ANDREWS UNIVERSITY SEMINARY STUDIES

CONTENTS

BOOK REVIEWS

The articles in this journal are indexed, abstracted, or listed in: *Elenchus of Biblica; Internationale Zeitschriftenschau für Bibelwissenschaft und Grenzgebiete; New Testament Abstracts; Index Theologicus/Zeitschrifteninhaltsdienst Theologie; Old Testament Abstracts; Orientalistische Literaturzeitung; Religion Index One, Periodicals; Religious and Theological Abstracts; Seventh-day Adventist Periodical Index; Theologische Zeitschrift; Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft.*

EDITORIAL

From its inception in 1963, *Andrews University Seminary Studies (AUSS)* has intentionally kept editorial comment to a minimum. Our articles speak for themselves as part of the conversations that are taking place within the academy. Our intermittent editorials are limited to presenting the purpose and goals of the journal; introducing special issues, such as this one; making staffing introductions and goodbyes; and discussing mechanics of publishing and distribution.

The editorial in the first issue of *AUSS* introduced our journal as cosmopolitan in character, welcoming "suitable contributions of a distinctly scholarly nature not only from Seminary faculty and students but also from alumni and scholars around the world regardless of color or creed." As such, the *AUSS* editorial team continues to seek academic conversations in the pursuit of truth rather than apologetics or polemics.

In this current special issue on hermeneutics we are now able to publish a number of articles that engage matters that should be of interest to all interpreters of Scripture. Of course, it is not possible to adequately address so large a subject as hermeneutics through the publication of a few articles. Therefore, this is simply one scholarly exchange in a wider ongoing discussion, and it is likely that we will publish other articles on hermeneutics in the near future.

We anticipate that the following four articles on hermeneutics will inform and challenge you. Separate articles, one by Boubakar Sanou and the other by Wagner Kuhn and Esther Happuch, discuss hermeneutics from the perspective of biblical and contemporary mission studies. Erik C. Carter's article on hermeneutics and practical theology complements these mission studies. In another article, Ante Jerončić provides a philosophical perspective on hermeneutics through dialogue with Michael Foucault.

In harmony with the vision expressed in our first editorial mentioned above, this issue of our journal also includes several abstracts for dissertations recently completed by students at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University and reviews on significant and recently published books. You may have noticed that, starting with this year's volume 56, we have "revived" the publication of book notices in *AUSS*. The purpose of these notices is to inform you about the most recently published books that we have received and to pique your interest in possibly reviewing one of them for the journal. If you are so inclined, you can send your book review request to our Book Review Manager, Dominic Bornand. You may also be interested in the details of our most recent call for papers on the subject of Ecclesiology which is presented on the inside back cover of the journal.

Students play important roles on our journal staff in fulfilling its purpose. Rebecca Murdock, our recent Circulation Manager, has transitioned from student to professional and has moved to Colorado. We thank her for her excellent work and her buoyant use of team skills while she was on staff here. We are happy that she can continue in service to the journal as an offsite copy

editor. Joining our staff are Danielle M. Barnard, as Office Assistant; Lincoln Nogueira, as Circulation Manager; and Natalie Dorland, in the new role of Public Relations & Marketing Manager. We welcome these new members of our team and have already appreciated their competence, energy, and insights.

This is the last issue to benefit from the skills of Matthew L. Tinkham Jr., our Editorial Assistant. He is returning to pastoring, while completing his PhD in Theological Studies. Matthew played a crucial role in implementing our large step forward to Digital Commons as host for our web interactions with authors, referees, and subscribers. He was also instrumental in compiling the updated writer's guidelines. We thank Matthew for his diligence and commitment to *AUSS* these last three years. As Editorial Assistant, starting Spring 2019, we welcome Sandra Stebenne, who brings editorial skills with a considerable passion for excellence in language as well as biblical and theological research training. She is being instructed on the software side of our publishing by Matthew.

We have a recent change in our shipping procedure to which we'd like to draw your attention. International shipping has long been the largest expense in printing and distributing *AUSS*, but in 2018, this expense has more than doubled. Whereas in 1963 it was possible to print and distribute the first issue for USD 2.50, the cost of shipping a single issue internationally has risen above USD 22.00. In an attempt to avoid raising subscription prices, we propose (starting in 2019 with volume 57) to regularly ship the journal to our international subscribers one volume at a time, rather than one issue at a time. In other words, we propose shipping internationally once a year instead of twice a year. In cases where this might cause difficulties, we may consider the possibility of, upon special request, continuing to ship individual issues for international subscribers, but this would require a steep additional charge.

Finally, we want to again express our appreciation for your ongoing support of *AUSS* through your continued subscribing and reading. It is your investment in the journal that keeps us working so hard to provide you with cutting-edge research for your personal and professional enrichment.

MFH and *JWR*

THE HERMENEUTICAL PROMISE OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

Erik C. Carter
Loma Linda University

Abstract

This article proposes that, of all the disciplines and methods employed in faith's pursuit of understanding, the practical theologian is especially equipped to help overcome a long hermeneutical tradition of separating theory and practice in Christian theology. In order to make this case, I will first explicate the dynamics of dichotomies in the academy and church. Second, I will locate the centrality of practice and its relevance for what it means to do theology today. This sets the stage for a discussion of the field of practical theology with its interdisciplinary and collaborative approach to the hermeneutics of lived religion. Although practical theology does not exercise proprietary control over how the issues of dichotomies are tackled in this essay, what sets this theological discipline apart is the object of study, the variety of sources drawn upon, and the method employed. I will conclude, therefore, by illustrating the methodological distinction as articulated by Richard Osmer's consensus equilibrium model with its four-fold tasks—the empirical, analytical, interpretive, and pragmatic tasks. This article provides a contribution to a specific theological hermeneutic that is notably absent within the theological guild.

Keywords: practical theology, theological methodology, practice, hermeneutics, theological education

Dichotomy and Integration in Academy and Church

According to Claire Wolfteich, ministerial students entering their academic programs are portrayed as intellectually curious, spiritually hungry, and driven with a real sense of calling.[1] However, when faced with the reality of academic demands and expectations, many students become so overwhelmed that they neglect prayer, family, friends, and even their own health. Further implications reveal a dichotomy between seminary curricula that also asks for integration of academic work and field studies, yet often provides no interpretative framework to do so. If this is what it means to "master divinity" then there is an obvious irony: the study of divinity leaves little time for God. As a result of an inability to manage this tension between the intellectual and

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[1]Claire E. Wolfteich, "Graceful Work: Practical Theological Study of Spirituality," *Hor* 27.1 (2000): 7.

the spiritual, and the theoretical and the practical, some aspiring ministers "find seminary halls graceless."[2]

Students, however, are only one side of the equation in theological education. Indeed, teachers constitute a crucial role as well, especially if students perceive them as the ones imposing what is experienced as a duplicitous curriculum. However, professors, especially non-tenured junior faculty, have their own challenges. Stephanie Paulsell paints a portrait of the contemporary teacher of religion who also faces a dichotomy, that of intellectual work and theological vocation. The "forces of commodification" in the academy often eclipse the passion for a particular subject matter that drives one to pursue a doctorate in religion in the first place, to the extent that specialized scholarship is experienced as incompatible with vocation.[3] Thus, "New faculty in theological schools can often feel confused, or even alienated, by the conversation about vocation, calling, and spiritual formation they encounter in their institutions."[4]

Discussions of this lived dichotomy in interpretative method extend beyond the university or seminary walls to that of the church as well. Succinctly put, there is a "sad gap between the academic pursuit of truth and the needs of contemporary spiritual seekers, inside and outside of the Christian churches."[5] Connecting academia and the church lies at the heart of another critique by L. Gregory Jones: "Preparation of men and women for ordained Christian ministry in most North American denominations has relied on a presumed division of labor."[6] Through the use of a working metaphor, Jones elaborates by describing theological education as a relay-race. Initial formation of future leaders, in terms of beliefs and practices, begins in the church. The church then passes the future leader on to a seminary, which, after deconstructing what was previously learned and experienced, along with teaching "practical pastoral skills," sends many graduates back into a local church setting. According to Jones, the problem rests in an increasing awareness that the respective educational partners are not running their leg of the race very well.

The philosophical underpinnings for this hermeneutical dichotomy, experienced both by students and teachers in the academy, as well as the church, are articulated by David Tracy. While others like Ellen T. Charry acknowledge the dawn of modernity as a dividing line in the way Christians think about theology in general,[7] Tracy more precisely speaks of three great

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[2]Ibid.

[3]Stephanie Paulsell, "Spiritual Formation and Intellectual Work in Theological Education," *ThTo* 55.2 (1998): 230.

[4]Ibid., 231.

[5]Wolfteich, "Graceful Work," 8.

[6]L. Gregory Jones, "Beliefs, Desires, Practices, and the End of Theological Education," in *Practicing Theology: Beliefs and Practices in Christian Life*, ed. Mirsoslav Volf and Dorothy C. Bass (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 185.

[7]Ellen T. Charry, "Educating for Wisdom: Theological Studies as a Spiritual

separations in modern Western culture.[8] These separations in modern thinking have not only affected our ability to think theologically but have also damaged our ability to reflect on clergy training. These include: (1) the separation of feeling and thought; (2) the separation of form and content; and (3) the separation of theory and practice. All three are related to one another and therefore address a pressing need for integration and wholeness. While much can be said about all three, the great separation of theory and practice is the primary concern of this essay and shall be dealt with more fully below.

Hence, there is a desperate need for integration and collaboration on all levels, including student and teacher, academy and church. Virtually all of the aforementioned scholars reach back to pre-modern sources as a guide for healing the fragmentation of all syntheses that modernity has bequeathed us. Tracy asserts how the ancients, medievals, and several of the scholastics all recognized, through their respective texts and schools, that the distinctions mentioned above must not be separated. In fact, they would have found such a separation not merely strange but self-destructive for true education. Furthermore, "Philosophy, as it is well known, was for the ancients, above all, a love of wisdom, an attempt at a unity of thought and a way of life."[9] Paulsell and Charry also call for a return to ancient sources, such as the Greek philosophers, the author of Proverbs, and medieval monastics as a guide for integration. Such integration will require intentionality to discover formative practices of reading, writing, teaching, and research—the *telos* of such an approach to academic work being spiritually formative.[10]

One of the ancient sources drawn heavily upon to support a spiritually sensitive hermeneutic is Augustine of Hippo, though framed in slightly different contexts. Charry asserts that Augustine understood "theology [as] a spiritual exercise, not a scientific discipline[,] undertaken for the sake of the care of souls beginning with himself."[11] Theology is to enable people to advance in the spiritual life—to know, love, and enjoy God better—to enable wisdom.[12] In this regard, contemporary theological education has so drastically strayed from this norm that spiritual development has been relegated to its own respective field of study, and not considered part and parcel of the theological endeavor.[13] Similarly, Jones draws on Augustine's teaching of baptismal

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Exercise," *ThTo* 66.3 (2009): 296.

[8]David W. Tracy, "Traditions of Spiritual Practice and the Practice of Theology," *ThTo* 55.2 (1998): 235–241.

[9]Ibid., 238. See also Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1995).

[10]Paulsell, "Spiritual Formation," 232; Charry, "Educating for Wisdom," 298–301.

[11]Ibid., 296.

[12]Ibid.

[13]On this point, see Mark A. MacIntosh's brilliant study, *Mystical Theology: The Integrity of Spirituality and Theology* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1998).

catechesis as demonstrating one way to reunite dichotomous distinctions and thus provide a more integrative alternative to the relay-race model of clergy training. For Jones, Augustine's teaching of baptismal catechesis embodies "an exceptionally rich understanding of the interplay between beliefs, desires, and practices," which Augustine would understand as one. [14]Thus, the chief end of theological education is to cultivate "a love of learning and a desire for God," by modeling the ongoing interplay of these three elements.[15]

The need for integration represents a crucial healing factor for hermeneutics, but some scholars emphasize the necessity of interdisciplinary collaboration within the academy in the formation of future leaders. Although Serene Jones does not extract wisdom from the likes of Augustine, she stresses the importance of integration through her research, teaching, and the task of theological education as a whole. As a constructive systematic theologian, she insists that older models of applied theology, where theological concepts are merely "applied" into concrete situations, are not helpful. Instead, she opts for practical theology conceived in two modes—shared aspiration among all the disciplines and a distinct discipline—as the way forward.[16] Wolfteich concedes that even for the practical theologian, whose work is by definition interdisciplinary, it can be overwhelming to draw on multiple disciplines and methods in the study of even one subject, like spirituality. No one person can do it all. Nevertheless, there is a need for scholarly collaboration so that research projects do not become mere accretions and exercises in reinventing the wheel, but cumulative.[17] In the end, there is a growing consensus that all of the theological disciplines, including the so-called practical fields, must be made more fluid to serve the needs of the present situation.

Recovering the Centrality of Practice in Theological Hermeneutics

One of the key concepts in the effort to undo the long-standing methodological separation of belief and practice is reframing practice as a delineation of different aspects of human activity, not different domains. In other words, theory and practice share a recursive relationship—theorizing is a practice and practices constitute theorizing. Unlike Hans-Georg Gadamer's (1900–2002) development of *phronesis*, where practice is integral for establishing human understanding as necessarily practical, moral philosopher and practice theorist, Alasdair MacIntyre, viewed practice as even more foundational. According to Ted Smith, MacIntyre is "not so much trying to describe what it means for knowledge to be practical" as he is "using practice

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[14]Jones, "Theological Education," 193.

