

real human freedom, albeit not in the sense of philosophical liberalism (that is, as freedom of choice), but rather in the sense of 'theological compatibilism' (*theologischer Kompatibilismus*), whereby human freedom is identical with obedience towards God.

Schüz divides her study of Barth's concept of faith in two parts. In part 1, 'The Motivation of Faith and Human Nature', she explains why Barth speaks of faith as a human impossibility (ch. 3), as an eccentric and christological reality (ch. 4) and as a free human act (ch. 5). In part 2, 'The Historical Realisation of Faith', Schüz turns to how God historically realises the covenant in faith, both Christ's own and that of human believers (ch. 6), to the relationship of justification and sanctification, or what Schüz terms the being and becoming of faith (ch. 7), and, finally, to the human aspect of faith, understood as acceptance (*Anerkennen*), recognition (*Erkennen*) and confession (*Bekennen*) (ch. 8). In her Conclusion (*Resümee*), 'Faith as Understanding between Eccentricity and Construction' (ch. 9), Schüz sums up her findings and locates Barth's theology as a *via media* between the hermeneutical and constructive-theological schools.

Schüz's impressive study is thorough and meticulous. It not only offers a helpful analysis of Barth's conception of faith, but also a good overview of his theology as a whole, and of the contemporary landscape of German systematic theology. As a German dissertation, which focuses on a rather specific issue in the interpretation of Barth (albeit one with wider implications), the book will be mainly of interest to Barth specialists. If there is a weakness in the book, it is the author's overly optimistic attempt to defend the master against any, every and all criticisms of his theology, no matter what the provenance. It is hard to imagine for this non-specialist in Barth that the large cloud of critics, all of whom have voiced similar concerns with regard to Barth's theology, have simply been wrong or unable to read him correctly. On this point, Schüz might have listened to the wisdom of one of Barth's interpreters, Wolfhart Pannenberg. In the first volume to his own *Systematic Theology* (ET: Eerdmans, 1991), Pannenberg reminds theologians that all theological proposals are subject to 'critical discussion', the aim of which, at its best, is 'to develop a better model which will be truer to the intentions of Christian teaching and more in keeping with the reality of the world, humanity, and history' (p. 60). In my view, Schüz would have made a stronger case for her interpretation of Barth, had she shown her readers a critical awareness of the limitations of all theology, even that of Barth.

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Douglas Farrow, *Theological Negotiations: Proposals in Soteriology and Anthropology*

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Douglas Farrow is Professor of Theology and Christian Thought at McGill University. In his latest book, *Theological Negotiations: Proposals in Soteriology and Anthropology*,

Farrow engages in sustained 'negotiations' around nature and grace as they appear in many sites, such as theology and philosophy, sacraments and atonement. Farrow's writing style is energetic and often polemical. In my view, the latter tendency clouds these negotiations, many of which appear staged to support Farrow's increasingly rigid moral and political arguments.

Farrow's first essay, 'Theology and Philosophy: Recovering the *Pax Thomistica*', lays the groundwork for much of what will be argued in subsequent chapters. Farrow sets up a conversation between Kant, Barth and Thomas Aquinas on what can be known by means of reason. Farrow sides with Aquinas and critiques Barth for his failure to recognise the gratuity that inheres in nature and the concomitant possibility for knowledge of God through God's creative acts. Were this critique and the Thomistic modification left here, there would be little to find objectionable. However, Farrow goes on to introduce a genealogy to Barth's error, and it is one that he will make use of throughout the book as he lumps together various theological and social positions across centuries that he does not like. Farrow locates in Barth a heresy deriving from nominalism (p. 23) and argues that Barth relegates reason outside the sphere of theology to the degree that philosophy can serve no other purpose than as an occasional pursuit. According to Farrow, Barth's project represents a 'theological totalism' (p. 23). Farrow's own conceptualisation of the relationship between theology and philosophy is supposedly much more irenic, drawing from Aquinas a view of the relationship as a 'cooperative and peaceful cohabitation, as a respected border' (p. 27). When Farrow enumerates the kind of philosophy that exists at the border of theology, he avers that such a philosophy must necessarily be 'the pursuit of clarity about ourselves, our world, and our place in it, for the sake of the good life' (p. 28).

