

was an idiot, it did not mean Christianity was untrue. Nevertheless, the alleged corruption within the institution, and the very public court cases over property and position, do undermine the credibility of the Church, and hence the Gospel in Indian eyes. Muthuraj draws the reader back to Jesus' prayer: 'that they may all be one' (Jn 17.21). Without this emphasis on unity, there may be a splintering of the Church in India akin to that in Western Europe at the time of the Reformation, and both its ecumenical nature and its apostolic witness may be lost. Strangely, although about a fifth of the book is dedicated to the bishops' attitudes to caste, from Bishop Middleton (1814–21) onwards, Muthuraj does not then apply these insights to the present situation in the CSI episcopate with sufficient depth, nor analyse the reasons why groups marginalized in Hindu society should behave in this way.

There is a third volume to be written, on the role of 'Bishop Amma', the important work of bishops' wives, from Amelia Heber, a great ambassador for the Christian faith in Calcutta in the 1820s, to Mrs Doraiswamy and Mrs Clara Clarke in the 1980s and 1990s building up the Women's Fellowship. To this might be added the work of the redoubtable sister of Bishop Gell in raising money for and directing women's literacy projects for more than thirty years. Generally it is to be regretted that women's voices are so little heard in this work. It is also surprising that there is no mention of the Revd John Devasahayam (1786–1864), first Indian Anglican priest in South India, who became a CMS district missionary in Tirunelveli in 1846 and was regarded by his missionary colleagues as having equivalent responsibilities to a bishop, or his son-in-law, Revd W.T. Sathianadhan (1829–92) who was expected to be consecrated Bishop in Tirunelveli in 1878 but was debarred partly because of colonial racism and partly because he would not make his wife give up her ministry in Chennai. It is important for the theological issues raised by Muthuraj in this excellent work to be addressed – and soon.

*Dr Eleanor Jackson*

*Radstock, UK and formerly tutor at Tamilnadu Theological Seminary*

*Madurai, South India*

Paul Kwong, *Identity in Community: Towards a Theological Agenda for the Hong Kong SAR* (Contactzone: Explorations in Intercultural Theology, 9; Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2011), pp. 270. ISBN: 978-3-643-90078-4.  
doi:10.1017/S1740355311000210

The admirable volumes in the 'Explorations in Intercultural Theology' series seek to explore postcolonial discourse, and the places where religion and cultures meet. Rooted in the idea that cultural-religious exchange and conflict are determined by power-relations, the volumes in this series pay close attention to theories of communication, hermeneutics and cultural theory, and explore arenas such as ethnicity, fundamentalism, syncretism, class, race and gender. The interdisciplinary approach adopted in the series makes this one of the more refreshing and cutting-edge publishing enterprises in recent years.

In *Identity and Community*, Paul Kwong – the Anglican Archbishop of Hong Kong – has made a timely and impressive contribution to this series, and one with

much depth and stature that illuminates the hybridity and diversity emerging in Hong Kong, which forms the basis for his study. Developing the idea of identity and community as a hermeneutical portal for exploring the theological and missiological agenda of Christians in Hong Kong, Kwong's thesis analyses the diverse perspectives on the territory's recent history, comparing the methodological approaches of indigenous theologians with contextual theologies from other parts of the world. He argues that the abundance of cultural and religious identities in this Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China – which overlap and occasionally collide – is a likely source of empowerment and richness, rather than a problem. Indeed, in embracing otherness and diversity, the Christian community is faced with more of an opportunity than a problem. The key is wisdom and discernment – knowing how to affirm the diversity, and without making premature choices that foreclose on other, better options that may emerge later.

Kwong's book is unusual on several fronts. Most doctoral dissertations do not make for good books, but this is a welcome exception to the rule: it has a clarity and consistency that will be of great help to all those trying to understand the complexity of how Christianity is emerging in modern Chinese cultures. The volume is also welcome in other respects. The interdisciplinary approach adopted by Kwong marks a welcome break from the usual and rather dry approaches to missiology in this context, and in this sense, we are offered a mature and fleshed out postcolonial vantage point from which to assess the issues. That said, the historical treatment is refreshing, and being written by an 'insider', has an authentic and insightful feel that other scholars approaching the subject might struggle to emulate. The volume also engages with a rich repertoire of postmodern methods and insights, but without ever collapsing into unnecessary relativism. Kwong writes with conviction, but without this occluding the scholarly enterprise that is undertaken in this important and timely work of contextual theology and missiology.

The book is divided into three parts, each with three chapters. The first two chapters cover the challenges to British Hong Kong (1984–87) in the run-up to handover back to China, and then the crises in Hong Kong from 1997 to 2002 – essentially the struggles for the essential nature of the SAR in relation to China. Chapter 3 examines the changing strategies of Chinese government policy, and the relatively rapid (though historically grounded) rise of Hong Kong identity. The second part of the thesis then returns to questions of British identity in Hong Kong for Christians and Anglicans (1842–1982), and the transitional period (1982–97), before the churches began to emerge with a more concrete, independent and postcolonial identity after 1997. In some respects, this is one of the richest parts of the thesis. Anyone wanting to understand how the Anglican Church has developed in Hong Kong in the postcolonial era – a strong, self-confident and distinctive body that holds a unique place within China, and is also at the same time playing an increasingly important and vital role in the wider Anglican Communion at many levels – would be wise to engage with this section. Kwong manages to present this material with composure and deftness, reflecting the same delicate nuance of the subject discussed.

