

Western forms – China is strangely omitted), to atheist inflections of the different world religions (Judaism, Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism), and to multidisciplinary perspectives (including the natural sciences, sociology and psychology). Christian atheism (e.g. death of God theology) does not merit a dedicated essay, though this might be seen as implicit in much of the volume.

The standard is generally very high, each essay representing intensive research and being appended by substantial bibliographical material. As such, it is one of the most successful of the *Oxford Handbooks*. In providing the most comprehensive and up-to-date guide to atheism in the world today, this volume ought to prove an invaluable resource both for teaching and as an entry point to further research.

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Kelly M. Kopic and Bruce L. McCormack (eds), *Mapping Modern Theology: A Thematic and Historical Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012), pp. vii+421. \$34.99 (pbk).

This book represents an impressive contribution to contemporary theological discussion both by virtue of the number of themes considered and the extensive nature of the presentations offered. There are fifteen lengthy chapters of small print covering ‘Modernity’, the Trinity, the Divine Attributes, Scripture and Hermeneutics, Creation, Anthropology, the Person of Christ, Atonement, Providence, Pneumatology, Soteriology, Christian Ethics, Practical Theology, Ecclesiology and last but certainly not least, Eschatology. Each chapter offers historical and theological perspectives on its theme and always attempts to relate theology to ‘modernity’ by exploring how theologians have dealt with theological topics under the pressure of ‘modernity’, which is to say, under the pressure of having to deal with the possibilities and difficulties raised by the thinking of Friedrich Schleiermacher and G. W. F. Hegel in particular. As with any work of this type, some chapters are more captivating than others, depending upon one’s particular area of interest and expertise.

Most of the chapters attempt to present the material in a way which leaves the reader the freedom to decide which direction to take, namely, whether to side with a theologian like Barth, Moltmann or Pannenberg for instance, or some other key theological figure. Some chapters push a bit harder in the direction of constructing a systematic theology in the course

of discussing a theme and do tend to take a position; sometimes this is helpful. But at other times this can be confusing to readers, especially since this book was ostensibly written using a thematic and historical approach to introduce students to the basic themes and problems vital for all major doctrines considered by modern theologians.

On the positive side, there is no doubt that one can learn a great deal from reading this book. Each chapter is well researched and well written. I especially appreciated the chapters by Fred Sanders (Trinity), Stephen Holmes (Divine Attributes), Kevin Vanhoozer (Atonement), John Webster (Providence), Richard Lints (Soteriology) and Michael Horton (Eschatology). But I learned a great deal from reading all the other chapters as well. A few of the chapters tended to give a more ecumenical overview of key issues by discussing Eastern Orthodox views as well as Roman Catholic views, though most of the emphasis in this volume is on key Protestant figures of modern theology. Since the theological issues which they discuss, however, relate to all theologians, irrespective of denomination, this book will be of interest to anyone who is seeking to be educated with regard to how and why theology is done the way it is today.

Negatively, the length and difficulty of the chapters will mean that this is a book which can be used only in graduate classes or upper level classes in theology. Beyond that, there are certain arguments presented as if issues which are currently being debated are already settled both in terms of Barth scholarship and in terms of theological insight. Putting a book like this into the hands of an untrained student of theology could leave that person rather perplexed. For example, the very idea that 'modernity' is a theological concept could leave one with the impression that to think theologically today must mean that, since classical theism has to be left behind, only certain 'values' of classical doctrine need to be maintained. Then one could equate God's being with his eternal choice to be God for us, 'in which he gives himself his own being as God' (p. 14). In this scheme God's self-determination would not be seen as a determination of the triune God to be for us as Creator, Reconciler and Redeemer, but as an act of self-constitution. Such thinking, grounded in a rereading of Schleiermacher and Hegel in particular, would then require rejecting such traditional ideas as the idea that God would still be the same triune God he always was even if he never decided to create, reconcile and redeem the world. No doubt there is a vast difference in the way theology would be done if one accepted the idea that 'modernity' is a theological concept. But shouldn't an introductory textbook such as this introduce students to the central truths of the Christian faith as expressed in the great Creeds, Councils and doctrinal works of the church and as understood by modern theologians? And if so, then