According to Farrow philosophy and theology are to be done within a commonwealth of 'angels ascending and descending' (p. 32), united in faith as in reason. At this point, one might ask the question that both Kant and Barth suggest: what of the *critical* natures of philosophy and theology? In profoundly different manners, Kant and Barth both alert us to the reality of human error, particularly human arrogance, and how our metaphysical projects have about them invariably an aspect of hubris. Indeed, Barth particularly enjoins us to consider dialectically the 'strange new world' of the Bible and its distance from human conceptions and programmes for the good life.

For Farrow, the institution of the church and the capacity for human reason are chastened to be sure by christology, yet where this chastening occurs is all too predictable. It lands squarely on those sites where Farrow avers that autonomy – the 'treacherous' (p. 195) descendant of nominalism – reigns supreme: abortion, euthanasia, same-sex marriage and transgender rights. 'The autonomy principle acts like an acid to dissolve what remains of the moral and cultural fabric of Christianity' (p. 188). At this point, one wonders what is driving Farrow's theological negotiations. Is it his theological vision of the good life or is it his trenchant animus toward liberalism?

Farrow offers more clues about what else does not belong to commonwealth of the elect, including Islam 'that great falsification of biblical religion' (p. 248). Yet who manages to escape Farrow's winnowing fork? According to the concluding chapter, 'The Gift of Fear', it is those who *fear* God appropriately:

Do we fear being charged with the fear of homosexual man or woman? Certainly we fear being charged with the fear of God! Not surprisingly we have begun to fear even the terms 'man' or 'woman' lest we charged with 'cisnormativity'. The

eclipse of the sense of God leads, as it must, to the eclipse of the sense of man. Or again: we fear the pains of death; that is we require euthanasia regimes ... We do not fear the pains of hell ... (p. 256)

Those who fear God, in other words, are emboldened not to fear political correctness, or the suffering of LGBTQ folk, or the agony of the dying. Their fear is rooted squarely in fear of God and the threat of divine judgement that such a God wields. As for me, I fear the renewed confidence and proliferation of such theological negotiations and I fear the earthly judgement that inspires them.

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Jörg Frey, *Theology and History in the Fourth Gospel: Tradition and Narration*

(Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2018), pp. xiii + 241. \$39.95.

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The Fourth Gospel has long been viewed as an enigma, a ‘maverick’ (as R. Kysar called it in 1976), in terms of its relationship to the Synoptics, the question of its sources and especially because of its high christology over against the Synoptics. In his new book (a revised and expanded version of his Shaffer Lectures at Yale in 2018), Jörg Frey, arguably the leading Johannine scholar today, provides a fresh and significant response to these unresolved issues. The book argues that John is neither concerned with an ‘accurate’ historical depiction of Jesus nor uninterested in the Jesus of history. Rather, the uniqueness of John is found in its ‘fusing’ (cf. Gadamer) of the post-Easter concerns of the Johannine communities and a ‘truthful’, Spirit inspired, reimagining and renarration of the foundational Jesus story. The fundamental conclusion is that John is primarily a theological narrative, a ‘spiritual Gospel’ in which the Jesus story has been reshaped by the evangelist, under the leading of the Spirit, for the needs of his readers.

The first chapter, ‘Christology as Theology’, investigates how John’s narrative depiction of Jesus bridges the gap between the story of the Jesus of history and the Johannine communities. John’s unique portrayal of Jesus as divine (e.g. 1:1; 1:14, 18; 8:58; 10:30; 20:28) and his crucifixion as his glorification/enthronement, to name a few unique aspects, are not to be explained by the Johannine community’s estrangement from the synagogue(s) or the community’s ‘sectarian’ distancing from other Christian communities. Rather, John’s sustained focus on christology developed out of a more ‘open discussion with other early Christian views’, that is, the ‘mainstream of the gospel tradition and especially the Gospel of Mark’ (p. 55).

The question of chapter 2, ‘The Quest for the Jesus of History’, is whether John can be characterised as ‘history’ or ‘theology’. Or is the Gospel somehow history *and* theology, in line with J. L. Martyn’s *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (1968)? Frey’s answer is that the Fourth Gospel is primarily *theology*, although the