The third part of the thesis opens up the agenda raised by the exploration, as well as issues of methodology and theological reflection. Kwong fruitfully engages in

dialogue with relevant and key theological methods (Liberationist, pastoral cycle, multi- and interdisciplinary approaches, Minjung, etc.), which in turn affords the opportunity to reflect on identifying the emerging Hong Kong theological agenda facing the SAR. The final chapter, and the conclusion, return to questions of identity explored in the introduction, which established that the abundance of cultural and religious identities in this – which overlap, and occasionally collide – are a likely source of empowerment and richness, rather than a problem. In welcoming the diversity and richness of Hong Kong identity, the Church – and perhaps especially the Anglican Church – has a real opportunity to model a praxis that is not only ideally suited for its local context, but also suitable for replication globally. Indeed, there is some sense in which Hong Kong is a torch-bearer for the possibilities and potential for postcolonial and multicultural ecclesial praxis. Kwong writes:

I have argued that sharing God's loving and embracing presence draws us of necessity into the building up of a sustainable community where all can have different identities but be able to live together in harmony. This has been our experience in Hong Kong and we hope and pray that it can become our experience in the Communion as a whole. (p. 236)

This is an exemplary book, and well worth patient and detailed exploration. Although some may perhaps ask 'what has Hong Kong to do with us?', this book offers a deep, nuanced and careful answer to such a question. The future for global Christianity – of whatever denominational hue – will increasingly have to be worked out in the face of many context-specific Christ-Culture-Church debates. Any church that has engaged with such questions – of enculturation, praxis and postcolonialism, for example – and done so deeply, and well, will have important ideas and rich resources for those churches that have yet to begin this complex journey of discovery and discernment. Kwong's book shows that Hong Kong Anglicans – with their rich and complex colonial legacy, abundant multiculturalism, and their relation to China as an SAR – are further down this road of discernment than many other places. As such, the Anglican Church of Hong Kong, although the newest Province of the Anglican Communion, is ironically better-placed to take a leading role in the formation of a shared, robust and missiologically rich ecclesial polity for the wider Communion.

As Kwong shows, this has been done through the careful, considered and wise processing of the past; engaging richly and deeply with the present; and cultivating and forming theological resources and strategies for the future. The great question before the churches – indeed all humanity – that faces us now, and will face us in the future, is 'how shall we live?' This important book answers that question for Hong Kong, and, I suspect, provides some vital clues for the other Anglican Provinces throughout the Communion facing the very same question. Kwong concludes:

We are a tradition that speaks of the *via media*. The *via media* enables us to be comprehensive, to practice tolerance and exercise restraint. In Chinese culture we like to talk about harmony and the middle way. By approaching our relationships within the Anglican Communion as somehow involving a search for identity in community, a search in which different identities are coming into conflict, overlapping and

evolving, we may be able to better understand who we are as churches in our contexts and who we can become together. (p. 236)

Martyn Percy  
Cuddesdon, Oxford, UK

Alan P.F. Sell, *Four Philosophical Anglicans: W.G. De Burgh, W.R. Matthews, O.C. Quick, H.A. Hodges* (Farnham, UK and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), pp. x+327. ISBN 978 1 4094 0059 2.

doi:10.1017/S1740355311000246

This impressive book examines the works of four Anglican philosophers, once eminent but now largely forgotten. Alan Sell dedicates a section of the book to each, setting out the major themes of their research, before offering some broad but illuminating comparisons.

In each case, Sell begins by telling us a little of their lives. William George de Burgh (1866–1943) was the first Professor of Philosophy at the newly founded University of Reading. Walter Robert Matthews (1881–1973) studied and taught at King's College London, leaving to become Dean of Exeter and later St Paul's. Oliver Chase Quick (1885–1944) ended his career as Regius Professor of Divinity and Canon of Christ Church, Oxford. Herbert Arthur Hodges (1905–76), who completes the set, replaced de Burgh at Reading at the extremely young age of 29, and retained the chair until his retirement. For all that these figures differ in philosophical outlook, methodology and churchmanship, the insights of the four are strikingly relevant to contemporary discussions.

The author of *The Legacy of the Ancient World*, de Burgh was deeply influenced by the classics and used ideas from ancient Greek philosophy to address modern philosophical problems. He was concerned that a focus on the scientific method left little room for the 'moral-cum-spiritual dimension' (p. 22). His main target was the logical positivists, who had missed the Aristotelian point that 'the human being's end is not simply to live, but to live well' (p. 26). This is particularly pertinent today, given that many logical positivist assumptions prevail in the work of the 'New Atheists'. De Burgh held Descartes largely responsible for our excessively narrow concept of reason, and is strongly dismissive of Spinoza, but he also criticizes Thomas Aquinas's distinction between the theologian (who begins with revelation) and the philosopher (who begins with the creaturely). In his own work, unlike many analytic philosophers today, he refused to separate the two, incorporating theology and apologetics into his philosophical work.

Matthews was also interested in the relationship between philosophy and science, and expressed the rather premature hope that their mutual antagonism was coming to an end. Like de Burgh, he was not opposed to science, but believed that its method of 'analysis, simplification and abstraction' gives us an incomplete picture (p. 88). Sell notes three other important themes in Matthews' work. First, there is a strong focus on the experiential basis of religion, which draws on both Schleiermacher and Otto. Second, Matthews drew on psychology and was a member of the Society for Psychical Research. Third, he was concerned with apologetics, and linked waning interest in Scripture to the decline of the 'metaphysical impulse: the