[15]Ibid., 203. This phrasing, which Jones does not cite in his essay, actually comes from Jean Leclercq's classic study, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture*, 3rd ed. (New York: Fordham University Press, 1982).

[16]Serene Jones, "Practical Theology in Two Modes," in *For Life Abundant: Practical Theology, Theological Education, and Christian Ministry*, ed. Dorothy C. Bass and Craig Dykstra (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 210.

[17]Wolfteich, "Graceful Work," 17.

to name a kind of institution that can ground knowledge and values."[18] Thus, for MacIntyre, practice is a "coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity" formed around the pursuit of "goods internal to that activity."[19] This form of neo-Aristotelean virtue ethics emphasizes how "practices pursue the good in a coherent, traditioned way."[20]

As influential as MacIntyre's explication of practices has been for Christian practical theologians, his perspective on practice must be placed within a larger cultural movement, contributing to a new attitude concerning hermeneutics. In *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory*, Theodore Schatzki locates "practices" as a major concept in current social thought. One of the reasons for its ubiquity across a large swath of disciplines, most notably in the natural, behavioral, and social sciences, is the impulse to move away from problematic dualisms in thinking, remnants of modernity.[21] The apparent genius of practices is that they underlie both subjects and objects. Closely linked to the opposition of dualistic thinking, another reason for the interest in practices is the hermeneutical turn in philosophy and the social sciences to the everyday life-world.[22] Regardless of the precise origin of the centrality of practices, a cursory survey of the field demonstrates the range of diversity and even conflict among practice theorists, both in terms of conceptions and research strategies. Yet, there are a number of ideas that unify the movement. Schatzki asserts how most conceive of practices, minimally, as arrays of embodied, human activity that occur within the field of practices.

Two elements of this statement figure prominently in Schatzki's analysis: embodiment and field of practices. Both of them have implications for hermeneutics. To say that human activity is *embodied* is to acknowledge that "the skilled body" is the "common meeting point of mind and activity and of individual activity and society."[23] Embodied practices thus dislodge the

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[18]Ted A. Smith, "Theories of Practice," in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*, Wiley Blackwell Companions to Religion 74, ed. Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 246. See also, Dorothy C. Bass, et al., *Christian Practical Wisdom: What It Is, Why It Matters* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016).

[19]Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008), 187.

[20]Dorothy C. Bass, "Introduction," in *Practicing Theology*, 6.

[21]Theodore R. Schatzki, Karin Knorr Cetina, and Eike von Savigny, eds., *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory* (London: Routledge, 2001).

[22]Other prominent practice theoreticians include: Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology 16 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977); Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, Bloomsbury Revelations (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013); Etienne Wenger, *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning, and Identity*, Learning in Doing: Social, Cognitive, and Computational Perspectives (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Jeffrey Stout, *Democracy and Tradition, New Forum Books* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

[23]Theodore R. Schatzki, "Introduction: Practice Theory," in *The Practice Turn*, 3.

mind as the sole phenomenon in human existence: "the source of meaning, the receptacle of knowledge and truth, the wellspring of activity, and the co- or sole constitutor of reality."[24] Embodiment also entails mediation and mutuality, as practices are materially "mediated by artifacts, hybrids, and natural objects," and are "centrally organized around shared practical understanding."[25] Another unifying idea, one which Schatzki refers to as the "linchpin of the practice approach," is the *field of practices*. As the meeting point of all interconnected human activity, the field of practices has become the place "to investigate such phenomena as agency, knowledge, language, ethics, power, and science."[26]

Despite these shared convictions among practice theoreticians, a unifying definition is elusive. Andreas Reckwitz comes close, however, by distinguishing practice theory as a conceptual alternative to other forms of cultural theory, which are based in structuralism, semiotics, phenomenology and hermeneutics, and Wittgensteinian language game philosophy. These other forms of cultural theories include cultural mentalism, textualism, and intersubjectivism, all of which "offer opposing locations of the social and conceptualize the 'smallest unit' of social theory differently: in minds, discourses, interactions and 'practices.'"[27] Thus, a practice is a "routinized way in which bodies are moved, objects are handled, subjects are treated, things are described and the world is understood."[28] Similar to Schatzki's proposal, Reckwitz places the human agent at the interpretive nexus of a constellation of crossings: the individual/social and the body/mind. The key to Reckwitz's definition is that a practice does not envelop two separate realms; instead, "bodily and mental patterns are necessary components of practices and thus of the social."[29] Practice theory is therefore a praxeological way of viewing the world.

The centrality of practice in the wider cultural turn in academia signifies, among other things, the inescapability of culture's role in any number of constructive projects. This is no less true for theological disciplines and hermeneutics, where practice is also beginning to figure more prominently. Regardless of which practice theory Christian theologians draw from, Dorothy Bass suggests there are at least four characteristics of any theory of practice that can be agreed upon: (1) "practices resist the separation of

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[24]Ibid., 11.

[25]Ibid., 2. For a discussion on the history of mediation, focused on elucidating how the Enlightenment was an event in the history of mediation, thereby foregrounding how mediation should include "everything that intervenes, enables, supplements, or is simply between," see Clifford Siskin and William Warner, eds., *This is Enlightenment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

[26]Schatzki, "Introduction: Practice Theory," 13–14.

[27]Andreas Reckwitz, "Toward a Theory of Social Practices: A Development in Culturalist Theorizing," *European Journal of Social Theory* 5.2 (2002): 245.

[28]Ibid., 250.

[29]Ibid., 252.

thinking from acting;" (2) "practices are social, belonging to groups of people across generations;" (3) "practices are rooted in the past but are also constantly adapting to changing circumstances;" and (4) "practices articulate wisdom that is in the keeping of practitioners who do not think of themselves as theologically trained."[30] Bringing these together, John Swinton offers a helpful definition. He articulates practice as a form of individual and communal value-laden action that emerges from various contexts that shape the way one views and encounters the world. In terms of Christian practices, he writes, "We practice what we believe in quite literal ways. In this sense, Christian practices are embodied theology which can be read, interpreted, and understood in a way similar to the way which we read and interpret texts."[31]

Theology-Practice and the Evolution of Practical Theology

It is precisely here, in the art and science of reading and interpreting "human texts," that the practical theologian locates her work, for the practices of lived religious experience constitute the beginning and ending points of theology. Although practical theology as a field of theological inquiry may be relatively new on the scene, at its core, it is preeminently concerned with the theology-practice binary and how they relate to and influence each other. This is also known as *praxis*—"the critical relationship between theory and practice whereby each is dialectically influenced and transformed by the other."[32] One may argue that Paul's epistles in the New Testament reflect this reality, as he worked out his understanding of Christianity while engaged in the practice of missionary activities.[33] All of his epistles are embedded in the lived experience of individual Jewish and Christian communities so that Paul's theology derived from these letters was not only contextual but in dialogue with revelation and lived religious experience.[34] The healthy distinction, yet mutual relationship,

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[30]Bass, "Introduction," 6.

[31]John Swinton, *Dementia: Living in the Memories of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 16–17n1.

[32]David Tracy, *Blessed Rage for Order: The New Pluralism in Theology* (New York: Seabury, 1975), 243.

[33]For an excellent article on the influence of the Apostle Paul's missionary practice on his interpretation of Scripture and theological construction, see Andrew Tompkins, "The Interplay between Forms of Revelation: Implications for Theological Method," *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies* 12.1 (2016): 84–106.

[34]Gerben Heitink, *Practical Theology: History, Theory, Action Domains*, trans. Reinder Bruinsma, Studies in Practical Theology (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 105. Chris A. M. Hermans and Mary Elizabeth Moore add Peter's address to the crowd in Acts 2:14–36 as a case-in-point. Both the Pauline letters, especially those addressed to the Roman and Corinthian believers, and the Acts passage, reveal how these apostles were "engaged in studying living situations and then responding to them with theological affirmations and guidance for action, in short, practical theology," in "The Contribution of Empirical Theology by Johannes A. Van der Ven: An Introduction," in *Hermeneutics and Empirical Research in Practical Theology: The Contribution of Empirical Theology by Johannes A. Van Der Ven*, ed. Chris A. M. Hermans and Mary

between theology and practice can be seen from the time of the early church to the Middle Ages, as most theologians were either bishops or monks, and thus engrossed in the practice of ministry.[35] In the modern era, theologians such as Karl Barth (1886–1968) also recognized this reality, as he described any distinction between theoretical and practical as a "primal lie, which has to be resisted in principle."[36]

Having thus established the mutually critical relationship of theology and practice at the heart of practical theology, how the practical theologian approaches these two hermeneutically has developed over time. As an academic discipline, it is said that practical theology finds its modern origins in the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834). The importance of his theological method cannot be undervalued, for it was a type of theological Copernican Revolution.[37] Like Copernicus, who shifted the focus of astronomy to the sun as opposed to the earth as the center of the universe, Schleiermacher shifted the focus of theology to human experience rather than authoritative propositions about God as the source of theology.[38] In other words, his innovation in theological method lies in the turn to the believing subject as a substantial criterion for theology. This resulted in practical theology as a reflection on the theory of practice, or what is referred to today as an action-reflection model.[39]

Despite the enormous significance and influence of Schleiermacher to Western theology in general and practical theology in particular, some have argued that he did not realize the hermeneutical ramifications which turned out to be revolutionary. In his attempt to legitimize the discipline of theology worthy of the university by correlating theology as professional training akin to medicine and law, he inadvertently caused a division within the theological

Elizabeth Moore, *Empirical Studies in Theology* 11 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 11–12.

[35]Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100–600)*, vol. 1 of *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 5.

[36]Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Thomas F. Torrance, trans. A. T. Mackay and T. H. L. Parker (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1955–1961), 787, quoted in Ray S. Anderson, *The Shape of Practical Theology: Empowering Ministry with Theological Praxis* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 15.

[37]Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Brief Outline of the Study of Theology as a Field of Study: with Essays and Notes by Terrence N. Tice*, 3rd ed., rev. trans. of the 1811 and 1830 ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011).

[38]Stanley J. Grenz and Roger E. Olson, *20th-Century Theology: God and the World in a Transitional Age* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 44.

[39]James O. Duke and Howard Stone, "Orientation to Schleiermacher's Practical Theology," in *Christian Caring: Selections from Practical Theology*, ed. James O. Duke and Howard Stone (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 17. See also Willhelm Gräb, "Practical Theology as Theology of Religion: Schleiermacher's Understanding of Practical Theology as a Discipline," *International Journal of Practical Theology* 9.2 (2005): 181–196; John E. Burkhart, "Schleiermacher's Vision for Theology," in *Practical Theology: The Emerging Field in Theology, Church, and World*, ed. Don S. Browning (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983), 42–57.

encyclopedia. This isolated practical theology as the field of study concerned with the application of the other theological disciplines, namely philosophical and historical theology, and resulted in further dividing theology from practice. Practical theology and its subfields (liturgics, homiletics, pastoral theology, religious education, etc.) were now primarily concerned with "tips" and "techniques" for the professional minister. Edward Farley brilliantly traces the history of what he refers to as *theologia* and the devastating unintended consequences of Schleiermacher's project for the study of theology and theological education, namely the "clerical paradigm."[40]

Practical theology continued to develop as a field of inquiry in the early twentieth century, particularly in the United States, along the lines of pastoral theology. British scholars Stephen Pattison and James Woodward see little need to distinguish between practical and pastoral theology: "It is probably futile to try and separate these areas either definitionally or in practice."[41] However, in North America, pastoral theology has come to be virtually synonymous with pastoral care and counseling—a field considered by many a sub-discipline of practical theology.[42] Leading figures include Anton Boisen,

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[40]Edward Farley, *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2001). For a more concise summary of the *Theologia* concept and its implications, see Farley's "Theology and Practice Outside the Clerical Paradigm," in *Practical Theology: Emerging Field*, 21–41. For a further development of Farley's thought beyond *Theologia*, see his follow-up texts: *The Fragility of Knowledge: Theological Education in the Church and the University* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1988); *Practicing Gospel: Unconventional Thoughts on the Church's Ministry* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003); and "Interpreting Situations: An Inquiry Into the Nature of Practical Theology," in *Formation and Reflection: The Promise of Practical Theology*, ed. Lewis S. Mudge and James N. Poling (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009), 1–26.

Farley and others have challenged Schleiermacher's clerical paradigm. Indeed, as Bonnie Miller-McLemore asserts, it has gained such staying power that it constitutes the primary way of characterizing the problem of theological education. However, Miller-McLemore goes on to challenge the dominancy of the clerical paradigm discourse by arguing "that it has distorted our perception, misdirected blame, and hence left other problems unattended" in "The 'Clerical Paradigm': A Fallacy of Misplaced Concreteness?" *International Journal of Practical Theology* 11.1 (2007): 20. Instead, she seeks to reclaim the value of congregational and pastoral know-how; for in denigrating the clerical paradigm the field of practical theology has suffered a terrible blow: "how to teach it, how to learn it, and how to demonstrate it" (ibid., 21).

[41]Stephen Pattison and James Woodward, "An Introduction to Pastoral and Practical Theology," in *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology*, ed. James Woodward and Stephen Pattison (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000), 6.

