truth of God is eschatological and anticipatory in nature – also in keeping with the Christian communion's anticipatory nature." There follows an uncompromising critique of religious relativism in which conviction and truth claim dissolve into personal suggestion and mutual accommodated compromise. For Karkkainen the truth content of faith matters decisively and in ways that define difference, but that defining of difference seeks understanding of the other and humble openness to having our own understanding of truth questioned and compared in the context of hospitable relating to others.

This hospitable relating to others is on full display in all these volumes. *Christology and Reconciliation* brings the revelation of God in Christ into conversation with that which is deemed absolute in other religions; *Trinity and Revelation* engages in respectful dialogue with Jewish and Islamic monotheism and Hindu and Buddhist conceptions of the divine or the All; *Creation and Humanity* is a wide-ranging discussion with other understandings of theological anthropology and human origins as well as exploring the purpose and meaning

of cosmic and human existence; *Spirit and Salvation* discerns the movement of God in the world's history, traced and detected as the life-giving presence of God in all cultures and histories, working towards a holistic salvation that embraces all human life and a renewed creation through the unique particularity of God in Christ; *Hope and Community* envisions a future in which the eternal Triune God of hope brings all creation to its destiny, and to fulfilment within the eternal life and originating purposes of God, while the Church as the ecclesial community of Christ, is defined as agent and impetus towards the promised renewed cosmos in the Kingdom of God. Ecclesiology is therefore placed at the end of this theological construction, and viewed against the hopeful horizons of an eschatology in which, finally, God will be all in all.

I finish this review with Karkkainen's own summary at the end of volume 5:

"The missional calling outlined in this project leads to a robust, hospitable encounter with (post) secularism(s) through the church's missional existence as a worshipping-liturgical and diaconal-charismatic communion, presenting a credible Christian gospel for religionless secularists, the nones, and followers of other religious paths."

Jim Gordon, Aberdeen

Anthony G. Reddie with Wale Hudson-Roberts and Gale Richards (eds.), *Journeying to Justice: Contributions to the Baptist Tradition across the Black Atlantic* (Paternoster, 2017)

Journeying to Justice was published in 2017 ten years after the Council of the Baptist Union of Great Britain made an apology for their share in and benefit from the transatlantic slave trade. This book then stands, in the Paternoster series of Studies in Baptist History and Thought, as another step on the road from that apology. The book is organised into three parts: Pre-Apology, the Apology, Post-Apology and the Future. The title *Journeying to Justice* reflect the name of the process 'The Journey' that followed the Apology. The other context of this book was the bicentenary of the relationship between Jamaican and British Baptists celebrated in 2014. This reflects that the apology, the journey and engagement has primarily been focused on, but not exclusive to, the relationship between Jamaican and British Baptists. *Journeying to Justice* is also the first volume in the Studies in Baptist History and Thought series and of any British Baptist book that includes a majority of BME authors. With this in mind, the book is a timely and helpful one, because it provides in written form a historical account of some of the last ten years within one denomination's attempt to engage, perhaps reluctantly, in issues of race and racism.

There is much that is to be learned in the story telling. The book is sobering, but hopeful. The essays in many places are revelatory and challenging.

Two things from reading through the essays struck me. First, the importance of the book being published. Finally, there will be a book in the Baptist section of our Baptist College libraries written by black Baptists. Hopefully it will not be the

last. (It should be acknowledged though that the book, like much Baptist theology, will probably only have a small readership!). As a Baptist Union and as Baptist Colleges we need to continue to encourage BME voices to write, research and play a greater role theologically, historically and biblically in our shared life. Baptist scholars remain overwhelmingly male and white.

Second, is an observation that the important work done by the Journey process has been much slower and its reach more limited because of where we currently are as Baptists. The 2012-2013 changes to the Baptist Union structures in England and Wales, I suggest have arguably hindered rather than aided the justice work being done by those working in the areas of race, and also gender and disability. (These three areas have had a fairly established history within the Union since the 1980s and 90s, may would now argue that LGBT justice should be added.) Hopefully those who will read *Journeying to Justice* will be many and it will see the good work led by Wale Hudson-Roberts, but also Gale Richards, Pat White, Rosemary Gotobed and others continue to help all Baptists become more just and inclusive communities. This might well be more needed, as the book acknowledges, post the 2016 Brexit vote.

Too many Baptists the book may not appear essential reading, but this may be telling in itself, and I recommend that Baptist colleges make it required reading and that Baptist minister, who are majority white, give it their attention.

Andy Goodliff, Belle Vue Baptist Church, Southend-on-Sea

Jana Marguerite Bennett, *Singleness and the Church: A New Theology of the Single Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 272pp.

'Singleness' is a notoriously difficult concept to define. Does one include never married, divorced, widowed, cohabiting and dating individuals, or only some of these? In her study, Bennett considers all of these groups under the umbrella of 'impermanent singleness'. The permanence of 'vowed religious life', according to Bennett, represents a different category of singleness which is not under consideration in *Singleness and the Church*. Whilst such a division is useful in some other conversations (thinking about the parallels between consecrated singleness and marriage, for example), Bennett's project could have easily included all forms of single life.

Bennett approaches the subject from a Roman Catholic perspective and focusses on American (read United States) Christianity. The book is organised around a theological study of different forms of singleness. Each chapter includes an enumeration of some other authors who have contributed to the field. Most importantly and most helpfully, however, each chapter's discussion is stimulated by the story and theology of a particular person from the Christian tradition. For example, the always-single life is illustrated by the consideration of Apostle Paul, represented here as someone who was a 'never-married man' – a contestable assumption not recognised as such, but providing a rich argument for the spirituality of singleness understood as a gift for the whole church. Bennett's

next chapter, which is on uncommitted, often short-term relationships, reflects on the life and thought of Augustine. This is the strongest of all the chapters in the book, offering seamless engagement with Augustine and demonstrating the author's expertise on the subject. This is not surprising, given Bennett's previous work on the Augustinian theology of marriage and singleness.

The next chapter, on committed relationships, adopts John Wesley for a guide, and is much more cursory in its discussion. In a stark contrast to the intricate work with primary sources on Augustine, Wesley's story is explored predominantly through secondary literature. Further on, same-sex attractedness is explored through the work of Aelred of Rievaulx, known and valued for his writings on spiritual friendship. Widowhood – a frequently forgotten face of singleness – is next examined through the lens of the experience of Mother Elizabeth Ann Setton. Divorce is thoughtfully discussed with the help of the story of Stanley Hauerwas, and, given the popularity of this still living theologian, is likely to be of interest to many readers. In the final chapter, single parenthood is explored in dialogue with the life story of Dorothy Day, 'who became [a single mother] precisely because she became a Catholic' (p. 182).

The biographical section in each chapter roots its complex topic in a particular life and setting, and that is one of the most attractive features of this work. The book's argument would be improved by weeding out a number of general claims that are not backed up by references. As Bennett refers to many other authors, weaving them into the discussion must have been a challenging task – as a result, at times these mentions can feel too cursory. There are also some factual mistakes that likely slipped through the editorial process.

What Bennett helpfully highlights is how much (American) Christian culture mirrors – and imbibes – certain convictions held by general US society. Readers from other Western societies will find this true in relationship to their context too. This includes various ways in which single people are often overlooked or stereotyped – and that is especially true of women. The fact that many of us will be single several times throughout our lives is easily forgotten, or perhaps subconsciously ignored, in church and society. Bennett also raises a number of important theological questions that have often been neglected in the life of the church. In this regard, what slightly puzzles me is the book's intended reader. On the one hand, Bennett wants to offer a sophisticated theological discussion; on the other hand, at times she feels the need to explain some basic Christian knowledge.

Does this work represent a coherent 'new theology of the single life'? Probably not. What it does offer is many fruitful ideas that can, and should, be developed further. In fairness to Bennett, this is precisely how she reflects on her own project in the Conclusion: as 'a beginning for thinking about theologies of singleness'. *Singleness and the Church* provides one such starting point and is a valuable partner in the conversation.

Lina Toth (Andronoviene), Scottish Baptist College

James Leo Garrett, Jr., *The Collected Works of James Leo Garrett Jr., 1950-2015. Volumes I & II: Baptists.* Edited by Wyman Lewis Richardson (Resource, 2017-2018)

James Leo Garrett may not be that well known amongst Baptists in the UK. He is a North American Baptist and in particular a Southern Baptist. While the name James McClendon and Stanley Grenz, two other North American Baptists are fairly familiar because of the impact of their work on British Baptist theologians, Garrett has perhaps not had the same kind of profile. He is the author though of a two-volume Systematic Theology (now in a 4th edition) and a one volume study of Baptist Theology. The Baptist Theology book covers ever significant Baptist theological voice over the four centuries since they began and is astonishing achievement in 700 pages!