theological truth would not be conceptualised to refer to 'values' which 'modernity' is able to extract from the theology of the past while leaving readers with a God who is thought to be constituted by his decision to be God for us. When theological truth is conceptualised as 'values' driven, one could at one and the same time say that for Schleiermacher 'there can be no incarnation in the traditional sense of the divine Logos entering into this world from outside of it', but that Schleiermacher still wanted to 'do justice to all the theological values that came to expression in the orthodox Christology of the ancient church' (p. 158) without apparently being too concerned that Schleiermacher's approach appears to result in nothing short of a degree christology. This is exemplified in the statement that 'Schleiermacher understands Jesus as the man in whom there existed a "vital receptivity" to the divine causality which is at work in and through all persons and things, a receptivity so pure as to enable him to realise perfectly in himself the presence of God to and in him' (p. 158). It is just this thinking that I believe the ancient church would have forcefully rejected because unless who Jesus was, and is, is grounded in an act of God coming into history from outside, then the difference between Jesus and us will be sought in the degree of his human God-consciousness or the degree of his dependence upon God instead of in his true deity on the basis of which, he as God could act as man reconciling the world to God from the divine and human side.

Furthermore, one could interpret Barth saying '(the God-human in his divine-human unity) is the identity of the second "person" of the Trinity – not only in time but also "in himself" (when, as yet, there was no creation standing in need of redemption) . . . There is no "person" somehow "beneath" the two natures as that in which they "subsist." The two "natures" – really, divine and human *being* – are made one in a single human history' (p. 171). Certainly there was a genuine union of natures in the incarnation. But for classical christology, Jesus' human history was grounded in his divine being which genuinely pre-existed that human history. Hence, his person was divine and not human in the sense that his humanity had no existence apart from the person of the Word/Son who came into history from outside. So while the divine person is not somehow beneath the human person of Jesus in the incarnation, his divinity is not a reality which can simply be read off from an encounter with the human Jesus either. In a historicised view, offered in the context of assuming that 'modernity' is a theological concept, we seem to be left without a genuinely existing Word who, as Barth held 'would still be His Word apart from this becoming [incarnation], just as Father, Son and Holy Spirit would be none the less eternal God, if no world had been created' (CD I/2, p. 135). Hence, Barth

could also affirm that 'As Son of Man, and therefore in human form, Jesus Christ does not exist at all except in the act of God, as He is first the Son of God' (IV/2, p. 102; emphasis mine). From the perspective of 'modernity' we are instead told that 'The "person" is made to be composite not through adding something to a divine being that is complete in itself without reference to the human' (p. 171).

Obviously, much more reflection and careful analysis of some of the key ideas offered in this volume would have to be engaged to do justice to the ideas expressed. While this is impossible in a brief review such as this, there are hints of answers which can be found even within this volume. For instance, in connection with divine providence, it is said that 'God is from himself and is in himself complete, requiring no reality beside himself to bring his blessedness to perfection' (p. 205). And in connection with the divine attributes, it is argued that, with Schleiermacher, there was a shift from speaking analogically about God in himself to speaking more about 'our experience of the divine' (p. 52), with the result that in the twentieth century 'the desire to make the gospel history an account of the internal life of God' (as in Robert Jenson's statement that 'God is what happens to Jesus and the world') meant that there was 'little point in arguing whether the language of attributes refers to the essence or the economy' (p. 53). All of this suggests that one will want to use this book with renewed awareness that 'modernity' may not be as benign a concept as some would like to believe.

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Andrew T. Lincoln, *Born of a Virgin? Reconceiving Jesus in the Bible, Tradition, and Theology* (London: SPCK, 2013), pp. 334. £25.00.

In order to be rigorously historical in approach, the author spends a long time in the first three chapters trawling evidence from sources other than Matthew and Luke, the better to interpret what early Christians thought about the Virgin Conception. The results are rather thin, but are nevertheless called on to warrant the conclusion on p. 33: 'it remains the case then that outside the annunciation stories the New Testament Writings witness to another tradition about Jesus' conception, namely that he was of the seed of David through Joseph as his biological father'.

Next, in handling the Matthean account, much is made of the reliving of the Moses story, although the author eschews the term 'midrashic' for Matthew 1–2. However, if Moses has to foreshadow Jesus, then he cannot