[42]According to Dana R. Wright, the developing field of practical theology in the United States moved in other directions as well—the religious education movement being one of them. See "The Contemporary Renaissance in Practical Theology in the United States: The Past, Present, and Future of a Discipline in Creative Ferment," *International Journal of Practical Theology* 6.2 (2002): 299. Currently, those in the field of pastoral care and counseling have sought a language revision in order to reflect a more inclusive perspective and not be tethered to the overt

who urged the study of "human living documents" and consequently founded the pastoral counseling and clinical pastoral education (CPE) movements, and Seward Hiltner, whose *Preface to Pastoral Theology* "set the terms of reference for discussion of pastoral issues" for decades.[43]

Criticisms have been brought against the pastoral theology hermeneutic as being largely organized around a psychological interpretation of human experience and symbolic interpretations of God.[44] Furthermore, the "contemporary renaissance in practical theology in the U.S.," to use Dana R. Wright's words, rendered invisible "the Christological determination of human history announced in the Gospel, making practical theology within the limits of the comic-kergymatic imagination appear naively confessional to the guild."[45] Rebecca S. Chopp maintains that this is indicative of a liberal agenda, which "construes religion and theology in a way that may not be adequate to the present situation."[46] The result, Andrew Purves claims, has been a loss of Christology, soteriology, and the doctrine of God, and has caused the work of the Church to be based largely on secular goals and techniques of care.[47]

While much can be said about these authors and their critiques, it was the work of such theologians as Tracy and Don S. Browning, which helped

Christian connections. The preferred name today is "spiritual care and counseling," and is reflected in seminary and divinity school course offerings and hospital chaplain service departments across the United States.

[43]Alastair V. Campbell, *Rediscovering Pastoral Care* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1981), 41. See Anton T. Boisen, *An Exploration of the Inner World: A Study of Mental Disorder and Religious Experience* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971); Seward Hiltner, *Preface to Pastoral Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1958). Johannes van der Ven provides a more nuanced version of practical theology in the United States than can be explicated here, see *Practical Theology: An Empirical Approach* (Leuven: Peeters, 1998). He traces the origin of empirical theology—an intradisciplinary approach whereby the methodology of one discipline (the empirical sciences) is adopted by another (pastoral theology)—to the "Chicago School" of the early twentieth century and clinical theology, "both of which grew out of the clinical pastoral education movement" (ibid., 5). The philosophical climate of these forms of theology lie in the pragmatism and empiricism of Jonathan Edwards, William James, and John Dewey in the United States, as well as Enlightenment philosophers like John Locke, James Mill, David Hume, and John Stuart Mill (ibid., 7).

[44]Andrew Purves, *Reconstructing Pastoral Theology: A Christological Foundation* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2004), xiv; Andrew Purves, *Pastoral Theology in the Classical Tradition* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 3. See also Thomas C. Oden, *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry* (New York: HarperOne, 1983).

[45]Wright, "Contemporary Renaissance," 292.

[46]Rebecca S. Chopp, "Practical Theology and Liberation," in *Formation and Reflection: The Promise of Practical Theology*, ed. Lewis S. Mudge and James N. Poling (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 121.

[47]Purves, *Pastoral Theology*, 3. The subtitle to the following work also reflects this view: E. Brooks Holifield, *A History of Pastoral Care in America: From Salvation to Self-Realization* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1983).

produce a hermeneutical shift, bringing pastoral theology back to a practical theology in the United States. This shift brought practical theology much closer to a form known in the premodern era. However, this was not a complete resuscitation of theory and practice as a coterminous hermeneutic, but rather a contemporary corrective. In contrast to the psychotherapeutic emphases of modern practical and pastoral theology, Tracy and Browning underscore the necessity of theological ethics and the public nature of practical theology in a post-Shoah and globally pluralistic world. Implications for this reconstruction of practical theology can be summarized in Browning's sophisticated approach, which is outlined in his classic text, *A Fundamental Practical Theology*. For Browning, practical theological methodology "goes from practice to theory and back to practice. Or more accurately, it goes from present theory-laden practice to a retrieval of normative theory-laden practice to the creation of more critically held theory-laden practices."[48]

Practical theology has since evolved to an empirical-hermeneutic model in which interdisciplinary theological reflection on the dialectical relationship of theory and practice has assumed center stage. In the words of Elaine Graham, practical theology has emerged as a "problem-solving and inductive discipline, which connects with practical issues in a way that illuminates and empowers. It has also emerged as a way of reflection that draws on other disciplines in its analysis of experience in order to do justice to the complexity of the situation."[49] Put another way, practical theology focuses on the "how to" within Christianity, but is guided by an informed theory of "why to"—"why we ought to practice the Christian way of life in certain ways in light of an interpretation of a particular social context and the normative claims of the Christian community."[50]

The Practice of Practical Theology

How do practical theologian's practice theology? Richard R. Osmer describes a specific direction that practical theology has been moving internationally as a hermeneutical discipline. When examining the variety of approaches to practical theology espoused by scholars around the globe, he writes: "[F]our distinguishable but mutually influential tasks have emerged as central to practical theology as a field."[51] These four tasks or movements of Osmer's consensus equilibrium model constitute a paradigm of reflective practice, which inform each other within a hermeneutical circle or spiral (see **Figure 1** below). All four tasks attend to four related questions and include: the Descriptive Task (What is going on?); the Interpretive Task (Why is it going

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[48]Don S. Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology: Descriptive and Strategic Proposals* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 7.

[49]Elaine Graham, Heather Walton, and Frances Ward, *Theological Reflection: Methods* (London: SCM, 2005), 5.

[50]Richard R. Osmer, *Teaching Ministry of Congregations* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005), xiv.

[51]Ibid., xv.

on?); the Normative Task (What ought to be going on?); and the Pragmatic Task (So what? How to?). It is important to note that one can enter into the hermeneutical spiral at any point and, because of the interrelated nature of the four tasks, will inevitably move back and forth between each "moment," especially within the descriptive-empirical and interpretive points on the circle. According to Osmer, "It is the mutually influential relationship of practical theology's empirical, interpretive, normative, and pragmatic work that allows this field to construct action-guiding theories of religious praxis" (see **fig. 1**).[52]
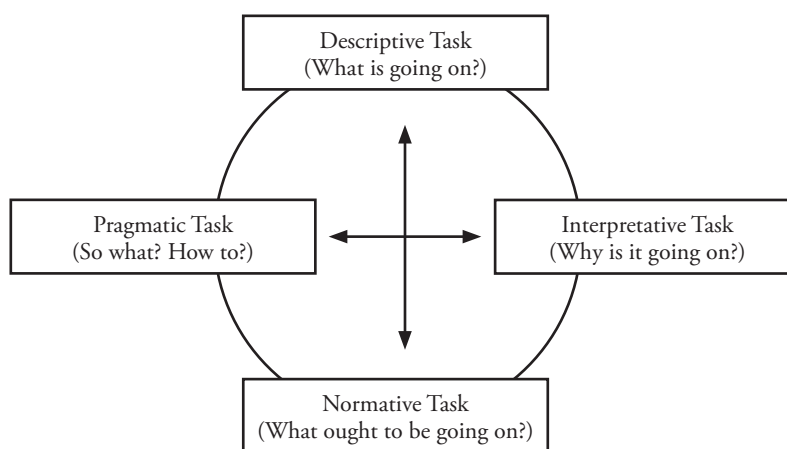
Figure 1. The Four Tasks of Practical Theology

The first task of practical theology is the descriptive-empirical. The question that lies at the heart of this task of practical theological reflection is, "What is going on?" This is an attempt to arrive at a thick description of a particular field of experience—a situation, problem, or practice—either within a Christian setting, such as a local congregation, or in society-at-large. It is more than a social scientific practice of gathering data of an actual, empirical phenomenon. The practical theologian who opts to conduct his own qualitative and/or quantitative research also engages in this stage as astute listener and partner with the Holy Spirit. Osmer elaborates: The key term is "attending," relating to the other with openness, attentiveness, and prayerfulness. Such attending opens up the possibility of an I-Thou relationship in which others are known and encountered in all their uniqueness and otherness, a quality of

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[52]The quotation is taken from Richard R. Osmer, "Johannes Van der Ven's Contribution to the New Consensus in Practical Theology," in *Hermeneutics and Empirical Research*, 152. **Figure 1** is taken from idem, *Teaching Ministry*, 303.

relationship that ultimately depends on the communion-creating presence of the Holy Spirit.[53]

The second task is the hermeneutical one. "Why is this going on?" is the question the practical theologian seeks to answer at this point. While the descriptive stage may draw on social scientific methods, such as participant-observation, interviews, surveys, or a focus group to gather the necessary data, the interpretive moment enters into an intentional dialogue with specific theories. For example, a hermeneutical "conversation" can engage social scientific theories of practice (as I do in this article), look to the arts as an interpretive lens when considering racism, or economics when examining issues related to classism.[54] Whatever the case may be, the objective is to interpret and explain "patterns of behavior, actions, and ideas."[55] As Osmer is apt to note, since the data of empirical research is not self-evident and must therefore be interpreted, it is vital that researchers be aware of the ways their own hermeneutical commitments inform their investigation.[56] In this way, the descriptive and interpretive are both individual as well as mutually influential tasks.

Stepping into the realm of formal theology and ethics, the third task of practical theology—the normative—asks the following question: "What *ought* be going on?" Having developed an informed and thorough description of a particular episode, situation, or context, the practical theologian, who ultimately conducts research in service of the church, brings the aforementioned interpreted description into formal dialogue with the Christian tradition.[57] The objective is "to construct ethical norms to guide our responses and learning from 'good practice.'"[58] The work of the practical theologian during this stage most closely resembles the biblical scholar, Christian ethicist, or systematician; however, an important distinction must be made between these respective fields and practical theology. The goal of the practical theologian is not to develop a theological doctrine or write a biblical commentary, for example. Rather, she constructively makes use of these sources to articulate context-specific models of divine and human action

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[53]Idem, *Practical Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 34.

[54]For a sampling of the range of possibilities in practical theology, see: Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore, ed., *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Practical Theology*, Wiley Blackwell Companions to Religion 74 (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012).

[55]Osmer, "New Consensus," 150.

[56]Idem, *Teaching Ministry*, xv.

[57]These are technical terms used by Osmer to describe the following. "An *episode* is an incident or event that emerges from the flow of everyday life and evokes explicit attention and reflection"; "A *situation* is the broader and longer pattern of events, relationships, and circumstances in which an episode occurs"; "A *context* is composed of the social and natural systems in which a situation unfolds," in *Practical Theology*, 12.

[58]Ibid., 4.

in order to "better understand the patterns of God's praxis in the world and to shape the patterns of their lives and communities accordingly."[59]

The fourth task that completes the hermeneutical circle is the pragmatic. The question under consideration here is: "How might we respond?" More specifically: "How might this area of praxis be shaped to more fully embody the normative commitments of a religious tradition in this particular context of experience?"[60] One of the common misconceptions of contemporary practical theology is that it is "applied theology." That is, the practical theologian develops tips and techniques for Christian ministry based on the work of the biblical scholar and/or systematic theologian. Though this task of practical theology is very much concerned with the pragmatic "how to" of praxis, one must remember it rests on the cumulative work of rigorous interdisciplinary scholarship aimed at formulating a specific action plan, and is theory-laden. Thus, when questions, such as those mentioned above, are posed, it becomes clear: "Rules of art are not guidelines that can be applied in a mechanical or rote fashion. They presuppose creativity and good judgment on the part of the practitioner, who must determine a fitting course of action in a particular context or experience."[61]

In totality, all four tasks mutually inform each other in a hermeneutical spiral, which is one of the reasons why practical theology must be differentiated from other ways of doing theology. As a paradigm of reflective practice, practical theology "makes room for reflection on experience and practice and for dialogue with the social science as it engages the normative resources of the Christian faith."[62]

Conclusion

In summary, practical theology can be understood as beginning with lived religion, human experience, practice, or a crisis. It then draws on a variety of sources and methods as a hermeneutical process of interpreting and reflecting on what is going on, namely revelation and science. Pattison and Woodward remind us that the disciplines employed in practical theology are varied and hinge upon the particular phenomena being considered.[63] For example, practical theology may draw on economics when analyzing financial

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[59]Idem, *Teaching Ministry*, xvi.

[60]Idem, "New Consensus," 151.

[61]Idem, *Teaching Ministry*, xvi. On the move from applied theology to practical theology, see A. G. Van Wyk, "From 'Applied Theology' to 'Practical Theology,'" *AUSS* 33.1 (1995): 85–101. To my knowledge, Van Wyk's study is the only article published on practical theology proper in *AUSS*. The present essay moves beyond and updates Van Wyk's Dutch-South African perspective to more accurately reflect the development of the field over the past twenty-five years.

[62]Richard R. Osmer, "Practical Theology: A Current International Perspective," *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 67.2 (2011), n.p., https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v67i2.1058.

[63]Pattison and Woodward, "Introduction," 9.

debt, psychology when considering the experience of guilt, or anthropology when studying African tribal conflict. Each of these respective disciplines has embedded philosophical assumptions—such as the nature of knowledge, and corollary research methodologies—such as case study, narrative research, and ethnography. Although employing social-science methodology and empirical research findings may be useful in the hermeneutical process, there are very real challenges that practical theologians must face with this critical correlation. John Swinton and Harriet Mowat pose several questions: "How does it actually link with theology? What kind of conceptual structure will allow the two disciplines to come together in a way that prevents one from collapsing into the other? Precisely where does the information elicited by qualitative research fit into the process of practical theology research?"[64] Nevertheless, every practical theologian must answer these and similar questions in order to maintain an integrative approach.[65]

As Serene Jones has already suggested above, in order to overcome the hermeneutical dichotomies bequeathed to us from modernity, "shared aspiration" among all the theological disciplines as well as the need for a "distinct discipline," is the way forward. Much good has already come from the work of practical theologians within Roman Catholicism, mainline Protestantism, as well as Evangelicalism. Ellen T. Charry affirms how theological teachers are moving closer and closer to the necessity of being interdisciplinary and more intentional about partnering with local churches. They are also becoming more attentive to the real needs of their pupils in the academy, for many "students are more interested in nurturing their life in God than in the teacher's dexterity at mastering the material."[66] It is for these reasons that practical theology, with its insistence upon fully informed reflective practice, is beginning to undo the devastating separation between spirituality and theology, theory and practice, within the academy and church.

