

penal substitution model while touting Barth's narrative, nontheoretic treatment of the theme.

Rutledge's erudite and insightful ruminations come into focus around a message of justification, understood as God's powerful, purely gracious action to rectify the human condition, an action that extends into the gift of faith. At various points she raises speculative questions—whether God is immutable, whether hell is eternal, whether annihilation is the fate of some—that may indicate the limits of the dialectical imagination to which she so skillfully appeals.

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Lyotard and Theology. By Lieven Boeve. London and New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014. 162 pages. \$78.00.

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Lyotard and Theology presents a persuasive argument for the unparalleled significance of Jean-François Lyotard's thought in "recontextualizing" theology. This is the first effort of this kind to introduce Lyotard in a theological fashion, and the argument is made brilliantly by Lieven Boeve, who has truly fathomed the depths of Lyotard's writings.

The book is a well-intentioned endeavor to make Christian faith and theology relevant in the post-metaphysical, detraditionalized, and secular context of western Europe. The author explores the question of whether or not Lyotard's philosophy of difference and the differend, while posing a radical criticism of and incredulity toward the Christian master narrative, can nevertheless offer any hopeful possibilities for theological engagement. Through a critical investigation of Lyotardian literature, Boeve eloquently shows that Lyotard's emphasis on "heterogeneity" challenges Christianity to redefine itself by retelling the story of love as an open, nonhegemonic narrative. Boeve takes to heart Lyotard's criticism and identifies its inherent potential for providing theology a structural framework to present the Christian narrative as an open narrative and rethink theology in terms of recontextualization, evading the temptation of being a self-enclosed master narrative. Thus, Boeve tactfully turns Lyotard's "verdict" on Christianity into a promising possibility for theology.

The author's innovation involves representing Lyotard as a deconstructionist who has made a shift to religion in his thinking. He cements the rationale of this methodological move to reclaim the "sublime" as a resource for theology by rejecting Saskia Wendel's Kantian reading of Lyotard. Thus, having built his theological stance, he defends philosophy's role of helping

faith to place itself in a broader anthropological and epistemological context. Boeve, then, explores the problematics of thinking sacramentality in a postmodern context. He critiques post-Vatican II sacramental theology as being captivated by a too premodern, “neo-Platonically structured ontotheological premise” in representing the relationship between the cosmic and divine transcendence. In this regard, Lyotard does the double task of offering both a critical consciousness that theology can take up, which challenges its traditional methodology to help it reevaluate its own presuppositions, as well as a salutary corrective helping sacramentology recontextualize itself in the postmodern milieu.

As such, the book’s argument is not entirely original. However, by a systematic treatment of the themes in some of his earlier publications, Boeve coherently builds on the “interruptive character” of history and God and reconceptualizes sacramentality as God’s breaking into (interruption of) particularity and contingency in time (*kairos*), contrary to the classical premodern scheme where the sacramental encounter is represented in the scheme of metaphysics. In this regard, Boeve considers Johann Baptist Metz as a theologian of interruption ascribing full validity to the particularity and historical experience of suffering as exemplified in Auschwitz, despite Boeve’s critique of Metz’ apocalyptic accent that ultimately made his cry for solidarity less sensitive to the present moment. Boeve also expresses strong resentment against Metz for incorrectly blaming postmodern thinkers like Lyotard and Derrida for promoting postmodernity as a philosophy of amnesia that relegated the anamnesis of Christian faith to oblivion. Can Boeve’s reconstruction of sacramentality as the interruption of God into the particularity and contingency of the present moment be viewed as an antidote to an increasing lethargy toward religion and the menace of violence threatening the world very often in the name of God? While the readers are invited to share his optimism, the validity of his claim needs to be proven.

Finally, by reading Lyotard theologically, Boeve wants to assign him a rightful place in deconstruction and theology, and rethink the usual rejection of Lyotard as a potentially useful theological resource. The direction Boeve has taken must be judged as valid and can even be viewed as another instance of the “theological turn” in phenomenology, which in Boeve’s case is being motivated by his eagerness to develop adequate philosophical idioms for recontextualizing the Christian message feasibly in a postmodern context. The book, as Anthony J. Godzieba has noted, posits itself in the “grand tradition of Irenaeus, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Rahner, and Schillebeeckx” as excellent evidence of theology’s insatiable search for *understanding*.

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