The Collected Works of James Garrett is a projected eight volume series! These first two volumes draws together Garrett specific Baptist essays. Volume one features general essays on Baptists and on Baptists and the Bible, plus two essays on Anabaptism. Volume two features essays on Southern Baptists and on Baptists and ecumenism.

Garrett is a significant Southern Baptist, having been Professor at Southwestern Baptist Seminary and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He calls himself an evangelical, but has also been highly committed to ecumenism. These Collected Works include essays, articles, interviews and biographical pieces. They provide an insightful view of one Baptist mind that has been influential within American Baptist life, but also the Baptist World Alliance, and inter-church dialogue. Include in volume one is a testimony of his attendance at the 1969 Baptist Assembly in London, when the BU discussed issues of polity and ecumenism.

There is an unfortunate caricature of Southern Baptists, in which many Baptists would want to distinguish themselves from being associated with the views and belief often espoused. Garrett is a Southern Baptist who is more generous, what Nathan Finn describes as 'warm-hearted evangelicalism' and more open to theological engagement and thought. These two volumes offer a worthy account of one Southern Baptist whose work continues to be worth reading alongside that of McClendon and Grenz for an account of Baptist thought in the second half of the twentieth century.

Andy Goodliff, Belle Vue Baptist Church, Southend-on-Sea

Marc Cortez & Michael P. Jensen (eds), *T&T Clark Reader in Theological Anthropology* (London: T&T Clark, 2018).

While browsing newspapers in a coffee shop last year, I picked up a broadsheet magazine which featured an article about university research on the top five greatest threats to humanity in the next 50 years. To my surprise, a catastrophic nuclear event did not feature! The first threat mentioned was a pandemic virus, the second was the continued development and enhancement of artificial intelligence. If readers have seen the TV series *Humans*, in which sophisticated

humanoid robots acquire consciousness and sentience, they will get the picture about the kinds of ethical and theological questions arising around this area. The question of what it is to be a human person has always occupied Christian theologians, if implicitly (and, indeed, was of interest to Greek philosophers before that! — although John Zizioulas would argue that the ancient Greeks had no way of moving to a truly personal ontology from a primary universal category). Theologians in the early centuries of the church were of course occupied by developing the key doctrines of the faith rather than addressing human personhood *per se* (Gregory of Nyssa and Basil being exceptions) – although it could never really be far from the surface, given Christian belief in creation and incarnation. Today it is just as much a question as it ever was, although the goalposts have shifted over the centuries.

Marc Cortez, one of the editors, is a prolific current contributor to the field and has written several books that are clear, accessible, and very helpful for teaching, including his *Theological Anthropology: A Guide for the Perplexed* (also T&T Clark), *Christological Anthropology in Historical Perspective* and *ReSourcing Theological Anthropology* (both Zondervan). The *Reader* reviewed here, edited by Cortez with Michael P. Jensen, was really useful to me, arriving just as I was preparing to teach a Masters' module focusing on theological anthropology. The *Reader* is divided into seven key areas, addressing the major contemporary discussions. The opening chapter, *Sources and Methods*, explains that there are many disciplines in which the question of anthropology is central: medicine, art, sociology, science and psychology being just some. What does theology have to contribute, and what methods can we legitimately use if we are to try to integrate insights from various different sources? What are the rules of engagement between the disciplines, and what ideas can or should be privileged - and why?

The chapters that follow address some of today's debates thematically: the image of God (a hugely contested concept); human ontology; free will; gender and sexuality; human personhood; worship and desire. Each offers a selection of writings across the centuries which give the reader an insight into the development of key debates. The editors in their introduction say of their intention: 'Rather than offering a comprehensive summary of Christian theological anthropology, we hope that these readings will serve as more of an entry point, illuminating some of the key issues...[and] help spark meaningful reflection and conversation about the perennial question of the human' (p.6). I believe this is well achieved.

I was particularly interested in chapter 6, *Human Personhood*, which addresses some very contemporary discussions of the current fascination with the relational person. It starts with a classic paper by Zizioulas entitled *Human Capacity and Human Incapacity: A Theological Exploration of Personhood*, which appeared in the *Journal of Scottish Theology* in 1975. This paper explores the difference between 'thinghood' and 'personhood', focusing on the need for relationship with God. A series of other helpful excerpts follows, including a critique by Harriet Harris of Alistair McFadyen's dialogical personhood model, in which she suggests that McFadyen confuses personhood with personality, and

also that he places the category of relationship as ontologically prior to that of person, which makes little sense.

There is plenty more where this came from, and if this area interests you I would recommend this book as a 'map' to the current state of discussion about theological anthropology. A helpful companion overview volume (if you can afford it!), would be Farris & Taliaferro (eds), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Theological Anthropology* (2015) - I borrowed that one from the British Library!

Sally Nelson, St Hild College, Yorkshire

John Swinton, *Becoming Friends of Time: Disability, Timefulness and Gentle Discipleship* (SCM, 2016), 245pp.

In 2016 John Swinton won the Michael Ramsey Prize for his excellent 2012 book *Dementia. Becoming Friends of Time* extends some of the work begun in that book, but also moves into new territory. Swinton's background is in mental health and disability and he brings this experience and context to all his work. This might suggest, as the title does, that this is another work in the area of disability theology (which he has developed alongside Hans Reinders, Brian Brock and others in a new generation beyond that of John Hull, Frances Young, Stanley Hauerwas and Nancy Eisland). *Becoming Friends of Time* does address disability, but not as a niche or separate topic, but in the context of what it is for all Christians to be disciples.

In this new book Swinton addresses the question of time and in a world which lives in the 'tyranny of the clock', Swinton explores what it is to live in God's time. The middle chapters — *Becoming Friends of Time*, *Time and Discipleship* and *Time and Vocation* — are a challenging treatment to live differently. Swinton takes up the idea of three-mile-an-hour God from Kosuke Koyama and explores the speed of love, which is time-full. Living as a disciple of Jesus requires slowing down and living more gently. This new understanding of time means we should re-approach how we might include those with profound intellectual disability in the church. Swinton suggests that being a disciple is more about God being with us, rather than us being with God. If to be a disciple is about God being with us, if its about being more slow and gentle, Swinton says we can see the potential of the vocation of the profoundly disabled.

Following these chapters, Swinton explores what time means in the context of living with dementia, and he is both drawing on his earlier work and developing it. The book ends with a section called 'The Horror of Time' and he engages with those he have experienced brain injuries. In this Swinton helps us reflect and engage with areas of life that sit outside of our biblical and theological thought.

Interwoven throughout his theological discussion are stories, stories of those with disability or dementia. We meet Judith, Christine, Loraine, John, Arthur,

Graham and Elizabeth. Swinton's theology emerges from being with and listening to those with disabilities. This of course also grounds his theological arguments in the concrete. You could possibly see Swinton deserving to win the Michael Ramsey Prize again for *Becoming Friends of Time*. He has written a powerful argument that should cause us to reassess the meaning of discipleship, our relationship to time, and place of those with disability in the life of the church. It deserves to be widely read, discussed and acted upon.

Andy Goodliff, Belle Vue Baptist Church, Southend-on-Sea

Albert A. Herzog Jr., *The Social Contexts of Disability Ministry: A Primer for Pastors, Seminarians, and Lay Leaders* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2017).

Jennie Hogan, *This is My Body: A Story of Sickness and Health* (Norwich: Canterbury, 2017)

Herzog's question: 'how can we integrate theologies of disability...into the life of the church, and into the seminaries that train ministers and other church workers?' (p.207) is a good one. Most church leaders in the UK are simply unaware of the sheer numbers of people with disabilities in their communities. Similarly, few have engaged with the reality of the likelihood that many of us will develop a disability during our longer life spans, meaning that we will join the generic community of 'people with disabilities'.

Churches in the UK are still very exclusive towards those with disabilities, the problem lying far deeper than questions of physical access. The challenges are often attitudinal: to be truly inclusive means a massive alteration of the way most of us 'do' church: it is currently cerebral, it requires quiet and concentration; it is often relatively passive; it is full of subtle inequalities, even in the dissenting sector. People with disabilities may not be autonomous about their Sunday choices (for example, some may depend upon the availability of 'carers' or be cognitively or linguistically unable to express preferences); they may be unable to give to the church financially, or in terms of time and effort; they may suddenly disappear from the middle of a course or commitment because they have been hospitalised. What can Herzog's book about the American scene say to us?