To be sure, practical theologians do not claim to exercise sole proprietary control over the concerns about hermeneutics that I have outlined in this essay. However, because of the ways practical theologians put these concerns together in terms of method, the field "simultaneously builds bridges of understanding and collaboration in the wider academy, as well as with practicing religious leaders and others in the churches."[67] Theologians and religious scholars today must seek more collaborative ways of practicing theology and not fall prey to the temptation of isolation within our own academic and ministerial silos. I would thus propose the practical theologian, as outlined in this essay, as one such academician to lead the way.

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[64]John Swinton and Harriet Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research* (London, UK: SCM Press, 2006), 73.

[65]For a good overview of the available options, see Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 163–173.

[66]Charry, "Educating for Wisdom," 306.

[67]Kathleen A. Cahalan and Gordon S. Mikoski, eds., *Opening the Field of Practical Theology: An Introduction* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 2.

THE TRUTHFUL SELF: SUBJECTIVITY, TRUTH, AND HERMENEUTICS IN DIALOGUE WITH MICHEL FOUCAULT

Ante Jerončić
Andrews University

Abstract

In the wake of the hermeneutical turn in Continental philosophy, the question of the interpretive agent has become a central feature in most discussions on hermeneutics. While schools of thought differ significantly in how they position themselves vis-à-vis the subjectivist-objectivist axis, few would deny that the delineation of the interpretive task must attend to the embodied character of human cognition. Taking such a broader framework as a starting point, I will tackle a specific aspect of this problematic by examining Foucault's conception of subjectivity and truth as it relates to issues of epistemology, moral responsibility, and *askēsis*. As I will argue, Foucault's "art of living" persuasively highlights the background or "unthought" aspects of hermeneutics. My particular approach will be to connect Foucault's brand of virtue epistemology with a broadly post-Heideggerian conception of engaged agency, and in so doing spotlight some assumptions as to what "having truth" or "arriving at it" might mean in the context of hermeneutical practice and being.

Keywords: Michel Foucault, hermeneutics, truth, subjectivity, *parrhesia*, *askēsis*

Introduction*

"What is philosophy if not a way of reflecting, not so much on what is true and what is false, as on our relationship to truth?"[1]

"My problem is the relation of self to self and of telling the truth. . . . My own problem has always been the question of truth, of telling the truth, the *wahr-sagen*—what it is to tell the truth—and the relation between 'telling the truth' and forms of reflexivity, of self upon self."[2]

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[1]Michel Foucault, "The Masked Philosopher," in vol. 1 of *Ethics, Subjectivity, and Truth: The Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: New Press, 1997), 327.

[2]Idem, *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings, 1977–1984*, ed. Lawrence D. Kritzman, trans. A. Sheridan et al. (New York: Routledge, 1988), 32–33.

Since its publication in 1987, Pierre Hadot's *Exercices spirituels et philosophie antique* has exerted a significant influence on discussions within Continental philosophy and constructive theology.[3] The focus point of such debates often pertains not only to the function of philosophy, that is, to what degree we might define it as a transformational and performative venture, but also wide-ranging questions concerning power, truth, subjectivity, and human flourishing. Invariably, such considerations impinge both on the understanding of the hermeneutical *task*—its nature, method, goals, and epistemic morphologies in which it trades—and the role of the hermeneutical *agent* for whom, as for any human being, interpretation is an essential modality of existence.[4] With respect to the latter, reminders about the anthropological dimension of hermeneutics seem patently redundant. *Of course* it is a given that we bring ourselves into and out of the hermeneutical process; who would claim otherwise? Nevertheless, "the myth of the mental"—the privileging of methodological proceduralism at the expense of embodied agency—still holds sway over many a discourse concerning hermeneutical practice.[5] I believe that such a reductionism carries a range of deleterious effects, including those concerning the life of the Church and its mission.

In order to explore some of these issues, I will turn to Michel Foucault's late thought, primarily his 1980–1984 Collège de France lectures. The discussion itself will juggle several levels of argumentation. First, I will push back against some popular misunderstandings of Foucault as a type of "relativist" or "postmodern subjectivist," and instead present him as a virtue ethicist of a particular kind. Not that I agree with all or even most of his argumentations; much of what he says concerning human nature I find problematic and even contradictory. What I do consider helpful are certain fundamental gestures, certain spaces for constructive thinking about hermeneutics, that his philosophy helpfully opens up. Besides, my approach to Foucault in some ways approximates his strategy with respect to Nietzsche: "I prefer to utilize the writers I like," he notes. "The only valid tribute to a thought such as Nietzsche's is precisely to use it, to deform it, to

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[3]Pierre Hadot, *Exercices spirituels et philosophie antique*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 1987); Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, ed. Arnold I. Davidson (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1995).

[4]I am well aware that the term hermeneutics carries a range of connotations ranging from "sound exegesis," to a "series of epistemological problems concerning objectivity in interpretation," to "assuming an anti-objectivist philosophical stance," to "a methodology of the social sciences," and to "an ontology of being." On the various meaning of hermeneutics, see Nicholas H. Smith, "Taylor and the Hermeneutic Tradition," in *Charles Taylor*, ed. Ruth Abbey (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 29–30.

[5]See Hubert L. Dreyfus, "Overcoming the Myth of the Mental: How Philosophers Can Profit from the Phenomenology of Everyday Expertise," *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 79 (2005): 47–65. My considerations here are indebted to Charles Taylor, "Overcoming Epistemology," in *Philosophical Arguments* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 1–19.

make it groan and protest. And if commentators then say that I am being faithful or unfaithful to Nietzsche, that is of absolutely no importance."[6] So, utilize Foucault we shall—albeit respectfully.

Second, I will show how his concept of "spirituality" that places "the care of the self" (*epimeleia heautou*) at the center of philosophical concerns offers helpful conceptual tools for rethinking the intersection of subjectivity and truth. In referring to "subjectivity and truth" I limn a semantic range that includes some of the following: being open and attuned to truth; caring about it; paying for access to it; becoming worthy of it; letting its impact be felt on life; embodying it in one's comportment to the world; and telling it freely and courageously. By way of illustration, I will attend to Foucault's treatment of *parrhesia* (frank speech) in order to interrogate, phenomenologically and otherwise, its relationship to virtue and human agency in general. As I will suggest, such an intersection of epistemology and philosophical anthropology is of enormous significance for Christian theology. Whether one speaks, let's say, of the pursuit of wisdom, experiences of transformation (spiritual, cognitive, moral, etc.), or discerning "signs of the times," questions of subjectivity and truth are always already at play.

Third, I will stress the significance of hermeneutical agency in relation to moral psychology and *askēsis* (formation, self-transcendence, etc.) when discussing hermeneutical principles.[7] Such meta-hermeneutical explorations seek to bring to the foreground anthropological features within hermeneutical practice; features which one can never really bracket out or leave behind, and which account for the possibility of having any awareness of the world (and text) at all. While my approach will be mostly meta-conceptual in its focus, I trust that the implicit theological considerations will be more than inferential.

Foucault and the Care of the Self

In the acclaimed documentary *Foucault Against Himself*, the French philosopher and sociologist Geoffroy de Lagasnerie observes that, when considering Michel Foucault's works in their entirety, "a question immediately springs to mind: how can we imagine that the same person wrote all of them? It seems incredible that in twenty-five years . . . there could be so many styles, subjects, theses, and rhetorical forms that were so scattered, broken up, and incoherent."[8] In view of this, can one even speak of Foucault? Is there an author, a voice, and an *oeuvre*? Is there some direction, some main question(s), some central drive to his work? What are the limits, the boundaries, the criteria of his thinking? *Ipso facto*, what transpires in the act of quoting Foucault? Who (or what) is one referring to, and for what purposes?

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[6]Michel Foucault, "Prison Talk," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon, 1980), 53–54.

[7]For a helpful yet accessible introduction to the field of moral psychology, see Mark Alfano, *Moral Psychology: An Introduction* (Malden, MA: Polity, 2016).

[8]François Caillat, F*oucault Against Himself*, trans. David Homel (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp, 2015), 122.

A prime example of such an interpretive challenge concerns the apparent difference between the middle period of his work and the so-called "ethical turn" in the late 1970s and early 1980s. During the middle period, we see Foucault problematizing the notion of moral agency in the context of modern disciplinary societies to the extent that the concept of free human action becomes virtually unintelligible.[9] On this count, even seemingly emancipatory gestures are already co-opted, in a *Matrix*-like fashion, by various mechanisms of identity formation. Foucault refers to these synergistic mechanisms as *dispositifs* or apparatuses; as "heterogeneous ensemble[s] consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions—in short, the said as much as the unsaid."[10] Giorgio Agamben unpacks and expands the idea of Foucauldian apparatuses to include anything

> that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviors, opinions, or discourses of living beings. Not only, therefore, prisons, madhouses, the panopticon, schools, confession, factories, disciplines, judicial measures, and so forth (whose connection with power is in a certain sense evident), but also the pen, writing, literature, philosophy, agriculture.[11]

It is by means of such apparatuses, argues Foucault, that the capillary forces of power inculcate subjects into "certain modalities of life . . . getting them to do things while believing they want them."[12]

Maurice Blanchot perceptively notes how in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, as well as Foucault's other works from the middle period, one can find "many a formula from negative theology. Foucault invests all his talent in describing with sublime phrases what it is he rejects: 'It's not . . . , nor is it . . . , nor is it for that matter . . . ,' so that there remained almost nothing for him to say."[13] Other writers as well have picked on this element of epistemic

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[9]On this point, Gilles Deleuze notes: "What happened during the fairly long silence following *The History of Sexuality*? Perhaps Foucault felt slightly uneasy about the book: had he not trapped himself within the concept of power-relation?" (Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. Sean Hand [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995], 94). For this reference, I am indebted to Daniela Vallega-Neu, *The Bodily Dimension in Thinking*, The SUNY Series in Contemporary Continental Philosophy (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2005), 114.

[10]Michel Foucault, "The Confession of the Flesh," in *Power/Knowledge*, 194.

[11]Giorgio Agamben, *What Is an Apparatus? and Other Essays*, trans. David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella, Meridian: Crossing Aesthetics (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 14.

[12]Jonathan Tran, *Foucault and Theology*, Philosophy and Theology (New York: T&T Clark, 2011), 23.

[13]Maurice Blanchot, "Foucault as I Imagine Him," in *Foucault/Blanchot*, trans. Jeffrey Mehlman and Brian Massumi (New York: Zone, 1987), 74. For the initial reference to this source, I am indebted to Alexander Nehamas, *The Art of Living: Socratic Reflections from Plato to Foucault*, Sather Classical Lectures 61 (Berkeley:

austerity or immanent apophaticism concerning anything approximating a fixed conception of human nature and purpose.[14] Behind his rejection of aspirational thought, in other words, lies a deep unease towards any type of discursive essentializing or utopian thinking, including the language of subjective self-realization in whatever shape or form.

And yet a marked change is afoot in his writings from about 1980 on.[15] Suddenly, it seems, the brutalized self, pulped into submission through capillary forces of control, gets a second lease on life. The image of an autonomous agent with capacities to create heterotopian spaces of resistance rises out of the ashes, and there, in the person of Foucault, seemingly emerges a run-of-the-mill Enlightenment thinker hinting at a post-critical *Mündigkeit* (I. Kant).[16] In that regard, Foucault notes:

> I do not think that a society can exist without power relations, if by that one means the strategies by which individuals try to direct and control the conduct of others. The problem, then, is not to try to dissolve them in the utopia of completely transparent communication but to acquire the rules of law, the management techniques, and also the morality, the ethos, the practice of the self, that will allow us to play these games of power with as little domination as possible.[17]

That notwithstanding, an exclusive emphasis on volte-faces in Foucault's assumptions invariably misses the life-long cohesion of his concerns.[18] While strategies and approaches continually change, and with them investigative

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University of California Press, 1998), 174.

[14]Foucault's reticence in that regard came on display during the famed 1971 debate with Noam Chomsky, where Foucault repeatedly refused to speculate about the possibility of emancipated subjectivity in some future society. See Noam Chomsky and Michel Foucault, *The Chomsky-Foucault Debate: On Human Nature* (New York: New Press, 2006).

[15]Nehamas correctly notes that, following the completion of volume one of *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault "began to think about it in drastically new terms. The next two volumes were totally different from what had been earlier announced in subject, style, and approach" (Nehamas, *The Art of Living*, 175).

[16]On Foucault's relationship to the Enlightenment, see, for example, Lois McNay, *Foucault and Feminism* (Cambridge: Polity, 1992), 5.

[17]Michel Foucault, "The Ethics of the Concern for Self as a Practice of Freedom," in vol. 1 of *Ethics, Subjectivity, and Truth: The Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: New Press, 1997), 298.

