

metaphysical principle? Why exactly was Barth's famous animus towards the analogy of being, which at one point in his life he considered the greatest obstacle to Catholicism, misplaced? Provocative and unfamiliar theological principles deserve careful dialectical treatment and their power can be obscured if articulated in an unduly declarative way.

At certain points the text might have benefited from a more ruthless editorial scalpel, bearing as it does some of the marks of the doctoral dissertation from which it emerged, especially in its slightly repetitious structural signposting and an overly cautious attitude of deference towards the major figures it engages that occasionally obscures the bold and imaginative constructive contributions the author seeks to advance. The author's search for an innovative nomenclature occasionally issues in clunky formulations that may puzzle uninitiated readers, as when in the introduction he labels Przywara's foundational contribution a 'pleromatic analogical hermeneutic of non-identical repetition', or proposes to advance an 'analogical-apocalyptic metaphysics'.

Such cavils as these notwithstanding, there can be little doubt that Gonzales has produced a clarifying and often profoundly stimulating guide to Przywara's thought. The only English-language monograph of its subject to appear for many years, it will be essential reading for anyone with an interest in the many and various contentious ways in which analogy is deployed in modern theology.

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Juliane Schüz, *Glaube in Karl Barths Kirchlicher Dogmatik: Die anthropologische Gestalt des Glaubens zwischen Exzentrizität und Deutung*

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Steffen Lösel

Emory University, Atlanta, GA, USA (steffen.loesel@emory.edu)

It is a truism to say that Karl Barth's theological oeuvre is as long as it is complex. Much of twentieth-century theology, Protestant and Catholic alike, defined itself over against this theological giant. From the very beginning of Barth's theological career, with the first edition of his commentary on *The Epistle of the Romans* in 1919, the Swiss theologian has been at the center of much controversy. His early prominence on the theological scene resulted not least from his uncompromising attacks on what he perceived as the shortcomings of the nineteenth-century school of liberal theology in the wake of Friedrich Schleiermacher, including its most prominent representative in the early twentieth century, Adolf von Harnack. Later, Barth engaged no less ferociously in debates with his one-time allies of the dialectical theology movement. Against Emil Brunner's attempt to find a connection point (*Anknüpfungspunkt*) for revelation in natural theology, Barth uttered his famous 'Nein!' When Rudolf Bultmann ventured into his dual programme of demythologisation and existential interpretation, Barth made a no less notorious 'attempt to understand him' (in *Rudolf Bultmann: Ein Versuch ihn zu verstehen*). And to Catholic theologian Erich Przywara's defence

of the analogy of being, Barth polemically responded by likening the notion to ‘the invention of the Antichrist’!

If Barth developed his theology over against that of others, many theologians alongside and after Barth have defined themselves no less critically over against his own work: from early sympathetic critics, such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer, to the next several generations of theologians on both sides of the Atlantic, including Hans Urs von Balthasar, Jürgen Moltmann, Wolfhart Pannenberg, Eberhard Jüngel, James H. Cone, Dorothee Sölle and Stanley Hauerwas, to name just a few well-known figures. While their criticisms of Barth’s theology vary, two concerns emerge most prominently: that the representational christocentrism of Barth’s theological proposal from above leads to a positivistic understanding of revelation (*Offenbarungspositivismus*) and to a theological totalitarianism, which, by turning Jesus Christ – in Bonhoeffer’s famous words – into the believer’s ‘heavenly doppelgänger’ (*himmlischer Doppelgänger*), undermines human freedom, independence and historicity.

In this new book – originally a dissertation submitted at the University of Mainz under the guidance of noted Barth scholar Professor Christiane Tietz – Juliane Schüz has undertaken the ambitious task of offering a full-blown defence of the great master against his theological critics, old and new, near and far, sympathetic and less so. Thematically, Schüz’s work focuses on the anthropological concept of faith in Barth’s *Church Dogmatics*, which generations of scholars have suspected to be underdeveloped, both in terms of its substance and function. Schüz, however, ventures to demonstrate (in the mathematical sense of *quod erat demonstrandum*) that Barth develops a consistent and perfectly defensible notion of faith ‘in a manner, which is specific for his theology’ (p. 6). Further, Schüz wants to make this notion fruitful for the contemporary (German) theological debates between hermeneutical theology, on the one hand, and constructive theology (what she calls a ‘deutungstheoretische Ansatz’), on the other.

The subtitle of the book indicates how Schüz attempts to achieve her objective, namely, by employing a key term of each school, ‘eccentricity’ (*Exzentrizität*) and ‘construction’ (*Deutung*), as guiding principles for understanding Barth’s conception of faith. According to Schüz’s reading of Barth, believers are ‘eccentrically grounded in Jesus Christ’, the quintessential human being, real covenantal partner of God and only perfect believer. In Christ, each human being is reconciled to God, *extra me sine me* (outside of me, without me). For Barth, believers perceive their eccentric existence in Christ (only) through their faith, a human response to God’s revelation. Even though faith is caused by God and functions as a merely receptive ‘hollow space’ (*Hohlraum*) to be filled by Christ, it is also a human, subjective, penultimate and non-eschatological act, which involves, as Schüz avers (here terminologically going beyond Barth), a degree of human construction (*Deutung*).

The author suggests that Barth’s concept of faith, if only properly understood, avoids the various pitfalls which his critics have diagnosed in his theology. Although faith is God’s work in believers, it is also a necessary human, cognitive action, which turns humanity’s ontological reality into an ontic one in the historical lives of the believers and thus accomplishes a ‘historical realisation of God’s work in Christ’ (p. 28). Through faith, believers accept (*anerkennen*), recognise (*erkennen*) and publicly confess (*bekennen*) to church and world what God has done on their behalf. This process leads them to understand themselves in a new way (Schüz calls this a ‘Verstehenswende’ on p. 38) and to live their lives ‘in correspondence with the christological new creation’ (p. 28). They become an ‘image’ (*Abbild*), ‘analogy’ (*Analogie*) or ‘parrhesia’ (*Parrhesie*) of God’s work in them (p. 28). Although caused by Christ, faith involves

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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Jane Barter

University of Winnipeg, Winnipeg, Canada (j.barter@uwinnipeg.ca)

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