Herzog explores the church disability movement in the USA, devoting the first half of the book to the social and legal developments that have impacted the church, noting in his introduction that a 60-year movement to relocate those with disabilities away from the margins and to the centre of church life is rooted in 'the absence of people with disabilities in the life of the church'. He examines the responses of various denominations, noting that 'No disability ministry exists apart from its social context' (p.1). Although this survey is of limited *particular* interest to UK practitioners, the way that the church has responded *generally* to social developments could be tracked in a parallel fashion in the UK and probably other countries.

The second half of Herzog's book is a summary of key disability themes and scholars. The chapters on biblical disability studies, historical Christian responses to person with disabilities (something of a contested category in ancient times although human personhood is not), theology and ethics are useful and compact surveys of the work of all the key writers: Eiesland, Young, Swinton, Yong, Creamer, Reinders, Reynolds and others. Jean Vanier, that giant of the theology of disability, does get a mention although unfortunately his name is spelled wrongly several times.

Hogan's book, *This is My Body*, is a personal narrative describing the experience of acquiring disability as a teenager. Her condition stems from bleeding on the brain from a previously unsuspected birth condition, which caused brain damage. Hogan's comments are perceptive and jolt us into an uncomfortable space: 'Parents' innocence is lost after the serious illness of a child' (p.11). True – one lives with a nagging doubt that things will ever 'be OK' once this has happened. 'When a sudden illness occurs we begin to realize that we have taken our bodies for granted' (p.13). True – being able to walk or use our hands is so very natural and intuitive for most of us that the renegotiation of the whole 'abled' (or 'normate', to use a term favoured by many disability writers) environment is a challenge that often seems insurmountable. John Swinton talks about inclusion being real when someone is *missed* from the community – in practice, disability usually makes one feel like a *nuisance* to the community.

Hogan's book moves from narrative sections to meditation to biblical reflection, thematically rather than in strict chronological order. She describes her losses with candour and her belittlements by others with honesty. She navigates her teenage and adult years of periodic ill health alongside a call to ministry in the Anglican church (serving as a university chaplain) and her movement into a relationship with another woman.

I found the book interesting for its profound personal insights, although in terms of theological or biblical reflection on disability the terrain would be familiar to anyone with an interest in the area. However, it is salutary to hear how it feels to be the subject of the vicar's visit when he asks if Hogan's family can be 'prayed for'. 'At the moment when the vicar closed his eyes and engaged his well-formed and well-meaning piety, two shell-shocked sufferers [Hogan and her father] jointly acted-out belief, creating a performance which was half-pantomime, half-tragedy' (p.111). On the subject of prayer and healing, there are many helpful observations from the recipient's perspective. Hogan remarks, for example, that Jesus did not heal 'in order to prove anything, only to reveal God's love' and suggests that 'scars might be used to read our own selves better...to create some sort of understanding of how our wounds connect with Christ's body, especially his wounds' (p.144).

The theology of disability literature continues to grow and mature, and these two books are in some ways hard to place. Herzog's is a primer, or textbook, but the first part is very US focused. The second part is a thematic summary of and commentary on other literature (although succinct and useful), so it may help someone get an overall view of the terrain quite quickly. Hogan's does not offer

new theological insights but is an addition to the narrative resource: since the theology of disability arises as much from experience as from the 'timeless truths' of the tradition, it also has its place in this landscape. It is suitable for the non-academic and may challenge and change the way readers relate to those with disabilities. If so, it will do an important job.

Sally Nelson, St Hild College, Yorkshire

Sam Wells, *Incarnational Mission: Being with the world* (Norwich: Canterbury, 2018)

It is part of our DNA as Christians to be missional: to go and make disciples. Yet when asked to describe *how* they are missional, in my experience often English churches will tend to rely one of two approaches. Either they will hope that quiet service within their local community, for example through debt-counselling or foodbanks, will be the trigger for questions about their motivation. Or they will pursue more overt mission 'programmes' that offer the security of structure and brand recognition but may lack a differentiation to neighbourhood-level needs, culture and the individuality of participants. The first approach can tend be reticent about the church's motivation for mission; the second will pose questions that the church thinks non-believers ought to be asking. One Anglican diocesan bishop is known to insist that all 550 churches under his care should have at least one 'missional weekend' a year, although anecdotally there is some resistance to anything quite so un-English. It is not just a cultural reticence; what happens if the church is unable to supply convincing answers to the questions non-believers may have about faith?

One of the attributes of the Revd Dr Sam Wells, the vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields in central London, is that he clearly has an understanding of the culture of the English church and can find sympathetic and appropriate ways for it to consider its mission. He combines the roles of theologian and communicator, writing material that is treated seriously both in the academy as well as by the public, not least as a regular contributor to Radio 4's Thought for the Day. *Incarnational Mission: Being with the world* complements the sister volume *Incarnational Ministry: Being with the church*. Yet it also continues and extends themes Wells has touched on in two other works: *Living without enemies* and *Nazareth manifesto*. The main point draws upon an Anglican understanding of incarnation – the presence of Christ through the witness and sacraments lived out by the church with us, in every locality. In plain terms, the 'being with' of the sub-title. Mission in this context is not something that is done-to people but is a process of a sustained accompanying of people in a variety of settings.

Wells structures the book in two main sections: the first five chapters explore how Christians can be with people missionally who are, respectively, the lapsed; seekers after truth; those of no faith; those of other faiths and those who are hostile to faith in Christ. He then pauses to explore what it is to be a neighbour. The second part of the work marks a transition from being with individuals to a

corporate accompanying: organisations; institutions; government and the excluded.

Wells begins and ends with sermons and these are engaging in nature. Indeed, along with his theological assertions this preacher employs many an apt illustration to communicate his points well. For example, he draws the readers' attention to the (truly excellent!) French film *Intouchable* (also known as *Untouchable*), in which a Parisian aristocrat, quadriplegic since a paragliding accident, hires a young African man from the impoverished housing projects of Paris to be his live-in carer. Although so very different, the two men bond and develop a close friendship. Being with, in practice.

The author asks some pertinent and awkward questions. For example, what is the role of the priest/minister in relation to the church's mission? Thinking back to the 'missional weekends' I mentioned in the opening paragraph, I wonder how many churches see their role as attracting friends and neighbours to events where it will be the minister's job to convert? Here's another question: if there is joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, is there grief about the impoverishment of the church without new blood?

This is a book for Christians willing to reflect upon their preconceptions of mission. It is bold in calling us to step away from an attractional model to one of accompaniment; of incarnation, demonstrated by walking with others without having to dominate or insist on our answers prevailing. At its heart is confidence in Christ: that he is still capable today of drawing people to follow him, even through the agency of an imperfect and sometimes hesitant and reticent church. It is not a profound book; it breaks no new ground. Yet I found that I was drawn into reflection more deeply upon some of the well-known scriptures cited, which is the mark of a gifted Christian communicator. I commend it.

Ivan King, Southend-on-Sea

Paul T. Nimmo and David Ferguson (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Reformed Theology* (Cambridge University Press, 2016), 334pp.

The idea of being accompanied on a journey through Reformed theology by informed and skilled interpreters is a delightfully reassuring one. And this book lives up to its designation as a "companion" – or rather, the writings of a series of companions, well able, and eager, to help the reader understand the riches, depth and context of Reformed theology, both in historical development and in current expression.

The "journey", if I may continue the metaphor, is in three stages; theological topics – for example Scripture (the opening chapter), Christology, the Christian life; theological figures - a series of encounters with significant people, from Zwingli to Barth via Schleiermacher, and contexts – historical and geographical. Each chapter, written by an expert, has its own flavour, and taken together, they form a multifaceted survey of a form of theology that is currently very significant,

and for Baptists has a place in our history, development and contemporary expression, especially world-wide.

Of course, Baptists are not only informed by Reformed theology, nor are we totally identified with it. The essay on Reformed Theology in North America, for example, points out the complexity of the relationship between Baptists in the USA and other, perhaps more “classically” Reformed communities, especially in the area of ecclesiology – and the impacts of theologies of election and covenant for baptism. Unsurprisingly, the essay on Zwingli also has some discussion on the relationships between Reform and Radical reformation theology – and some of its later developments, and impacts. It is always interesting to read a theology and history that one knows from one, perhaps slightly “insider” position from the point of view of the “other side”.

This is not a book to sit down and read from cover to cover. It is a reference book, introducing us to a variety of themes and approaches. As such, it is a very useful and accessible book to have on the shelf to understand more deeply some of the history that has shaped us, and some of the distinctives that we can on occasions forget.

Ruth Gouldbourne, Grove Lane, Cheadle Hulme

Craig Hovey and Elizabeth Phillips (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Political Theology* (Cambridge University Press, 2015), 305pp.