[18]On this point, see Timothy Rayner, "Foucault, Heidegger, and the History of Truth," in *Foucault and Philosophy*, ed. Timothy O'Leary and Christopher Falzon (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 69–70. I am aware that Foucault's thought is much more complex than what I can do justice to here. In general, I agree with Hubert Dreyfus's contention that to properly understand Foucault we need to "triangulate him among phenomenology, hermeneutics, and structuralism" (C. G. Prado, *Searle and Foucault on Truth* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006], 66). Prado, in this connection, references Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

emphases and rhetorical styles, the underlying thematic subtext remains consistent during much of his career: the fundamental problem of subjectivity and truth, or how relations of power and truth regimes construct subjects, and how subjects, in turn, construct themselves through modalities of resistance.[19] Foucault himself indicates as much when he stresses that the goal of his life-work "has not been to analyze the phenomena of power, nor to elaborate the foundations of such an analysis." Instead, his primary objective "has been to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects,"[20] in the sense of the bidirectional character of *assujettissement* or subjectification: the engendering of the subject through relations of power and the (partial) reversing of these processes by means of autonomous agency.[21] In that regard, I agree with Alexander Nehamas, who views Foucault "as a philosopher who had always been concerned with the care of the self and whose project, despite its general applications, was essentially individual."[22] That point is brought home further in Foucault's coinage of the term "subjectivation" (or sometimes translated as "subjectivization") dating from around 1980. In distinction to *assujettissement*, subjectivation refers to the "procedure by which one obtains the constitution of a subject or, more precisely, of a subjectivity which is, of course, only one of the given possibilities of organization of a self-consciousness."[23] In other words, the focus here shifts from the production of subjects in the context of power relations to the self's relation to self through practices of self-constitution or *ethopoetics*.[24] Again, the opening of such an agential space (or the possibility of such an opening) is embedded in Foucault's understanding of subjectivity as that which is

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[19]Foucault's conception of truth is both complex and controversial. On this count, I side with Prado, who suggests five "uses" of truth in Foucault: criterial, constructivist, perspectivist, experiential, and tacit-realist. On the last point, he argues that "the only option is to try to understand how truth is wholly discursive, hence is a product of power, but without its being so entailing a denial of objective reality" (Prado, *Searle and Foucault on Truth*, 100).

[20]Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power," in *Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, 208.

[21]On the meaning of *assujettissement* as "subjectification," see Nikolas Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). For this reference, I am indebted to Alan Milchman and Alan Rosenberg, "The Aesthetic and Ascetic Dimensions of an Ethics of Self-Fashioning: Nietzsche and Foucault," *Parrhesia Journal* 2 (2007): 55.

[22]Nehamas, *The Art of Living*, 168.

[23]Michel Foucault, "The Return of Morality," in *Politics, Philosophy, Culture*, 253. For a helpful discussion of how the notion of subjectivation might be applied to the field of education, see Jean-Pierre Àudureau, "Assujettissement et subjectivation: réflexions sur l'usage de Foucault en éducation," *Revue française de pédagogie* 143 (2003): 17–29.

[24]On Foucault's concept of *ethopoetics*, see Edward F. McGushin, *Foucault's Askēsis: An Introduction to the Philosophical Life*, Topics in Historical Philosophy (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2007), 53.

always already underway, always already in the process of composition and recomposition.

During his 1980–1984 Collège de France lectures in particular, the central category through which Foucault repeatedly revisits the truth-subjectivity dialectic is in the principle of the "care of the self" (*epimeleia heautou*). Summarizing a key focus of those presentations, he notes:

> Since my project was concerned with the knowledge of the subject, I thought that the techniques of domination were the most important, without any exclusion of the rest. But, analyzing the experience of sexuality, I became more and more aware that there is in all societies, I think, in all societies whatever they are, another type of techniques: techniques which permit individuals to effect, by their own means, a certain number of operations on their own bodies, on their own souls, on their own thoughts, on their own conduct, and this in a manner so as to transform themselves, modify themselves, and to attain a certain state of perfection, of happiness, of purity, of supernatural power, and so on. Let's call this kind of techniques a techniques or technology of the self.[25]

In ancient philosophy, Foucault argues, the concept of self-care comes to us through a variety of expressions: "taking care of the self," "withdrawing into oneself," "remaining in the company of oneself," "being the friend of oneself," etc.[26] They all imply the adoption of a *technē tou biou* (*ars vivendi*, lat.) or "art of life" via a set of "spiritual exercises" (P. Hadot). To the degree that these various *technai* aid us in overcoming self-destructive passions and other forms of existential ennui, they are vital for the art of living or "autoplasticity" (Peter Sloterdijk's neologism for the ascetical work on oneself).[27] Accordingly, Epictetus, for instance, maintains that "from this time forth, the material that I must work upon is my own mind, just as that of a carpenter is wood, and that of a cobbler is leather."[28]

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[25]Michel Foucault, "Subjectivity and Truth," in *About the Beginning of the Hermeneutics of the Self: Lectures at Dartmouth College, 1980*, ed. Henri-Paul Fruchaud and Daniele Lorenzini, trans. Graham Burchell (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016), 25.

[26]For a list of synonyms to "care of the self," see Michel Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1981–1982*, ed. Frédéric Gros, trans. Graham Burchell, Lectures at the Collège de France 9 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 12.

[27]For instance, Peter Sloterdijk, *You Must Change Your Life* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013), 149.

[28]Epictetus, *Discourses, Fragments, Handbook*, trans. Robin Hard, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 183. Foucault notes the following on Epictetus: "In fact, the idea of a missionary of the truth coming to give men the ascetic example of the true life, recalling them to themselves, putting them back on the right path, and announcing to them another catastasis of the world, this personage is, of course, up to a point, part of the modified Socratic heritage, but you can see that, up to a point, it also comes close to the Christian model" (Michel Foucault, *The Courage of Truth—The Government of Self and Others II: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1983–1984*, ed. Frédéric Gros, trans. Graham Burchell, Lectures at the Collège

Foucault is not suggesting here, I should add, an uncritical buy-in of these ancient practices of self-transformation; according to him, that would neither be possible nor desirable. Nor is he forgetting for a moment that such practices can all too easily turn into "strategies of coercion or domination."[29] What he finds in them, instead, is a template that, once shorn of ancient cosmological and universalist dimensions, might enable us to concretely approach the constitution of human identity vis-à-vis the all-pervasive effects of disciplinary power. Such an ethics of liberation or "art of freedom," we could say, names a type of intentionality aiming at voluntary subjectivation through practices of subjectivation.[30] In other words, the practices of the *technē tou biou* attune us to the conditions of our existence by performing both a critical (i.e., they have a moving-away-from element) and a formative function (i.e., the relationship of self to itself by which the subject constitutes herself as a moral agent).[31]

Two things of importance emerge in the "art of living" or aesthetic of existence so conceived. For one, we can see how Foucault defines self-realization primarily as continual "straying afield of oneself;"[32] an activity that aims at creating spaces of freedom within ever-changing arrangements of power relations. He writes:

> The three elements of my morality are: [first] the refusal to accept what is proposed to us as self-evident; second, the need to analyze and to know (*savoir*), because we can do nothing without reflection as well as knowledge (*connaissance*), this is the principle of curiosity; and third, the principle of innovation, that is to say, not being inspired by a pre-existing program, looking for what has not yet been thought, imagined, or known in elements of our reflection and the way we act. So, refusal, curiosity, innovation.[33]

To that end, even micro-gestures such as laughter, irony, and a range of other everyday practices can assume an emancipatory sway by which we might fashion alternative identities in the face of oppression.[34] And second, Foucault

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de France 11 [New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011], 316).

[29]Foucault, "Subjectivity and Truth," 25.

[30]Arnold I. Davidson, "Introduction," in *Hermeneutics of the Subject*, xx. For the term "art of freedom," see Timothy O'Leary, *Foucault and the Art of Ethics* (New York: Continuum, 2006), 170.

[31]See Davidson, "Introduction," xix.

[32]Foucault asks: "After all, what would be the value of the passion for knowledge if it resulted only in a certain amount of knowledgeableness and not, in one way or another and to the extent possible, in the knower's straying afield of himself?" (*The History of Sexuality: The Use of Pleasure*, trans. R. Hurley, vol. 2 [New York: Vintage, 1990], 8).

[33]Idem, "Interview with Michel Foucault (3 November 1980)," in *Hermeneutics of the Self*, 127.

[34]On the importance of micro-practices as a form of "tactical" resistance, see Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984) 91–110.

proposes a thoroughly Nietzschean recasting of authenticity by means of self-creative expressiveness or self-stylizing. Indeed, the notion of "style" or "stylizing" in reference to self-realization is central to Nietzsche's idea of the *Übermensch* as the ultimate self-care exemplar. Such a person sculpts or stylizes herself as "an *oeuvre* that carries certain aesthetic values and meets certain stylistic criteria."[35] Or as Nietzsche puts it:

> To "give style" to one's character—a great and rare art! It is practiced by those who survey all the strengths and weaknesses of their nature and then fit them into an artistic plan until every one of them appears as art and reason and even weaknesses delight the eye. Here a large mass of second nature has been added; there a piece of the original nature has been removed—both times through long practice and daily work at it. . . . In the end, when the work is finished, it becomes evident how the constraint of a single taste governed and formed everything large and small. Whether this taste was good or bad is less important than one might suppose, if only it was a single taste![36]

While a conception of anything transcending the confines of individual creativity and autonomy is absent here, we nevertheless find in Foucault an account of chastised self-transcendence. After all, the subject in question is capable of assessing things, responding to them, envisioning a course of action, establishing a set of practices, evaluating the extent and success of her self-crafting, and even commending to others the beneficence of such an intentionality. For Foucault, a prime example of such a self-transcending subjectivity is the *parrhesiastes*—an authentic truth-agent for whom *parrhesia* or frank speech comprises a way of life.

On Being a Parrhesiastes

In his discussion of the art of living, Foucault frequently highlights the tension in ancient philosophy between *epimeleia heautou* and the paradigmatic Delphic apothegm *gnōthi seauton* ("know yourself"). In Plato's *Alcibiades*, for instance, "the requirement 'know yourself' completely covers over and occupies the entire space opened up by the requirement 'take care of yourself.' Ultimately 'take care of yourself" will mean: 'know yourself.'"[37] Correlatively, Foucault employs these categories—*gnōthi seauton* and *epimeleia heautou*—as epigrams for two types of philosophizing: "philosophy," which places self-knowledge at the center of its attention, and "spirituality," which gives primacy to the self-crafting of human agents. The increasing dominance of the former over the latter comprises the warp and woof of Foucault's

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[35]Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, 10–11. Here I follow Thomas G. Guarino, who interprets Nietzsche's *Übermensch* as someone "who welcomes pluralism and understands the lack of final structures. This is someone who can don many masks, live in many cultures, the one who can renounce foundations even while accepting the risk and historicity of human life" (Thomas G. Guarino, *Vattimo and Theology*, Philosophy and Theology [New York: T&T Clark, 2009], 36).

[36]Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science: With a Prelude in Rhymes and an Appendix of Songs*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1974), §290, 232.

[37]Foucault, *Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 419.

lapsarian genealogy of Western philosophy.[38] Central to Foucault's narrative is the treatment of *gnōthi seauton* as a shoo-in for objectivized, epistemic proceduralism—methodological or definitional criteria for accessing truth (hermeneutical or otherwise)—at the expense of approaches that put a premium on the epistemic worthiness of the agent. Its primacy is on display whenever a philosopher, or anyone else for that matter, claims to have access to truth "through his activity of knowing, without anything else being demanded of him and without him having to change or alter his being as subject."[39] It is this shift that Foucault has in mind when he writes about the "Cartesian moment" in Western intellectual history, naming the moment—any moment actually—when "philosophy" becomes detached from "spirituality," and with it, unwittingly buys into an "undeveloped theory of the subject."[40] It stands to reason, therefore, that any understanding or practice of hermeneutics that operates on subject-*less* presuppositions—"subject-less" here denoting a "forgetfulness of being" in favor of disengaged proceduralism—becomes yet another instance of "philosophy" in Foucault's sense of the term.

In response to such transmutations of the philosophical task, Foucault articulates several points of critique. To begin with, we must not reduce access to truth to "a simple act of knowledge (*connaissance*)" or some procedural methodologism that sets aside the subject's existential coordinates. Instead, an approach is needed that recognizes that the (hermeneutical) subject "must be changed, transformed, shifted, and become, to some extent and up to a certain point, other than himself." To wit, the pursuit of truth and self-transcendence are essential corollaries. Thus, we ask: What price needs "to be paid for access to the truth"?[41] How does one become worthy of it? What does letting go of oneself in this sense mean? How does self-care produce or shape people who are capable of "having" truth—being open and attuned to it, caring about it, being capable of perceiving it, embodying it in one's comportment to the world, etc.? What is at stake here, then, is truthfulness—the task of turning ourselves into the kind of persons (and community of persons!) who not only desire to know the truth, but also have the courage and capacity to accept it and be changed by it.[42]

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[38]See ibid., 461. Davidson recollects Foucault's remark during a conversation that "Spinoza is one of the last ancient philosophers and Leibniz one of the first modern philosophers" ("Introduction," xxv).

[39]Foucault, *Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 15.

[40]Ibid., 461. Rayner rightly notes that this "is precisely how Heidegger read the history of truth. Heidegger presents a distinguished example of how to misread the history of truth, presupposing the constancy of self-knowledge in the form of the pre-ontological understanding of being" (Rayner, "Foucault, Heidegger," 70). Foucault himself states: "I have tried to reflect on all this from the side of Heidegger and starting from Heidegger" (*Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 189).

[41]Ibid., 15.

[42]I have elsewhere explored this subject matter as it relates to Iris Murdoch's moral epistemology. See Ante Jerončić, "Loving the Good: Iris Murdoch's Ethical Realism," *Biblijski Pogledi* 21 (2013): 101–114.

