

in Korea and the East Asian region – as we move between feminist theory, media studies, and more. This, I guess, is the nature of many edited volumes, but I for one would have preferred a greater consistency between authors in their approaches and subjects.

**Keith Howard**

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GENERAL

NINIAN SMART:

*World Philosophies*. (2nd edition. Edited by OLIVER LEAMAN.)

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This second edition of Ninian Smart's 1999 original is a welcome revision of a valuable work. In sixteen chapters Smart's survey embraces South and East Asian, Greek and Roman thought, Islamic, Jewish and European philosophies and North and Latin American contributions. The final four chapters focus on modern times, including African philosophies. In his 1999 Preface Smart wrote: "Mine is a guide to intellectual thought from all parts of the world. I have limited its scope up to shortly after World War II, say the 1960s, and chiefly to the dead. This is partly because of limitations of my own knowledge and because of the desire for my descriptions to be confined to complete philosophers, namely dead ones. This has generally led to the underplaying of some recent movements, including feminism, environmentalism and postmodernism. It has led to the neglect of otherwise excellent philosophers, such as my brother". Oliver Leaman's intention as editor of the second edition is unobtrusively "to tweak [Smart's] material to bring it more up to date and in line with current research in the many areas that he discussed". Accordingly, in this edition some additional sections have been added and minor revisions made, sometimes without it being obvious that a hand other than Smart's is at work. This is still a book that, for the most part, admirers of Smart's lucid style can relax into. The work takes an admirably broad view of "philosophy" and "philosophers", with the minimum criterion being some kind of systematic expression of a world-view (hence the Buddha with his lists makes the cut, while Jesus the mysterious storyteller and healer does not). In his opening chapter, quite ambitiously titled "The history of the world and our intellectual inheritance" Smart sketches eight "human types" of philosopher. These are: sage, spiritual analyst, super-scientist, metaphysician, sceptic, logician and adviser, as well as the modern professional philosopher. This latter, Smart observes, "is in danger of becoming tamed by the very institutions that have begotten him [*sic*]. The image of suit and briefcase flit through the mind, and hours completed at the knowledge-plant from nine to five". The tasks undertaken by philosophers of these various sorts across the world and throughout history include analysis, systematic instruction, worldview construction, questioning (from curiosity or scepticism), and offering political and ethical advice. Smart notes that globalization encourages such systematic representations of world-views (and university courses on them), where previously local and idiosyncratic reflections prevailed.

As in his many other works, Smart offers novel perspectives and deftly entertaining asides as well as an unusual breadth and liberality of vision. Oft-neglected Latin American and Russian philosophers are included alongside familiar and less familiar Asian and European thinkers. If the various worldviews and historic currents of philosophy are indeed flowing into one river in a global age, then Smart's own works, this one included, must form an important tributary. Don Wiebe, whose brief introduction to the new edition is to the point, though it hardly lives up to the publisher's description of "a brand new introduction which celebrates the career and writing of Ninian Smart" writes that Smart's inclusive vision "expresses an enthusiastic idealism that is more characteristic of the mid-twentieth century than today" – and Wiebe finds this refreshing

Smart's global range and talent to amuse as well as edify makes this an easy yet stimulating read. The work of course has its limitations. With few exceptions it draws on the thoughts of men, so feminists and women receive scant attention, while coverage of postmodern philosophers such as Foucault and Derrida (of whom, curiously, there is no trace in the index) is cursory. In contrast is a rather wordy exegesis of the later Kyoto school (pp. 428 ff.), which seems well deserved.

The enterprise of comparative global philosophy is undoubtedly necessary to counter presuppositional parochialism, from whatever religio-philosophical direction, East, West, North or South. The book is aimed at the intelligent general reader and a revised bibliography with works published as recently as 2007 offers much scope for further study. Beyond this level, the comparative philosophical enterprise inevitably runs into the problem of language. Monoglot English-language readers can easily (in principle) delve ever more deeply into Pierce, Hume and Jevons but there are linguistic hurdles to jump before any advanced study of Ibn Khaldun, Isaac Luria or Tosaka Jun. Still, if this volume persuades a reader to take some more world philosophies seriously and to see philosophy as both a broadly conceived enterprise and a common human one, both the original author and the present editor would no doubt be pleased. Smart's vision of global mutual enrichment through the understanding and appreciation of world-views other than one's own shines through this volume. Confirmed dystopians may not find the will to synthesize to their taste, but I found the book unputdownable.

**Brian Bocking**