The relationship between theology and politics is often misunderstood. Even those who study theology are often surprised to discover that there is such a thing as political theology and initial responses often display an element of wariness. Baptist Christians however should know better given our conviction about baptism as a declaration that Jesus is Lord of our lives. Properly understood this is a political claim because by it the Christian and the Church are disavowing any other claim to authority that might be made over them. The full implications of such a claim are rarely understood which is why we need more help reflecting on what it means to submit to the politics of Jesus.

The essays in this excellent companion to Christian Political Theology provide both an introduction to political theology, both historically and as a discipline that emerged in the mid-twentieth-century, and a wide-ranging discussion of many of the issues involved. Most are very well written but not all are easy to read or understand. The reader who picks up this book without at least some prior knowledge of political theology or of some of the issues being discussed will struggle. Elizabeth Phillips’ own “Political Theology: A Guide for the Perplexed” would be a better place to start. As always with such a companion there is no need to read the essays in order and most can be read without reference to the others, although as I will say below, reading some chapters alongside others will bring to light some interesting contrasts.

The book is divided into two main parts. The first is headed 'The Shape of Contemporary Political Theology' and it looks at the different strands of political theology that emerged predominantly in Europe, Latin America and the USA. In the opening chapter, Jürgen Moltmann writes as both commentator on the development of European political theology, from the perspective of one who was himself one of the first proponents, and critic, acknowledging that in its early reactionary form it was not broad enough in its hope for the coming kingdom of God. The work of Moltmann and others is set in stark contrast in the following two chapters to that of the Liberation Theologians and the work of Public Theology. Reading these essays side by side exposes the blinkers that our starting point can bring to an understanding of Scripture simply because it is context that sets the questions that we ask and (perhaps even) the answers that we expect.

This part also has chapters on the related discourses of Catholic Social Teaching (CST) and Protestant Social Ethics. Baptists who know little about the Roman Catholic Church and how it relates theology to the questions of the day will find Lisa Cahill's chapter both informative and thought-provoking. She is particularly illuminating about the way CST has developed over time, with the popes (although not exclusively) attempting to apply biblical teaching to the different moral, social, political and environmental issues that confronted the world they lived in. Two final chapters in this part look at twenty-first century reimaginings of the discipline. One of the most difficult but also rewarding chapters to read is Daniel Bell's on Postliberalism and Radical Orthodoxy. His understanding of Radical Orthodoxy as, in part, a critique of other forms of political theology, which make the mistake of regarding modern political liberalism as a neutral space, requires careful attention. His essay is in part a rebuttal of the criticism that the movement is just a call for a return to a pre-modern world and renewed Christendom. Susan Abraham's chapter then explores the different ways in which post-colonial theologies have attempted to "dismantle cultural, political and historical binaries" (p.142).

The second part of the book is headed 'Contemporary Questions in Political Theology' and has chapters on Scripture, Liberalism and Democracy, Capitalism and Global Economics, and Good Rule among others. Readers who have previously encountered political theology will be aware of the significance attributed to Augustine and Aquinas. In their excellent chapter on Augustinianisms and Thomisms, Eric Gregory and Joseph Clair attempt to show that the standard readings of Augustine and Aquinas, as pessimist (or realist) and optimist, have driven a wedge between the two that is not borne out by careful study, and one that in particular reads more of Augustine than just book 19 of *The City of God*. Their hope is that by bringing Augustine and Aquinas closer together they might create the possibility for new imagination in political engagement. One of the most engaging essays in the book is written by William Cavanaugh on Political Theology as Threat, in which he offers a robust response to Mark Lilla's book *The Stillborn God: Religion, Politics, and the Modern West*. Lilla's critique is offered (by his publisher?) as a more sophisticated argument about the dangers of political theology in contrast to the cruder works of Christopher Hitchens, Richard Dawkins and others. In the end Cavanaugh argues

that it fails to recognise that the religion/politics distinction was not the discovery of Hobbes and Locke et al but rather their creation. "The point of all this," he writes, "is that the choice with which Lilla presents us – either combine religion and politics or keep them separate – is already rigged in favor of the latter because religion and politics are presented as two essentially separate universal human activities that only subsequently got mixed up together" (p. 247). Elizabeth Phillips final chapter on Eschatology and Apocalyptic is a well-argued appeal to recover the place of both ideas within a balanced reading of the Now and Not Yet presentation of the Kingdom of God in scripture.

This is a book that I intend to return to again and again and one well worth spending both money and time investing in. Do not expect to put it down after reading even just one chapter without at least a dozen questions buzzing about in your head. It asks them and it provokes them in equal measure and that, I suggest, is a very good thing.

Ashley Lovett, Sockets Heath, Grays

Adam J Johnson (ed.), *T & T Clark Companion to Atonement* (Bloomsbury T & T Clark 2017), 859pp.

This very hefty volume really is a 'companion' kind of book, to dip into wherever you like for short entries of a few pages, one on 'Blood' being just two! Others are substantial critical essays, fifteen to twenty pages, such as Stephen Holmes on penal substitution. The longer ones tend to treat the well known academic topics and figures, such as atonement in Thomas Aquinas, Calvin and Barth, the shorter entries come under the section heading of 'essays'. The entries all have a good conclusion to crystallise the main drift of what has been written, a pattern that works well.

The volume covers a wealth of content and critical discussion of themes and theologians. We have patristic discussion, the major medieval and Reformation traditions and very contemporary treatments such as *Crucified – So What? Feminist Rereadings of the Cross-Event* by Arnfridur Gudmundsdottir, and Rene Girard's thought on atonement. The Christian theologies across the centuries are well covered with interesting treatments from high quality theological authors who bring out the significance of the great theologians they discuss and also their points of possible weakness or incompleteness. New Testament books are discussed as well as issues such as culture and universalism. The short entry by Peter C Hodgson on *Hegel and Baur* is crystal clear exposition in a few pages, a valuable cameo for a wide range of readers, and that typifies the whole book. Matthias Grebe in his four pages on Moltmann's doctrine of atonement makes the point that the very idea of God being against God, Son being abandoned by the Father, is problematic – how can this really represent love and a reason for hope to the godforsaken? For Grebe, Moltmann misses the NT imperative of the Trinitarian God's rejection of sin and that is primary for the Christian faith. The better option is for the Father to be working in and through the Son in the unity of the Spirit towards the reconciliation of the world. The cross reveals not so

much God against God as God against evil, he argues – which, I might suggest, neatly takes us back to Barth on the atonement. Such short gems as Grebe's are a boon for any tutor wanting to point students to a range of criticisms in an essay on Moltmann, as well as helpful theological reflection on the Trinity for the pastor.

The penultimate piece, number 102, is just four pages by Craig Bartholomew entitled *Wisdom Books (Old Testament)*. Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians that the cross is the true wisdom of God, contrasted with the wisdom of this age. Folly is a major theme in OT literature, and Paul is claiming Christ crucified to be the antidote to human pride and egocentrism. Folly at its root is the desire for human autonomy and Christ crucified exposes this idolatry. The Pauline teaching can also relate to wisdom and folly in *Ecclesiastes*, where wisdom exposes folly and is incarnate in Christ. The way of Christ is wisdom revealed and implemented in humanity, Barth's 'real man'. Bartholomew also reminds us that Barth brought out the idea of Job as a type of Christ, another key link to the wisdom tradition. The threefold ministry of Christ should be fourfold, prophet, priest, king and wisdom? Barth on Christ's priestly ministry is brought up in Joseph Mangina's essay 'Ecclesiology', four pages again, and calls for further ecumenical understanding on the area of church and atonement. The Roman Catholic notion that the sacrifice of the cross is 'carried on' each time mass is celebrated is discussed, in particular the idea of the 're-presentation' of Christ's sacrifice to God the Father by the priest. Mangina denies that this is a 'repetition' of Christ's sacrifice but a participation in it. The Anglican Roman Catholic agreed statement on this topic concluded that in the eucharist our human self offering was taken up in the great self offering, that of Christ, making His the one and only atoning act of sacrifice. Mangina criticises Barth for failing to take into account the liturgical cultic side of atonement, but Barth of course is very aware of the church deifying its own cultus and indeed itself, sliding away from the uniqueness of Christ's once for all sacrifice, once and for all offered to God by Jesus and once and for all accepted by the resurrection – with no need to re-present it cultically, as Calvin stresses. Barth aligns this mistake of a cultic self identification with Christ's self giving with Bultmann's theology of the act of faith, the same act of faith as made by Christ being repeated by us now: an interesting coordination of the same error by Rome and the existentialists!