At this juncture, it is hard to miss links to Nietzsche's perspectivism, both regarding Nietzsche's influence on Foucault, and the way in which Foucault's "spirituality" might help us reread some of Nietzsche's arguments.[43] As is clear from his (posthumously published) 1872–1873 essay, "On Truth and Lies in an Extra-Moral Sense," Nietzsche views both the pursuit and articulation of truth as inseparable from the jagged topography of virtues and vices, emotions and experiences, influences and presuppositions. There is always more to knowing than simply *knowing*; inevitably, all kinds of motives, sensibilities, tastes, and affects—all of which figure into Nietzsche's conception of "drive" (*Instinkt*)—also get thrown into the mix in a way that eludes our clear comprehension.[44] Accordingly, we must admit that

> the intellect, as a means for the preservation of the individual, unfolds its chief powers in simulation. . . . In man this art of simulation reaches its peak: here deception, flattery, lying and cheating, talking behind the back, posing, living in borrowed splendor, being masked, the disguise of convention, acting a role before others and before oneself—in short, the constant fluttering around the single flame of vanity is so much the rule and the law that almost nothing is more incomprehensible than how an honest and pure urge for truth could make its appearance among men.[45]

In light of such an epistemic fallibility and the pervasiveness of self-deception in human agents, both Nietzsche and Foucault assume the mantle of virtue epistemologists broadly construed.[46] In a way that resonates with our cultural situation in the West, they recognize that ignorance has a personal and "political geography, prompting us to ask: Who knows not? And why not? Where is there ignorance and why? Like knowledge or wealth or poverty, ignorance has a face, a house, and a price: it is encouraged here and discouraged there from ten thousand accidents (and deliberations) of social

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[43]In one interview, Foucault describes himself as "simply Nietzschean." See Michel Foucault, "The Return of Morality," in *Politics, Philosophy, Culture*, 251. The interview itself took place on 29 May 1984. For a helpful discussion of Foucault's project in relationship to Nietzsche, see Hans Sluga, "'I Am Simply Nietzschean,'" in *Foucault and Philosophy*, ed. Timothy O'Leary and Christopher Falzon (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 36–59.

[44]For a helpful discussion of drives in Nietzsche's moral psychology, see Paul Katsafanas, *The Nietzschean Self: Moral Psychology, Agency, and the Unconscious* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 77–107.

[45]Friedrich Nietzsche, "From 'On Truth and Lie in the Extra-Moral Sense,'" in *The Portable Nietzsche*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Penguin, 1976), 43. For a helpful discussion on the "discipline of veracity" and pragmatism in Nietzsche's "On Truth," see Robert Brigati, "Veracity and Pragmatism in Nietzsche's 'On Truth and Lies,'" *Parrhesia Journal* 25 (2015): 78–102.

[46]On reading Foucault as a virtue epistemologist, see W. Jay Wood, "On the Uses and Advantages of an Epistemology for Life," in *Postmodern Philosophy and Christian Thought*, ed. Merold Westphal, Indiana Series in the Philosophy of Religion (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 24–26.

fortune."[47] That is to say, ignorance does not just have a narrative, a story of how things happen to us. It also comes with a burden of intentionality, or better yet, moral responsibility, in that there are things we could have known had we so desired. Of course, the deeper question of how I become a person in whom such a desire is absent is precisely the point at which virtue ethics and epistemology intersect.

Anyone interested in actual hermeneutical practice, where "actual" stands in for the concern of how fallible human beings *actually* go about their interpretive endeavors, will be hard-pressed to take the above stated anthropological considerations seriously. In other words, if Nietzsche is correct about the priming effect of human drives—priming in the sense that drives predispose us to perceive and take in texts and situations in a certain way—then we need to consider more carefully what is at stake in being an authentic interpretative agent. Such a task receives additional warrant when we take to heart insights from contemporary neuropsychology and cognitive science. While those disciplines either question or refine Nietzsche's account of "drives," his basic intuition that there is always more to knowing than simply knowing has become a common coinage. As when Graham Ward reminds us that

> there is a mode of liminal processing, related to embodiment and affectivity, which "thinks" more quickly and reacts more instinctively than our conscious rational deliberation. Beneath and prior to interpretation, and conflicts of meaning, lie sets of remembered associations and assumptions woven tightly into the processes of how we *make* sense. These associations and assumptions have been taught and arrived at; they are not innate, they are not genetic—but they are not always articulated. These assumptions constitute what some social anthropologists (Pierre Bourdieu, for example) have called "habitus"—encultured dispositions, socialised mindsets and biases.[48]

I believe that we gain much when we refract the Foucauldian problematic of subjectivity and truth through such a broadened conception of human cognition, one which seriously troubles disembodied and objectivist narrations of hermeneutic agency.

To bring this point home from another angle, let us briefly consider Foucault's discussion of *parrhesia* (frank speech) as the true mother of

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[47]Robert Proctor and Londa L. Schiebinger, eds., *Agnotology: The Making and Unmaking of Ignorance* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008).

[48]Graham Ward, *Unbelievable: Why We Believe and Why We Don't* (London: Tauris, 2015). See also Timothy D. Wilson, *Strangers to Ourselves: Discovering the Adaptive Unconscious* (Cambridge: Belknap, 2002); Iain McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); James K. A. Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works*, Cultural Liturgies 2 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013); David Eagleman, *Incognito: The Secret Lives of the Brain* (New York: Pantheon, 2011); and John A. Bargh, *Before You Know It: The Unconscious Reasons We Do What We Do* (New York: Touchstone, 2017).

"spirituality."[49] In Fearless Speech, for instance, he delineates several components of the *parrhesiastic* act.[50] First, the speaker ought to present his views without undue embellishments or rhetorical trickery. Second, *parrhesia* rests on the speaker's conviction that what he professes is true. "Such truth-having," furthermore, "is guaranteed by the possession of certain moral qualities;"[51] qualities both to come to know the truth and to communicate such a knowledge to others. Third, he attests to that conviction by speaking courageously in the face of danger. "The speaker uses his freedom and chooses frankness instead of persuasion, truth instead of falsehood or silence, the risk of death instead of life and security, criticism instead of flattery, and moral duty instead of self-interest and moral apathy."[52] It is this moral quality of courage that is a critical litmus test as to whether one is a *parrhesiastes*. Fourth, *parrhesia* always aims at critique, either of oneself or another. Accordingly, the *parrhesiastes* is a speaker who says everything he or she has in mind, who opens himself up to other people in an entirely transparent way, free from any prevarications, even if what he says flies in the face of the crowd and powers that be.[53] And finally, fifth, the *parrhesiastes* speaks the truth as someone who puts himself under the obligation to obey it.[54] He is not a theoretician of truth in the sense, let's say, professors of ethics are, who do not see the obligation to live out what they teach in the classroom.[55] In sum, *parrhesia* is a personal commitment to "say what has to be said, what we want to say, what we think ought to be said because it is necessary, useful, and true."[56]

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[49]Michel Foucault, *The Government of Self and Others: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1982–1983*, ed. Frédéric Gros, trans. Graham Burchill, Lectures at the Collège de France 7 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 342. One of Foucault's main intents for the recovery of "spirituality" lies in the fact that he sees it as a progenitor of philosophy as critical theory.

[50]Michel Foucault, *Fearless Speech*, ed. Joseph Pearson (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2001), 11–20. See also idem, *The Government of Self*, 66–67.

[51]Idem, *Fearless Speech*, 15.

[52]Ibid., 19–20.

[53]See ibid., 12.

[54]For a helpful discussion of Judith Butler's engagement with Foucault's *parrhesia*, see Anita Brady and Tony Schirato, *Understanding Judith Butler*, Understanding Contemporary Culture (London: SAGE, 2011), 130–134.

[55]There is a significant body of literature examining this phenomenon. As the argument sometimes goes, it would be unfair to expect from an ethicist to have higher moral standards just by virtue of him or her being an ethicist. See, for example, Eric Schwitzgebel and Joshua Rust, "The Moral Behavior of Ethics Professors: Relationships among Self-Reported Behavior, Expressed Normative Attitude, and Directly Observed Behavior," *Philosophical Psychology* 27.3 (2014): 293–327.

[56]Foucault, *Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 366. Although not the subject of our exploration here, parrhesia so defined yields itself to a number of contemporary applications. A quick search through citation indexes resulted in a list of following research topics: "Teacher Political Disclosure as *Parrhesia*," "Nursing as 'Disobedient' Practice," "*Parrhesia* and Democracy," "Quakers and *Parrhesia*," "Philosophy

As we coalesce these various strands of Foucault's thought, what emerges is a particular type of experiential philosophy, in other words, a "philosophy as a way of life." Its existential spaciousness commends a certain kind of "moral perfectionism" (in Stanley Cavell's and Cora Diamond's sense of the term when discussing Wittgenstein's ethics of self-transformation), a moral vision that "wishes to prevent understanding which is unaccompanied by inner change,"[57] including understanding that emerges in the context of hermeneutical engagement. By committing to such a perspective, Foucault places himself within a tableau of thinkers who, significant differences notwithstanding, share certain resonances when it comes to critiquing the "ontologizing of rational procedure."[58] Any number of experiential philosophers comes to mind in this regard: Søren Kierkegaard, Henry David Thoreau, William James, Martin Heidegger, Iris Murdoch, (later) Ludwig Wittgenstein, Charles Taylor, and others.[59] In that sense, Foucault's *Bildung* philosophy—one that connects "truth" and "virtue" with the pursuit of human flourishing—moves rhizomatically and intertextually into all kinds of fecund directions which, unfortunately, cannot be explored at any length here. What does interest us and has been our focus so far are the implications Foucault's self-care might have for how we are to understand the agential dimension of hermeneutics.

Hermeneutics and Truthfulness

So far in this article, I have examined two central moves in Michel Foucault's philosophical opus. I began with relating his ethical turn to the category of *epimeleia heautou.* There I noted how Foucault samples ancient practices of self-transformation not in order to uncritically emulate them but rather to articulate a discursive space for situated or engaged (and thereby embodied)

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with Children as an Exercise in *Parrhesia*," "Practicing *Parrhesia* in Self-Managing Community," etc.

[57]Stanley Cavell, "The Availability of Wittgenstein's Later Philosophy," in *Must We Mean What We Say? A Book of Essays* (New York: Scribner, 1969), 72. For the initial reference to Cavell, I am indebted to Davidson, "Introduction," xxvi. In Cavell's usage, "moral perfectionism" broadly refers to efforts that stress the moral responsibility of self-knowledge and the difficulties associated with it. Put differently, it "captures the thought that persons are always on the trembling edge of the unexpected, on the verge of becoming themselves through shedding what is less than perfect. . . . All this an *unending* process of becoming, a forever *unfinished* striving" (Edward F. Mooney, *Lost Intimacy in American Thought: Recovering Personal Philosophy from Thoreau to Cavell* [New York: Continuum, 2009], 115; emphasis original). For an additional development of this theme, see Stanley Cavell, *Conditions Handsome and Unhandsome: The Constitution of Emersonian Perfectionism*, Paul Carus Lectures 19 (La Salle: Open Court, 1990).

[58]Charles Taylor, *Philosophical Arguments* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 61.

[59]For a helpful comparative study, see Jörg Volbers, *Selbsterkenntnis und Lebensform: Kritische Subjektivität nach Wittgenstein und Foucault* (Friedland: Bielefeld, 2009).

agency, one that makes the experience of freedom possible within the context of personal, historical, and disciplinary contingencies.[60] I then turned to Foucault's delineation of *parrhesia* to illustrate how the relationship between subjectivity and truth plays itself out in this quintessential political (and communal) practice. Such an account of truth-speech, as I have highlighted, troubles all types of epistemic reductionisms that unwittingly operate on some form of self-neglect. By now it should be clear that this should have an enormous significance for how we conceive of hermeneutical practice. The interpretive agent—irrespective of whether we reference textual interpretations more narrowly or a fundamental modality of human existence more generally—by his or her very being determines the range of perceptual possibilities. As we will see in the paragraphs below, such possibilities pertain not only to getting at what a text (or a situation) says, but also to the range of meaningful appropriations in the sense of what can be "done" by such-and-such interpreted "truth." In that sense, the *parrhesiastes* who is able to "see" and "do" certain things because he is a certain kind of moral agent who stands in as a type of authentic hermeneutical enactment.

But before I turn to the unpacking of these claims a bit more, let me highlight some reservations I have with respect to Foucault's approach. To begin with, I side with Pierre Hadot's objection that Foucault's reading of ancient philosophy mobilizes a notion of self fundamentally at odds with Hellenistic or classical ideas of what it is that one ought to care for.[61] Specifically, he faults Foucault for superimposing a flattened and individualist sense of the self on ancient sources, one devoid of any normativity, thus resulting in a "new form of Dandyism, late twentieth-century style." As the critique goes, one cannot, for instance, simply demythologize the Stoics by setting aside the correlation of human flourishing and a life according to *physis* (nature) central to their writings. You reject the belief in the universal *Logos*, the moral structure of the universe, the implied universalism of it all and, suddenly, technologies of the self, such as the Stoic *prosochē* (attentiveness, vigilance), lose their intended meaning. Therefore, yes, "all spiritual exercises are, fundamentally, a return to the self, in which the self is liberated from the state of alienation into which it has been plunged by worries, passions, and desire." But at the same time, "the 'self' liberated in this way is no longer merely our egoistic, passionate individuality: it is our *moral* person, open to universality and objectivity, and participating in universal nature or thought."[62] Consequently, an entirely different type of self-transcendence is operative in these classical writings when compared to Foucault's aesthetics of freedom. That this should be the case is hardly surprising. After all, he seeks to purge philosophical thinking of all transcendence; transcendence in the form of trans-historical normativity

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[60]On the notion of embodied agency, see Charles Taylor, "Embodied Agency and Background in Heidegger," in *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger*, ed. Charles B. Guignon, Cambridge Companions to Philosophy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 317–336.