This is just a great book for browsing, making connections and finding new angles, another of those Christmas presents!

Tim Bradshaw, *Regent's Park College, Oxford*

Michael Mawson, *Christ Existing as Community: Bonhoeffer's Ecclesiology* (Oxford: OUP, 2018).

The longstanding attention devoted to the German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer shows little sign of abating. In the 70 plus years since his execution by the Nazis, books such as *Life Together* and *Discipleship* have proven inspirational for generations of Christian believers, while *Ethics* and his *Letters*

and Papers from Prison have offered fertile ground for many a theological imagination. However, the opening book of the Bonhoeffer corpus, his PhD thesis, *Sanctorum Communio* has often been overlooked, in and of itself and with regard to the foundation it lays for much of what Bonhoeffer subsequently published. Michael Mawson's stated intention is to remedy that omission and establish the essential significance of *Sanctorum Communio* for Bonhoeffer studies in general, and particularly with regard to ecclesiology. Mawson's new book successfully achieves this ambition through a critical reading of Bonhoeffer's previous interpreters along with a compelling new exposition of this foundational text, arguing that the social theory and theology underpinning Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology can only be understood through a doctrinal dialectic of creation, sin and reconciliation. He contends that it is this dialectic that unlocks the complex social theory that dominates the early part of *Sanctorum Communio* and which enables a correct understanding of the ecclesiology of revelation and reality that emerges in its final chapters.

Mawson helpfully follows the same basic developmental structure as Bonhoeffer's original thesis. However, in doing so with such diligence it does leave the reader a little unsure whether this is a book that ought to be read in preparation for grappling with *Sanctorum Communio*, or as a necessary source of post-engagement illumination. To that end it may be most appreciated by those who are already re-reading Bonhoeffer's early work, keen to engage with it afresh.

Part 1 of the book returns the reader to Bonhoeffer's own early theological struggle to offer a distinctive ecclesiological response to the liberal historicism of Ernst Troeltsch and the dialectical theology emerging from Karl Barth. It notes how Bonhoeffer is seeking to move beyond both these writers and develop an ecclesiology that expresses both a human community and the reality of divine revelation.

Part 2 contains four chapters that examine the detailed theological social theory Bonhoeffer wants to place at the heart of his understanding of the church. One understandable, if ill-advised temptation facing readers of *Sanctorum Communio* is to skip through the early sociological sections in their eagerness to attend to Bonhoeffer's conclusions about the church. If there is a similar temptation with Mawson's book it is to be similarly resisted. Here, in chapter 2 there is a careful exposition of Bonhoeffer's theological engagement with social theory and his rejection of an idealist perception of reality. This proves essential for understanding the ecclesiology proposed by Mawson towards the end of the book and it is rooted in Mawson's interpretation of Bonhoeffer's concept of the person. In chapter 3 Mawson critiques Clifford Green's influential study of personhood within *Sanctorum Communio*. He argues that if the idea of the person is viewed through the dialectic lens of creation sin and reconciliation, then it may be more limited than hitherto understood; less concerned with offering a foundation for Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology and more focused on how concrete humanity is encountered and addressed in reality by God, as fallen creatures.

This insight is developed in the final chapters of this section, where the same dialectic is brought to bear on Bonhoeffer's theology of primal sociality, noting how it is his particular understanding of creation that allows *Sanctorum Communio* to develop its unique Christian social philosophy. Here there are helpful treatments of familiar Bonhoeffer terms including community (*Gemeinschaft*) and society (*Gesellschaft*). This theology of personhood and sociality is then developed in light of a Christian doctrine of sin, explored as both an individual and universal phenomenon. It is this that allows Bonhoeffer to articulate his finely nuanced theology of the 'ethical collective person' as a fallen and responsible humanity located within Adam and reconciled through Christ.

All this takes us to Part 3 of the book, to where impatient readers of *Sanctorum Communio* may have once prematurely turned - to matters of Christ, the Spirit and the Church. Chapter 6 examines Bonhoeffer's insistence that church must be understood both as a reality of divine revelation and as a concrete social entity and shows how Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology can only be properly understood in the light of the dialectic discussed throughout the previous chapters. Mawson repays the patient reader revealing how it is only through that interpretative dialectic that we can fully appreciate other key ecclesial motifs in Bonhoeffer's work, such as 'vicarious representative action' (*stellvertretung*) and the idea of 'Christ existing as community'. Chapter 7 then extends this thinking into a helpful examination of the concrete forms and functions of the empirical church community, including an examination of preaching and the sacraments.

This is a most important book for the ongoing development of Bonhoeffer studies. Like *Sanctorum Communio* itself, Michael Mawson's analysis is not always an easy read, but it is robust in its analysis and compelling in its argument, and it will repay the diligent reader with fresh and essential insight to all of Bonhoeffer's life and works.

Craig Gardiner, South Wales Baptist College

Mark Galli, Karl Barth: An Introductory biography for evangelicals (Grand rapdis, MI: Eerdmans 2017) 176pp.

Mark Galli is editor in chief of the American evangelical journal *Christianity Today* and writes this very readable and knowledgeable book with the aim of helping to allay evangelical suspicions of Barth. He does this, as the title suggests, using biography intertwined with theology. The biographical side is full of interesting domestic detail about Barth's life such as his child hood penchant for fisticuffs, being beaten by his father, the start of his love of Mozart after hearing a piano recital, such vivid details help to bring the great man into contact with the hum drum of everyday life. We might add a delightful letter to his great niece in reply to hers about the Bible and evolution in which he sets out the different spheres of scientific discovery and theology, which can he says not be merged any more than a vacuum cleaner and a church organ.

Galli skilfully engages evangelicalism and the theology of Barth, which has been labelled 'liberal' by many evangelicals. To academic theology Barth is the single most powerful engine working against the great weight of liberal theology dominant throughout the 19th Century, hence the irony of evangelical suspicion. Indeed Galli points out, as did Barth, that strains of evangelicalism themselves contain subjectivist and rationalist imperatives which align with liberal emotivism and anthropocentrism rather than Christocentric Biblicism.

Two hymns well loved in historical evangelical faith illustrate this. 'I tell you how I know he lives, he lives within my heart' and 'Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so'. Barth is said to have written the latter verse as one of his very last acts prior to dying, showing how the witness of Scripture was foundational to his faith. The former verse, basing faith on inner experience of the living Christ, is not Barth's trademark, he spent his theological and ministerial life pushing back on the thrust of subjective feeling being the source and measure of Christian faith. Galli reminds his readers of the great liberal theologian Schleiermacher founding his restatement of the faith on this feeling of absolute dependence coordinated with Jesus as the supremely God conscious man. The subjective feeling test has been misused in evangelical Christianity when pressed as a criterion for true genuine discipleship: the charismatic movement of the 1970's tended to stray in this direction, although not a major theme in Galli's book this divided opinion greatly at the time throughout evangelical denominations and groups. Christian experience cannot be judged better when happy than when undergoing the way of the cross and desolation, yet the happy smile, 'evangeligrin' has been taken as a mark of true faith with damaging pastoral results.

This was in effect a version of the perfectionist heresy in emotional mode, in line with moral perfectionism, another 19th Century route of restating Christian faith away from the base of revelation. Ritschl, as Galli explains, was the brilliant Kantian Christian theologian stressing the fatherhood of God and Jesus as the perfect moral teacher of righteousness. Along with moral experience can go rational argumentation as a preparation for faith, and evangelicalism has done much by way of Christian apologetics to bolster the credibility of faith in Christ. Barth, to the contrary, rejected all such preparatory reasoning, along with Kierkegaard, saying that such rational logic does not lead to the God of Jesus Christ. Here lies a major fissure between Barth and mainline evangelicalism: his theological attack on natural theology and insistence that only by faith in Jesus can God be known. Barth himself has been criticised for his own subjectivism of faith by such as Pannenberg who insists to the contrary that faith has to be reasonable and not a dualistic decision with no supportive evidence. Here there is a discussion to be had. But Barth has made a profound contribution to the church in pointing out that a rational and moral route to God can end with anthropocentrism projected upstairs, and neglects the eschatological in-breaking of God into history and the human predicament.