[61]Hadot, *Philosophy*, 211.

[62]Ibid., 103.

or discourse about essences. In Foucault's "art of living," there isn't, and there can't ever be, an *erōs* for perfection (*pace* Iris Murdoch); an *erōs* for a transcendent, normative source.

I find this problematic not only because I take umbrage at Foucault's "immanent frame" (C. Taylor), as a Christian theologian, but also because any account of human flourishing along Foucauldian lines necessitates at least two components. First, Foucault's *ethopoetics* is unintelligible apart from the specification of basic human goods correlating to the kind of beings we are—exactly the task he strenuously avoids. A *parrhesiastes*, for instance, utilizes not only a variety of tools such as interpretation, communication, repetition, and agitation, but she also does so as a person to whom, in the course of her development, certain basic human goods have been placed, more or less, at her disposal. She was able to acquire language, form ego identity, develop physically, and otherwise actualize her existence, which then, in turn, enabled her to become a *parrhesiastes*. That is not to say that the specification of such goods—whether understood in terms of needs, desires, interests, goals, or capabilities—is free from disagreements and even controversies.[63] But what it *does* mean is that such a conversation is to be had in order to make Foucault's account intelligible.[64] Second, the practice of *parrhesia* implies a range of *capacities*, such as the ability to live in a state of practical consciousness, assign causal attributions, engage in interest formation, remember, and experience intersubjective understanding, all of which are, to some degree, at work in any act of self-formation.[65] With that in mind, does not Foucault's *parrhesiastes* require such capacities, and couldn't they, in principle, be discussed in some fashion that does not amount to oppressive subjectification? And if that indeed is possible, wouldn't such a delineation amount to presenting a vision of "human nature," one that entails at least some normative features?

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[63]Theorists, such as John Rawls, Roy Baumeister, Hans Jonas, Kai Nielsen, Erich Fromm, John Finnis, and others, define basic goods in different yet complementary ways. For an excellent account of these and other proposals, see Christian Smith, *To Flourish or Destruct: A Personalist Theory of Human Goods, Motivations, Failure, and Evil* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 160–180. Smith's synthetic account proposes the following groupings of basic goods: bodily survival, security, and pleasure; knowledge of reality; identity coherence and affirmation; exercising purposive agency; moral affirmation; social belonging and love. See ibid., 181–182. Also helpful in this regard is William Schweiker's classification of human goods: (1) pre-moral goods that constitute material well-being, (2) reflexive goods that constitute personal well-being, (3) social goods that constitute communal well-being, and (4) the intrinsic ethical good of integrity that one generates by ordering the previous goods by respecting and enhancing the integral relation between them. See *Responsibility and Christian Ethics*, New Studies in Christian Ethics 6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); idem, *Dust that Breathes: Christian Faith and the New Humanisms* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010).

[64]For a related critique of Foucault, see Maria Antonaccio, *A Philosophy to Live By: Engaging Iris Murdoch* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 136–137.

[65]See Christian Smith, *What Is a Person? Rethinking Humanity, Social Life, and the Moral Good from the Person Up* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 25–89.

Which leads me to the qualms I have with Foucault's aesthetics of existence in general. By insisting that we are to see ourselves as unrestrained artisans of self-inventing possibilities, he commits to a perpetual table-clearing; a *tabula rasa* return-loop, so to speak. On such terms, we can move from one existential location to another, from one pursuit of authentic expressiveness to another, by the mere fiat of inventive subjectivity. That such possibilities are at times self-canceling, that they predispose the individual to some options but not others, that they differ in their potentiality for human flourishing, seems to be muted in Foucault's approach. Thus, his Dionysian celebration of existential flux elides the brute fact that actions over time sediment into a range of habitual orientations in individuals. Must there not be a possibility for their critical comparison, and wouldn't such an exercise demand recourse to something like human nature, as pointed to above? With that in mind, I side with Charles Taylor, who points to Foucault's failure to provide an "order of human life, or way we are, or human nature, that one can appeal to in order to judge or evaluate between ways of life."[66] It commits him to question-begging assertions about the need for autonomy and the importance of self-realization without specifying what it is about human life that should command or justify the recognition of such values *qua* values. That is why, in the end, I find it hard to see how Foucault's Nietzschean aesthetics of the self, with its non-teleological self-stylizing and kaleidoscopic impermanence, could ever "produce" a state of character required for the *parrhesiastic* act and existence.

So much in terms of critique. On the positive side, I have affirmed Foucault's basic intuition that, for a *parrhesiastes*, truth is more than a representational phenomenon—her possessing mental images mirroring factual states or "reality." Indeed, the *parrhesiastes*, or an authentic hermeneutical agent in general, has a certain life orientation and possesses a certain character on the basis of which she is not only equipped to know the truth in a representational sense. She, furthermore, sees the truth *as it is for* a course of action or a way of being. That is, truth for her is an existential force that demands obedience and responsible agency. For her, metaphorical notions of the "depth," "height," "width," and "length" of truth represent more than merely a rhetorical pull. The *parrhesiastes* hermeneuticizes texts and situations, and discerns problems and possibilities in a way that leads to the unveiling or "unconcealment" (M. Heidegger) of truth for that specific time and context—what it means, whom it addresses, what course of action it commends, what self-perceptions it changes, how it opens new horizons of understanding, and how it restructures imagination and attention.[67] Quite

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[66]Charles Taylor, "Foucault on Freedom and Truth," in *Foucault: A Critical Reader*, ed. David Couzens Hoy (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), 93. He additionally remarks on how Foucault's self-imposed strictures prevent him from accepting "the rival notion of a deep or authentic self that arises out of the critical traditions of Hegel and, in another way, Heidegger or Merleau-Ponty" ("Overcoming Epistemology," 16).

[67]Unfortunately, I cannot fully explore here a deeper connection between *parrhesia* and Heidegger's treatment of truth as *aletheia* or "unconcealment." For an illuminating

possibly, she exhibits an array of attunements, aptitudes, sensibilities, and epistemic pliability that others with a similar repository of factual information might not possess. If one were to give a Thoreauvian inflection to Foucault's account of the *parrhesiastes*'s relationship to truth, we could say that seeing is "ultimately dependent on the individual's *ability* to see and create, and the world as known is thus radically dependent on character."[68]

None of this is novel or even controversial. Most would grant that hermeneutics always concerns a specific human agent with specific existential coordinates engaging in a specific quest within a specific context and purpose with a specific range of ingrained skills, experiences dispositions, and biases—in short, to borrow from Pierre Bourdieu, an agent with a *habitus*.[69] In that regard, the interpreter might be honest or dishonest, open or intransigent, careless or attentive; she might have certain aptitudes and competencies, but not others; certain life experiences or decisions might have led her to the point where she cares about certain ideas or topics, but is indifferent to others; she might have vested interests that concern her financial well-being and status, or be impervious to them; she most certainly partakes in specific cultural practices and inhabits a historical context that closes off certain epistemic horizons, but opens up others; and on top (or bottom?) of it all, traditioned linguistic practices and imaginaries shape her consciousness and meaningful inhabitation of the world. In other words, her encounter with the world (and text) is intensely "carnal"; she has a *body* which always orients her perceptual sphere and corresponding saliences—what it is that stands out as interesting, important, threatening, emotionally charged, and so on.[70]

Such a triangulation of truth, experience, and praxis as we have it in the example above relates to the ontology of truth as found in the Scriptures. For

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account of *aletheia* in Heidegger, see Mark A. Wrathall, *Heidegger and Unconcealment: Truth, Language, and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[68]Alfred I. Tauber, *Henry David Thoreau and the Moral Agency of Knowing* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 5; emphasis original.

[69]See Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 52–65. Much more could be said on this point, including early Heidegger's "hermeneutics of facticity" which structures his existential phenomenology and speaks to the incomprehensibility of being. For an insightful discussion of these issues, see Scott M. Campbell, *The Early Heidegger's Philosophy of Life: Facticity, Being, and Language*, Perspectives in Continental Philosophy (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012). Additionally, for a helpful treatment of the task and focus of philosophical hermeneutics vis-à-vis human experience, see the following: Nicholas Davey, *Unquiet Understanding: Gadamer's Philosophical Hermeneutics*, The SUNY Series in Contemporary Continental Philosophy (Albany: SUNY Press, 2006); Donatella Di Cesare, *Utopia of Understanding: Between Babel and Auschwitz*, The SUNY Series in Contemporary Continental Philosophy (Albany: SUNY Press, 2012).

[70]My references to the role of the body are in the vein of Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Donald A. Landes (New York: Routledge, 2012). Broadly understood, I utilize the concept of the body and its synonym "carnal" to signify the centrality of temporality, spatiality, movement, and so on for the structuring of perception.

instance, Paul tells us, in Rom 1:18, ESV, about the unrighteous who "by their unrighteousness suppress the truth," which then resulted in a lifestyle profoundly at odds with the will of God. In that context, one might argue, matters of the heart—"their senseless hearts were darkened" (1:21, LEB)—decisively trump both truth and the means of "getting at it." No refinement of hermeneutical procedures would have been of use in the face of such a frontal refusal to know the truth. As Paul puts it elsewhere, "the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel" (2 Cor 4:4, ESV). On the other hand, 2 Peter highlights how certain "qualities" of mind and character—self-control, brotherly love, etc.—help us to be effective and fruitful in the knowledge of Jesus Christ (1:8). Again, "getting at the truth" here also encompasses something more than pure proceduralism, especially the kind that assumes the proverbial "view from nowhere."[71] Thus, unless we repent of our hardheartedness, we will neither "see" nor "hear" the truth (Mark 8:17–21).

At this point, it might appear that in so arguing I have thoroughly subjectivized the hermeneutical task, dissolving it into a morass of subjective biases. After all, is it not the case that efforts to "overcome epistemology" (C. Taylor) predictably come to a standstill in some anti-realist or even nihilist territories?[72] At the very least, am I not committing to a form of noncognitivism in favor of emotivism of sorts? I would hope not. I most certainly do not side with approaches that revel in endless chains of signification—approaches "unfettered by anything in the nature of a correct interpretation or an irrecusable meaning of either life or text."[73] That is, I do not subscribe to forms of subjectivist hermeneutics that exhibit a neurotic tic when faced with demands for clarity, attempts at interpretive adjudication, or efforts at getting to the *Sache* (H. G. Gadamer) of interpretation. In that sense, John D. Caputo's (somewhat) critical realist adage that "interpretations go all the way down but some interpretations are better than others" strikes me as basically correct.[74] What I do question is the way in which discussions about hermeneutics at times assume a dwarfed or atomistic conception of agency, one buttressed with an ambit of mechanistic and dualistic

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[71]Thomas Nagel, *The View from Nowhere* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986). He writes: "The attempt is made to view the world not from a place within it, or from the vantage point of a special type of life and awareness, but from nowhere in particular and no form of life in particular at all" (*Mortal Questions* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979], 208). For this reference, I am indebted to Taylor, "Lichtung or Lebensform," 66.

[72]Taylor's major complaint is that modern epistemology presents us with a disengaged agent comprised of the following three facets: (1) atomism of input, (2) computational picture of mental functions, and (3) neutrality (ibid., 63).

[73]Idem, "Overcoming Epistemology," 18.

[74]John D. Caputo, *Hermeneutics: Facts and Interpretation in the Age of Information* (London: Pelican, 2018), vii. For a similar argument, see Umberto Eco, *The Limits of Interpretation*, Advances in Semiotics (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994).

(subject/object) metaphors more proper to various Cartesianisms and their forms of disengaged agency rather than the Bible.

Of course, due to space constraints, much of importance has been left unsaid. For one, I have articulated my position on the primacy of embodiment in too oblique a manner. Also, I wish that my indebtedness to and engagement of Charles Taylor's thought amounted to a bit more than an intertextual nod, as his (post-Heideggerian) influence is palpable throughout. Finally, I might have left a wrong impression that in stressing the themes of *askēsis*, virtue, authenticity, and so on, I have unduly neglected the role of broader cultural and historical givens—communities, social imaginaries, social location, political context, etc.—in the shaping of hermeneutical agency. Such was not my intention. While I do resist cliché-ridden critiques of individuality, I understand my account to be decidedly *non*individualistic and in tune with intersubjective and historicist sensibilities common to personalist accounts of the human self. Such and other matters demand a careful hearing, of course. However, in lieu of a non-achievable finality, let me close with Iris Murdoch's sagacious observation that accurately sums up the basic intuition behind this article: "Truthfulness, the search for truth, for a closer connection between thought and reality, demands and effects an exercise of virtues and a purification of desires. The ability, for instance, to think justly about what is evil, or to love another person unselfishly, involves a discipline of intellect and emotion. Thought, goodness and reality are thus seen to be connected."[75] On that point, I cannot but concur!

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[75]Iris Murdoch, *Metaphysics as a Guide to Morals* (New York: Penguin, 1993), 399.