Galli also engages with the issue of faith and repentance. Barth stresses the grace of God in bringing disciples to participation in the life of Christ making repentance a matter of divine Spirit led but human freedom, a result of the gospel not a cause of forgiveness. We repent because we are forgiven in Christ's

saving work of Good Friday and Easter Sunday. This is another important pastoral and theological issue, with McLeod Campbell in the 19th Century arguing what Barth later emphasised as 'evangelical repentance' along with the Torrance brothers. DM Baillie, yet another Scottish theologian, famously spoke of the paradox of grace, rooting back to Augustine and Paul. Deeply connected with this theme is that of election and the fate of universal humanity under the grace of God in Christ, and Barth's well known doctrine that Christ is the elect and the reprobate, and his death on the cross is for everyone – opening the discussion of whether he was a universalist and the need of faith. Faith for Barth is not mere knowledge but responsive grateful sharing in the life of Christ, this is 'knowing Christ', and being saved means to participate in Christ whose life and work alone are the source of salvation. Galli adduces George Hunsinger's explanation of Barth to help exculpate him from the charge of being a liberal universalist making the cross and resurrection ultimately redundant. The sheer power of Barth's Christocentric emphasis, the substance of theology and faith being this Trinitarian saving self disclosure of God himself as Christlike and not otherwise, Galli is saying, gives us serious life confident because God is for us.

Galli has given us a serious and yet warm and humane treatment of a very important issue for millions of Christian. And of course Barth is, for the Roman Catholic Church, 'the greatest theologian since Thomas Aquinas', their most serious conversation partner. We all need to engage with Barth's determination to be disciples of Jesus, to be always in the orbit of the Word incarnate, to live in this reality who conditions how we live and move and have our being. I recommend Galli's book highly.

Tim Bradshaw, Regent's Park College, Oxford

Brian Bantum, *The Death of Race: Building a New Christianity in a Racial World* (Fortress, 2016)

Brian Bantum provides a memoir-style look at the way theology and race intersect. Rather than reducing theology to abstract metaphysics, or race to anthropology, he makes the case that the racialisation of society has constituted a distorted Christian imagination of creation, humanity and the gospel itself. This book is one of the shorter and more accessible works from a group of theologians, which include Willie James Jennings and K. Cameron Carter, who are making a robust case to redress some of the very systematic theological foundations that we stand on in the western church.

Bantum's main thesis is that God created a world which involved difference. His Word forged an order that was intended to engender exploration of one another and encourage a deeper understanding and love of God and the rest of the world. Difference is good, it is a gift of our finitude as human beings, without which we would cease to live in the reality of being God's creatures. However, difference has led to distinction which marks those who are not the same in a manner that is hostile. Race is an phenomenon that reconstitutes creation by making difference something to be controlled, categorised. This means that humanity is

structured around white bodies not just on an aesthetic level, but also ontologically. To be black is to be ontologically non-white and thus inferior. History has shown us the rest. Race has not drawn us more deeply together, but separated us from one another in our differences. Bantum talks of America presently, but highlights the harrowing truth for all the world, that race destroys human relationship and makes life violent. What he does not do is appeal to affirming people in their difference as a means of legitimising the individual's self-determination. The whole, 'I am who I am' thing is not something that fixes the problem, because we can end up perpetuating our isolation from the other through a reactive self-assertion

However, Bantum makes a profound challenge to those in the church who would claim to not be racist that we need to work to examine ourselves by entering into the lives of others, and welcoming them into ours as well, to redress words we have used to distinguish between ourselves and others, and which some of us have in turn used to control others. This is a heartfelt, personal, but theologically coherent and well presented book on the problem of race. The only thing that grieves me about it is that those who would perhaps find it the most thought-provoking and for whom it might be really necessary are most likely never to want to read it.

Tim Judson, Guildford Baptist Church

Eve Poole, *Buying God: Consumerism & Theology* (London: SCM, 2018)

In the week I wrote this review I met a colleague who had also read this book. It was no surprise to me when we both exclaimed "What a strange book!"

I have no doubt of the need for well-informed theological reflection upon consumerism. The author is the Third Church Estates Commissioner. The Commissioners are three lay people who represent the Church Commissioners (a different role) in the General Synod of the Church of England. The first and second commissioners are appointed by the Queen and the third commissioner is appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury. He has enthusiastically endorsed this book with the words "...a magnificent contribution to the church..." This is perhaps significant, as we shall see. Dr Poole previously taught at Ashridge Business School, following an earlier spell working for the Anglican church and as a Deloitte management consultant. She holds degrees in theology and business management and a PhD in capitalism and theology from Cambridge University. So this author should have an interesting and provocative viewpoint, working along the interstices and overlaps between the disciplines of theology, economics and business.

The contents fall into two sections. Part 1 is entitled "How to do theology" and Part 2: "God and Consumerism." There are also some practical exercises for Christians who wish to challenge their personal consumerism. The main portions are presented as suitable for two separate types of reader. The substance of the book is found in Part 2, while the preceding section aims to demonstrate the

theological route and logic that led Dr Poole to the conclusions that follow. The author is open in stating that many readers may wish to skip the first part. Let's take her prompt and begin with Part 2.

The style and vocabulary of this section suggest that it is intended for an intelligent and questioning Christian reader who is open to challenge about consumer choices. It defines terms before asking what God thinks about consumerism. This leads logically to self-examination for both churches and the individual disciple. It concludes with an imaginative and hopeful depiction of life in a generation's time, characterised by consumer choices and economics reflective of Christian values as understood by the author. The final pages comprise a prayer, 30 days' worth of 'virtue exercises', a framework for a consumption audit, highly selective lists of websites and Bible passages and a six-week reflection 'course.' I thought that these were rather thin in content.

Now back to Part 1: the theology, which the author suggests are the workings-out that have led her to her subsequent conclusions. She divides the theological approaches into two 'clusters': the worldview cluster and the etiquette one. Within each she outlines the role and contribution of different key theological authors or schools of thought, for example Niebuhr, Kort or Postliberal theology. In each case she offers a so-called cheat-sheet – a paragraph-length text box, comprising a condensed crib of each concept in plain English. My problem with the author's approach is that I found it hard to follow a coherent and interesting thread through this section.

So who is this book written for and what is its main purpose? I cannot see that it would satisfy either a serious student of theology or a Christian seeking an accessible and challenging tool to reflect upon and adjust their consumer choices. Yet the author is plainly a well-qualified and erudite scholar across the disciplines covered by the book and this is an important topic. This work is endorsed, in glowing terms, by Rev'd Dr Samuel Wells of St. Martins-in-the-Fields and by Archbishop Justin. Dr Poole was Dr Welby's personal appointment to her role as Church Estates Commissioner.

A final clue to understanding the work may be found in the author's preface (page ix), where she writes:

"This book was commissioned to bring together into one volume my work to date on theology, capitalism and consumerism. Much of this is buried in monographs, scattered between blogs and sermons, or contained in several seemingly unconnected books."

It seems to me that this work makes most sense as a roadmap of the author's personal theological journey through the topic. It may be a route that helps you, though I found myself somewhat lost.

Ivan King, Southend-on-Sea

Joshua T. James, *The Storied Ethics of the Thanksgiving Psalms* (London: T & T Clark, 2017)

This monograph is the published version of Joshua James's doctoral thesis. James's area of interest is the ethical content and purpose of the narrative psalms – in particular, Psalms 116, 118 and 138.

James's work builds on Alasdair MacIntyre's theory of *narrative ethics*, wherein some narratives shape the worldview of their society by offering a coherent vision of the world. This has been adopted by Stanley Hauerwas, who argues that the biblical stories of covenant, promise and redemption are stories that must be lived, stories that demand participation. As James quotes Hauerwas, 'Christian ethics is not first of all concerned with 'Thou Shalt' or 'Thou shalt not'. Its first task is to help us rightly envision the world.'

While some work has been done in recent years on the ethical interpretation of Old Testament narrative, little has been published on the ethical narrative readings of non-prose texts, and it is this gap which James is seeking to fill. Further, following Brueggemann and Wenham, James argues that the psalms are uniquely positioned, given their place within the liturgical life of the nation, to shape the thought-world of the reciter. Indeed, they could be said to create a world for the community to inhabit, which may stand in contrast to the world as they currently see it. James helpfully points out, however, that biblical narrative or liturgy only has the *potential* to shape a society, and that both the biblical testimony and historical experience show that a 'storied people' can nevertheless commit grave ethical crimes.

At the core of the book James performs a close reading of the three psalms he has chosen. His work is thorough and painstaking. He concludes as follows: Psalm 116 is the story of an individual who has been rescued by divine action, providing an example and paradigm of divine faithfulness, and thus inviting the liturgical performers to participate in the story by loving, trusting and hoping as the narrator does. Psalm 118, which comprises a narrative of God's redeeming actions towards Israel, comprises an ethos of possibility. The God of the exodus still guides, rescues and protects. James identifies similar themes in Psalm 138. This is an important study in biblical scholarship, as it fills a gap and demonstrates something that many of us will have intuitively believed but which was hitherto unproven by rigorous scholarship. However, in my view, the findings do largely accord with the intuitive reading of the psalms in many instances, and so the nature of the book is more corroborative and decisive than novel and surprising. Nonetheless it will be welcomed by those working in the specialist fields of biblical ethics and psalms studies.

Helen Paynter, Bristol Baptist College

Ray Vincent, *Sing out for Justice: The Poetry and Passion of the Hebrew Prophets* (Christian Alternative, 2017)

In this short and highly readable book Ray Vincent seeks to help the Church reclaim the writings of the Old Testament prophets for the contemporary world. There is much that I appreciated and found helpful within it. The introductory chapter very effectively positions us alongside Amos's original listeners, confronted at festival time at Bethel. This at once introduces us to the raw passion of the prophet, and to his original context. Indeed, the attention to the original context of the prophecy is one of the real strengths of the book. It would help people who have little experience of reading the non-narrative parts of the Hebrew Bible to begin to find their way in.

Along the way, the book helpfully critiques and corrects many of the more simplistic approaches to the prophets, including the tendency to use the prophets as a source of proof-texts for Jesus, and the danger of misusing the apocalyptic genre 'to opt out of concern for this world and transpose all idealistic hopes to heaven' (p.109). There is also a good chapter on the cost of obedience to the prophetic calling.

The burning passion of the prophets for social justice is well conveyed by the book; indeed, it is (as the title suggests) Vincent's primary interpretive lens. But herein also lies one of the weaknesses of the book, in my opinion. There is almost no mention of covenant, although the role of the prophets as enforcers or recollectors of the covenant is widely considered to be a central part of their calling. Linked to this, Vincent seems to exhibit some embarrassment about the language of wrath or judgment, much to be found in these texts, of course. For example, he characterises Jonah as demonstrating God's unconditional love, and while I agree that there is something scandalous about the forgiveness God offers to Nineveh in this story, it can hardly be said to be unconditional! In a similar vein, Vincent shows significant discomfiture at the strong anti-idol polemic of some of the prophets. He reduces the prophetic concern for YHWH worship alone to a 'clash of values', which boils down to a concern for social justice. Likewise, the declarations of Isaiah 40 and 43 (I am God and there is no other) are simply 'a necessary assertion' (p.76) in the context of Babylonian exile. I agree that this is the explanation for Isaiah's assertion in the first instance, but would also wish to affirm – especially in a book written at accessible level – the deeper theological truths that this text conveys.

In general, it is not what is said in the book that troubles me, but what is omitted. Vincent provides a very helpful emphasis on the human source and form of the prophetic writings, expressed as they are in a particular language, idiom and metaphor, and spoken into a particular historical context. But he doesn't wrestle with the (to me) pressing question of how the text presents the word of God to us. He appears to have two agents in his mind: the human prophet, and the modern interpreter; the agency of God as author doesn't appear to be an important factor. Thus where there is a gap between the world-view of the text and that of our contemporary society, Vincent seeks to make the text leap the

gap, rather than considering to what extent it might be providing a valid corrector of our world-view.

The book views predictive prophecy as a human yearning in the 'I have a dream' category, leaving little room for that dream to be promise rather than aspiration. For Vincent, there seems to be a direct continuity between the yearnings of this world and the future dreamed of by Isaiah; the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a partial fulfilling of that vision, as is the truth and peace brought by all the major world religions. There is little room left for the in-breaking of God, either in the decisive moment of the incarnation or at the eschaton, neither of which, by conventional biblical interpretation, are a product of human hopefulness.

In summary, there are many elements of the book that I enjoyed and appreciated, and I shall certainly be directing students to portions of it. However, if I offered it as a whole volume to someone in my church, I would wish to accompany it with a conversation about the voice of God in scripture, and about the in-breaking of the Kingdom.

Helen Paynter, Bristol Baptist College

David Tollerton (ed.), *Biblical Reception 4: A New Hollywood Moses: On the Spectacle and Reception of Exodus: Gods and Kings* (T & T Clark, 2017)

Rhonda Burnette-Bletsch and Jon Morgan (eds.), *Noah as Antihero: Darren Aronofsky's Cinematic Deluge* (Routledge, 2017)

2014 was big year for the Bible in film. In the March, Darren Aronofsky's *Noah* was released, starring Russell Crowe in the title role and then in the December Ridley Scott's *Exodus: Gods and Kings* was released with Christian Bale as Moses. Two big Hollywood directors releasing blockbuster Bible films. Both films received mixed reviews.

In these two books, biblical scholars engage with the films, exploring how they tell the Bible story. *Noah* and *Exodus* were not simple re-tellings of the biblical narrative. Each film took dramatic license and made interesting choices in character portrayal. In *Exodus*, the character of God is presented as a young boy. For these reasons, the films provide these biblical reviewers lots to discuss and explore in the relation of the use of scripture and the need for visual drama.

I think it is very positive to see both films meriting this kind of engagement. Neither film will probably be considered a classic, but as movies they do open up these ancient stories for a new audience and for those of us Christians how do we receive them today, especially as stories of violence.

In *Biblical Reception 4*, the stand out essays are those by Matthew Collins, exploring how *Exodus* films have depicted the burning bush incident. Collins brings some helpful comparison of *Exodus* alongside that *The Ten*

Commandments and *Prince of Egypt*. He suggests that the ambiguity in Scott's Exodus portrayal of God 'mirrors ... the very ambiguity present in the biblical text' (p.29). J. Cheryl Exum's chapter argues that the *Exodus* film draws out some of the problems present in the story, and perhaps too easily glossed over by bible readers. Michelle Fletcher explores *Exodus* alongside over recent apocalyptic, but contemporary, movies and how much they have in common.

The title of the second book *Noah as Antihero*, draws attention to Noah being a more ambiguous character in the film compared to the Genesis account that calls Noah a righteous man. The essays here engage with how Aronofsky uses the biblical text, but also makes links to other ancient texts, that his choices, like those of the watchmen, were not invented from thin air. Matthew Collins (again) sees Noah as a faithful rewriting of scripture for the twenty-first century.

As we will continue to read these ancient narratives, these books demonstrate there is merit, in reading, preaching and exploring these narratives alongside these two recent films, if only to take us back to the Bible and pay attention to how these stories might be heard today and to how they may be more troubling than we might care to admit. I, for one, hope that contemporary film-makers like Aronofsky and Scott will continue to seek to tell biblical stories, even if they generate mixed results. And when they do, I hope biblical scholars continue to engage film with text, because these books demonstrate there can be some fruitful insights.

Andy Goodliff, Belle Vue Baptist Church, Southend-on-Sea

Sarah Harris *The Davidic Shepherd King in the Lukan Narrative*. LNTS 558. (New York: Bloomsbury, 2016)

Sarah Harris' thesis was conceived around questions concerning the infancy narrative. In amongst an otherwise sparse account of the birth of Jesus, Luke lays an apparent emphasis upon the role of the shepherds. Why is this and is there a suggestion here of Luke's approach to the life and ministry of Jesus? An immediate and obvious problem is that Luke not refer to Jesus as a shepherd at any point in his gospel.

Harris begins her exploration by seeking to build the historical scaffolding for her thesis – an examination of the repetitious use of the shepherd motif in the LXX and additionally the way in which God is understood as the shepherd of Israel. This is followed by an analysis of David as a shepherd – called as a shepherd caring for his father's sheep, to be the shepherd of God's people (2 Samuel/Kingdoms 5:2; 2 Kingdoms 5:2) and the explicit reference in 2 Samuel/2 Kingdoms 24:17 LXX, *εγω ειμι οθ ποιμην I am the shepherd*. Harris then scrutinizes the birth and infancy narrative in Luke for traces and echoes of this Davidic shepherd motif. Harris is clear that 'Luke has chosen to highlight Jesus as being given the throne of David and thereby fulfilling the Davidic promise' (p.81). The multiplicity of implicit and explicit references to David in the Gospel (p.43-81) emphasizes for Harris that this is a key primary lens for the Lukan Jesus. 'He

is not only Saviour, he is the Davidic Saviour. He is not only Messiah, he is the Davidic Messiah' (p.81). Harris then asserts that the birth narrative in particular evidences the arrival of the David shepherd king from the city of David (p.82). She also makes the connection with the historical context of the birth narrative, which is particularly prominent here and examines the significance of Augustus' census that is even more conspicuous in the text than the account of the birth itself. Harris concludes, 'What is at stake here is the nature of leadership and power, and while Augustus' might is found in decrees and Imperial rule, an important aspect of Jesus' identity is found in him as the shepherd king' (p.81). That being said, I wasn't completely convinced by, 'Both are rulers and so both are shepherds' (p.70). The account of Augustus' rule says more about power and rule than it does about character or about the concept of the emperor as a shepherd.

The focus upon Jesus as shepherd is centred upon a number of passages that make pastoral allusions: 10:3, Jesus sending out his disciples as lambs among wolves; 12:32, the disciples as the 'little flock'; and the parable in 15:3-7 of the faithful shepherd. More time is then spent examining 19:1-10 asserting that Zacchaeus account is an example of a salvation story and not simply a vindication story. 19:10 is described as having a summative nature (p.118) forming the telos of the narrative comprising such as the sinful woman (7:36-50), the crippled woman (13:10-17), the rich ruler (18:18-30), and the blind man (18:35-43). Jesus is portrayed here as the shepherd who 'come to seek out and to save the lost.'

This study is a fascinating and enlightening study. Harris has done well to not only discern the presence of the Davidic shepherd motif, but to present the evidence clearly and convincingly.

Edward Pillar, Evesham Baptist Church

Andrew K. Boakye, *Death and Life: Resurrection, Restoration, and Rectification in Paul's Letter to the Galatians* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2017)

Andrew Boakye's thesis argues that even through there is only a singular explicit reference to resurrection in Paul's letter to the Galatians (1:1), nonetheless, we should see 'life and death as interpretive keys for Galatians' (p.92). Following a lengthy introduction Boakye examines six key texts in Galatians (1.1-5, 2.19-20, 3.21, 5.24-25, 6.8, and 6.14-15), which in his view, demonstrate that resurrection is the central thought in this letter undergirding all else that is said. The thesis "foregrounds resurrection as pivotal for understanding Galatians' (p.218). In Boakye's view Paul's definition of God in 1:1 in terms of the resurrection of Jesus and as 'the Agent of Resurrection' (p.54) highlights "To give life was how God "put things right" (p.216). 'God was rectifying the world by an all-embracing, re-creative act of resurrection' (p.60). All this may indeed be true, but did this thought undergird Paul's thinking in this letter?

Boakye deals thoroughly with the texts and highlights the theme of death/life through repeated reference to the event of the Exodus, exile and restoration with particular attention being paid to Jeremiah and Ezekiel and the theme of the internalization of the law through the activity of the Spirit. Of interest, Boakye prefers 'rectification' and 'to rectify' when referring to justification in order to emphasise the transformational implications of justification and to avoid getting bogged down in disputes about either/or forensic/participationist ideas of justification and righteousness (see p.21). There seems to be no denying that Boakye is successful in finding and articulating the resonances of resurrection life in the texts he highlights. The key throughout Boakye's thesis is that the law cannot make alive, and cannot justify/rectify. It is only through participation in Christ – his death and resurrection – that one can be made alive and share in the resurrection life of Christ. However, even although I agree with his thesis, crucifixion is explicit and resurrection implicit in the letter. It may be that only if one accepts Boakye's claim that resurrection is the undergirding reality and ultimately the transformative power in Paul's soteriology that one will accept the thesis.

Although I was at times a little confused by an occasional apparent lack of clarity and consistency. Boakye speaking of 'Jesus' resurrection, that is his rectification' (p.41) left me wondering whether he intended to suggest that Jesus needed rectification. He later attempts a clarification, "The concept of the "rectification of Jesus" may seem misplaced. ... it is more difficult to imagine Paul articulating that Jesus attained "right status" before God, as if, in Paul's mind, he ever lacked it' (p.92), but then again refers to the resurrection of Jesus as his rectification (p.214). This may seem a minor quibble, but the way in which we seek to articulate the resurrection of Jesus as the salvific event and draw parallels with our own salvation is important. I wasn't entirely convinced as Boakye draws on numerous examples of revivification in the prophets (particular Ezekiel 37) and other literature as a precursor to the concept of resurrection. The resurrection of Jesus should not be mistaken as the same as examples of revivification; resurrection is of an entirely new order of things, whereby Jesus moves through death into a radically new life, and not simply a giving back of life. Additionally, I would have liked to have seen Boakye's discussion of the Exodus, freedom from slavery and 'the element forces of this world' make the straightforward move (clearly argued for example in Justin Hardin's work on Galatians) that this freedom is freedom from the sinful forces of the imperial powers – be they Egyptian or Roman. Quibbles aside, I agree with Boakye's basic thesis, that resurrection should be seen as the foundational element of this letter, the key that helps unlock this letter.

Edward Pillar, Evesham Baptist Church

Larry W. Hurtado, *Texts and Artefacts: Selected Essays on Textual Criticism and Early Christian Manuscripts* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2018)

Over the years a number of sceptics have told me that one can't trust what the New Testament tells us about Jesus because the interval between the writing of

the gospels and the date of earliest available manuscripts amounts to several hundred years, and in the course of that period the stories of Jesus were redacted by the church to such a great extent that the gospels as we know them bear no resemblance to the original accounts. Those of us who have led Alpha courses will be aware that the standard argument for the reliability of the gospels rests on the sheer quantity of New Testament manuscripts available and the claim that the time lapse between the writing of the text and the earliest copy of the New Testament ranges from just 30 (for a fragment of John's gospel) to 310 years for the full text of the New Testament.

Anyone who relies on that argument to assert the reliability of the gospels should read Hurtado's book, which includes in Part 1 a cautious, conservative, assessment of the significance, dating and accuracy of the 52 papyri which can with confidence be dated to the second or third centuries, and explores how these texts can serve to corroborate the NT text as we know it. Part 2 contains a fascinating exploration of early Christian texts themselves as artefacts: here Hurtado explores phenomena such as the way 'Jesus' and other significant sacred names or nouns have been abbreviated ('nomina sacra'), and the way the Greek letters *tau* and *rho* are sometimes combined in the contracted form of the Greek word for 'cross' (*stauros*) to provide what is probably the earliest visual representation of Christ on the cross. There are also insights into what various canonical and apocryphal manuscripts can tell us about the scribes who produced them, their purpose and their readership.

Most (but not all) the twelve chapters are accessible to the non-specialist. They have all been published elsewhere, with dates ranging from 1998 (on the stauogram) to 2016 (on ϕ 45); consequently, there is a considerable degree of repetition. It would have been really helpful to have diagrams to illustrate the detailed descriptions with which Hurtado supplies his readers: occasionally the text reads as if students at a lecture should be able to see what Hurtado is talking about on a PowerPoint presentation.

At the end of the Introduction, Hurtado observes that, 'It is an all too common mistake, even among NT scholars, to regard NT textual criticism and the study of manuscripts as some arcane area to which only specialists in these matters need give much attention. But NT textual criticism and early Christian manuscripts are much too important to be left to text critics and papyrologists!' Hurtado brings clarity to an important subject that is often neglected, and Bloomsbury Press have done us a service by assembling his articles in this volume.

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Frank Dicken and Julia Snyder (eds.), *Characters and Characterization in Luke-Acts* (LNTS; London: T & T Clark, 2016), 254pp.

The author of Luke-Acts offers a range of interesting characters across his two volumes and this edited collection provides a set of essays engaging with how

they are portrayed. This is the third volume in a series, with previous books looking at the characters in the gospel of John and the gospel of Mark. There is much to enjoy and stimulate in this new volume. Chapters explore the sinful woman of Luke 7, Levi's banquet in Luke 5, Zechariah and Gabriel in Luke 1, the two brothers in the parable of the Prodigal Son, Zacchaeus, Paul, and Simeon in Acts 15. As well as chapters look at women in Luke, the rich in Luke, the disciples in Acts, and Jesus in Acts.

A sermon or home group series on Luke or Acts would benefit from this book, because its close study of particular characters. (However, it should be noted the book presupposes an academic level readership, so its not a straightforward read, but a rewarding one.). David Gowler offers a fascinating reception history of the two brothers in the prodigal son. Scott Spencer explores how women interact with Jesus in the gospel, highlighting three women who touch Jesus – his mother Mary, the sinful woman who anoints his feet and the bleeding woman. John Darr argues that we see Levi's banquet as programmatic (like the incident in Nazareth in chapter 4,) for the whole gospel and discipleship. Steve Walton's study of Jesus in the book of Acts asks whether we should see Jesus as present and/or absent. This pressing question is one so often overlooked and our tendency is to think Jesus gone. Cornelis Bennema looks at the negative characterisation of rich people in the gospel – the rich fool, Dives, the rich ruler, and Zacchaeus. In looking at them together we cannot avoid the challenge of Jesus with regards wealth.

This book will lead the reader to new thoughts with regards Luke-Acts, which in the context of the church, will also have the potential to challenge notions of discipleship. I recommend it as offering something different to that which the usual commentary can often offer.

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