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS FOR MISSION IN ISLAMIC CONTEXTS: FIVE FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

Esther Happuch*   Wagner Kuhn
                                   Andrews University

Abstract

Over the last few decades, Seventh-day Adventist missionaries have begun engaging in thorough contextualization and innovative mission practices. However, sometimes the resulting liturgies or cultural adaptations have caused reservations for onlookers. Thus, the following question emerges: is it necessary to articulate a missional hermeneutic to guide mission practitioners in their quest for a biblical, yet relevant, transmission of the gospel to majority world religions? This article will briefly survey some of the questions, issues, and purposes that surround the topic of an Adventist missional hermeneutic and will make several suggestions for a missional hermeneutic specifically for Islamic contexts. Whereas the immediate context of this study is Seventh-day Adventist missions, the principles and experiences involved are applicable to a broad range of Christian missions.

Keywords: biblical hermeneutics, missional hermeneutics, Islam

Introduction

The mission enterprise of the Seventh-day Adventist Church has had its share of failures and challenges as it has tried to advance the gospel in the world. The church has gained significant growth in regions where Christianity is widespread, but has faced major challenges in preaching the gospel and making disciples in the least-evangelized areas of the world, like the 10/40 window. It has been particularly difficult to break through to major world religions such as Buddhism, Hindusm, and Islam, and even harder to retain converts from these religions.[1] For Islamic contexts, much of what has been written on the challenges of making and retaining new converts centers around three main themes: (1) logical or doctrinal objections,[2] (2) objections to Western

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*Esther Happuch is a pseudonym.

[1]According to Don Little, a researcher on discipling believers from Muslim backgrounds, more than seventy-five percent of Muslim converts fade out of Christian fellowship or return to Islam. See *Effective Discipling in Muslim Communities: Scripture, History, and Seasoned Practices* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 18.

[2]For an example of an ex-Muslim theologian who takes a heavily apologist stance, see Nabeel Qureshi, *No God but One: Allah or Jesus? A Former Muslim Investigates the Evidence for Islam and Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016).

or Christian lifestyle,[3] and (3) social barriers, such as fear of persecution or family rejection.[4]

The missiological issues presented by Islam are by no means reducible to one single problem that can be solved simply. It is clear that mission practitioners are in need of contextually relevant, appropriate, biblical methodologies to transmit the gospel message into these difficult contexts of the world, and sometimes it is helpful to take a step back and analyze the foundational assumptions and interpretive strategies that we carry with us to the task.

Over the last few decades, Adventist missionaries have begun engaging in thorough contextualization and innovative mission practices. However, sometimes the resulting liturgies or cultural adaptations have caused reservations for onlookers.[5] Thus, the following question emerges: is it necessary to articulate a missional hermeneutic to guide mission practitioners in their quest for a biblical, yet relevant, transmission of the gospel to majority world religions? This article will briefly survey some of the questions, issues, and purposes that surround the topic of a missional hermeneutic and will make several suggestions for a missional hermeneutic specifically for Islamic contexts.

The Rationale for a Missional Hermeneutic

The first question that will naturally be asked when pondering the term "missional hermeneutic" is, why would missiologists need a different hermeneutic than the one used by systematic theology or any other field of biblical research? Do not missiologists use the same biblical text? Why, then, would they need a different set of interpretive rules? To create a Seventh-day Adventist hermeneutic of mission would imply either something more or less than what is commonly used by theologians. This may stir up questions as to whether missiologists intend to create a hermeneutic that shortcuts interpretive processes to more easily reach the desired end.

Let us begin by summing up what we mean when we talk about hermeneutics or interpretive principles. If we broadly sum up these interpretive principles that guide biblical scholarship, we could say that the

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[3]Much of Phil Parshall's classic work, *Muslim Evangelism: Contemporary Approaches to Contextualization* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), is centered around the theme of decreasing unnecessary lifestyle objections.

[4]Much of Little's book (cited above in n.1) revolves around this theme. In a survey of sixty believers from a Muslim background, he was able to isolate a list of challenges faced by those who convert to Christianity. The top three, each of which were listed by more than half of the respondees, were "pressures from family, pressures from the local Muslim community, and pressures from being a socially and economically vulnerable member of one's family and community" (*Effective Discipling,* 171–173).

[5]G. T. Ng writes, "Issues relating to contextualization are complex. Discussions on such matters are likened to the opening of a 'Pandora's box' of vexed hermeneutical issues much debated today." ("Connected to Culture, Conformed to Christ: Exploring Alternate Forms of Worship," *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies* 1.2 [2005]: 57, 58).

field of hermeneutics is comprised of two key elements: presuppositions and processes. The former is what you bring with you *to* the text, and the latter is what you actively do *with* the text to extract meaning. Interpretive principles such as *sola Scriptura, tota Scriptura,* and *prima Scriptura*[6] have guided most conservative Christian scholars since the Reformation. Furthermore, the methodological toolbox is well stocked with interpretive process tools such as contextual analysis, textual study, literary analysis, and historical comparisons.[7]

Additionally, Seventh-day Adventist systematic theologians have articulated clear and well-rounded presuppositions that they bring to the text (what Fernando L. Canale calls "macro-hermeneutics"). Canale lists two macro-hermeneutics that have irrevocably separated Seventh-day Adventism from mainstream Protestant Christianity. The first, what he calls the Principle of Reality, rejects the Platonic view of God as a being outside of time, space, and history. The second, what he titles the Principle of Articulation, places all biblical history within a connected metanarrative, which both corrects and illuminates our interpretation of Scripture as we see the connection of each part to the grand whole.[8]

These hermeneutical principles have guided theologians over the many decades of Seventh-day Adventist theological research. Has the Seventh-day Adventist body developed in its hermeneutical positions and practices over the years? Yes. Do the different voices from different geographical directions emphasize biblical themes with differing strengths? Yes, again. The question at hand is, does missiology need a hermeneutic distinct and separate from that which is used in traditional theological circles? Or do they perhaps need more emphasis on one or more presuppositions or processes? Does Seventh-day Adventism view hermeneutics as a fixed, unchanging set of guidelines valid for the next hundreds of years, regardless of time and context?

Let it be affirmed that missiologists are not interested in subtracting from the body of hermeneutics that has been used for so many years. Sincere missionaries do not attempt to apply Scripture in partial or selective ways. Most missiologists would readily affirm their dedication to interpreting passages in their historical and textual context and viewing them in light of an immanent God who interacts in time and space. If any separate hermeneutic is to be made, it must *add* qualifiers rather than subtract.

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[6]See Richard M. Davidson, "Interpreting Scripture According to the Scriptures: Toward an Understanding of Seventh-day Adventist Hermeneutics," *Biblical Research Institute*, 20–21 May 2003, https://adventistbiblicalresearch.org/sites/default/files/pdf/interp%20scripture%20davidson.pdf.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Fernando L. Canale, "The Message and the Mission of the Remnant: A Methodological Approach," in *Message, Mission, and Unity of the Church,* ed. Ángel Manuel Rodríguez, (Silver Spring, MD: Biblical Research Institute, 2013), 269–270. For a comprehensive treatement of reading Scripture canonically, see John Peckham, *Canonical Theology: The Biblical Canon,* Sola Scriptura*, and Theological Method* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016).

Since frontline mission—particularly in the 10/40 window—causes an intense and often bewildering interaction between Scripture and local mission context, it may be necessary to create a missional hermeneutic in which qualifiers and interpretive tools are actually *added* to safeguard Seventh-day Adventism's historical hermeneutical approach to the Bible. In no case, however, should a missional hermeneutic be viewed as a pseudo-theological or unacademic approach to the biblical text. Although missionaries have sometimes been accused of shortcutting or ignoring correct hermeneutics, a missional hermeneutic should exist, not to perpetuate such practices but to hedge in and correct them.

There's one last difference between systematic theology and missiology that further highlights the necessity for an Adventist missional hermeneutic. The former focuses heavily on orthodoxy, while the latter struggles to communicate both orthodoxy and correct orthopraxy across cultural divides. Since the rise of Seventh-day Adventism, as with many other Christian denominations, the Seventh-day Adventist message has been received primarily by people groups with very similar worldviews and behaviors—Protestant Americans, Catholic and Orthodox Europeans, Catholic Latin Americans, and so on. Thus, the emphasis has tended to be on doctrinal particularities rather than on worldview or behaviors.[9]

For example, the Southern Baptist liturgy is arguably closer to the Seventh-day Adventist liturgy than to a typical Islamic service. The greatest sources of spiritual virtue *ex opere operato* in Roman Catholicism and Islam—the Eucharist and Qur'anic recitation[10]—find no conceptual comparison within Seventh-day Adventism, but the Catholic Eucharist still finds echoes of familiarity in the communion service. A wide gulf exists between the thousands of Christian denominations and the rest of the majority world religions. Missiology's task is to deal equally with worldview, beliefs, and behaviors in these foreign contexts. Some of the most perplexing issues have arisen out of mission in action—polygamy, gruesome initiation rites, *Sati* (widow burning), infanticide, leper burning, foot-binding, response to pagan festivals, appropriate worship forms, and the list could go on.

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[9]Some behavioral exceptions would be the health, temperance, and dress reform movements in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries—these were behaviors that arose out of the Seventh-day Adventist pioneers' research and that of others as well. Recent studies in ecclesiology have led to decisions on religious/cultural behavior-based matters such as women's ordination. Sabbath-keeping has been a behavioral matter throughout the entire history of the church and in every culture. But with these exceptions noted, it still seems that, overall, doctrinal issues have taken center stage.

[10]Frederick Mathewson Denny writes, "There is an almost sacramental quality to the recitation of the Qur'an, in that God's presence is made apparent and all else is hushed before it . . . the reciting of the sacred words is itself a participation in God's speech. This is why it must be performed as perfectly as possible" (*An Introduction to Islam,* 4th ed. [Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2011], 134–135). He goes on to make the comparison, "In the Christian Eucharist the Lord is symbolically eaten in bread and wine. In Qur'an recitation, there is 'real presence' also, as God's words and their power penetrate the consciousness of the listeners" (ibid., 141).

Is it necessary to develop a missional hermeneutic? We would argue that yes, it is necessary, in part because of the dramatic impact of hermeneutical trajectories on the worldview, beliefs, and behavior of new converts. Medical students that stand and watch an operation have very few rules to go by: wear sanitary scrubs; don't talk; don't touch anything. Interns that plan on participating in the surgery will have a host of other rules they must obey in preparation for doing hands-on work.

Missiology is hands-on, frontline work. It is with great indebtedness to biblical scholars and theologians who have laid solid foundations in hermeneutics that missiologists pick up their toolbox and keep every single tried-and-true tool for their own use.[11] It is with great humility that they proceed to present some additional suggestions that may assist them in forming a Seventh-day Adventist missional hermeneutic, particularly for use in Islamic contexts.

Presuppositions for a Missional Hermeneutic in Islamic Fields

As mentioned before, hermeneutics can be broadly divided into two categories: presuppositions and processes. This section begins by asking what presuppositions would be imperative to both the missionary and the Muslim Background Believer (MBB) when approaching the biblical text.

Missio Dei (God's Mission)

The first key presupposition undergirding a missional hermeneutic is to view the entire canon of Scripture as a missional undertaking of God. God is the missionary; the world is his mission field. Humans often fall into the habit of thinking that the mission experience is about *us;* we are sent by God and he is the one watching and helping while humans take center stage. A missional hermeneutic is instead theocentric, viewing God as the originator and primary agent of mission.[12]

God is the one who seeks wayward humans. *He* is the one who draws all humankind. *He* is the one who is emblazoned on every page of the Bible, calling to fallen mankind through the tear-filled voice of Jeremiah, the fiery denunciations of John the Baptist, and the thoughtful explanations of Paul. It is God, the great missionary, who became a man, who dwelt with us, adopting human life, culture, and language in history's greatest mission endeavor. The existence of the Bible itself testifies of God's missionary purposes towards mankind. In the words of Charles Taber,

> The very existence of the Bible is incontrovertible evidence of the God who refused to forsake his rebellious creation, who refused to give up, who was

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[11]See Andrew Tompkins, "Seventh-day Adventist Approaches to Other Religions: Preliminary Findings from 1930–1950, Part I," *AUSS* 54.2 (2016): 333–348; idem, "Seventh-day Adventist Approaches to Other Religions: Preliminary Findings from 1930–1950, Part II," *AUSS* 55.1 (2017): 107–126.

[12]Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 64.

and is determined to redeem and restore fallen creation to his original design for it. . . . The very existence of such a collection of writings testifies to a God who breaks through to human beings, who disclosed himself to them, who will not leave them unilluminated in their darkness, . . . who takes the initiative in re-establishing broken relationships with us.[13]

A missional hermeneutic sees the God of mission traced throughout each book of the Bible. While every single passage cannot be interpreted as having an overtly missionary theme or message—and exegetes must not attempt to fabricate "missiological implications" in every verse of scripture—it is still true that the general movement of God towards humanity can be seen everywhere. Additionally, many texts have their origin in missionary tasks, such as how Israel related to the surrounding nations, or how the early church dealt with issues in their mission context.[14]

If theology is seeking to know the will and nature of God, then theology of mission is seeking to know the will and nature of the mission of God. Biblical theology of mission and its associated hermeneutics seek to interpret the mission activity found throughout scripture in order to further question, shape, define, direct, guide, and evaluate our understanding of and commitment to our ongoing participation in God's mission. Missiological hermeneutics is an essential skill in biblical theology of mission, founded on a mindset of perceiving the mission activity within a given text.[15]

As an example of this presupposition in action, we turn to the book of Daniel. A typical Western Seventh-day Adventist hermeneutic approach compartmentalizes the entire book: some sections as narratives (mostly used for children's stories or sermon illustrations) and other sections as prophecies, used to convince non-Adventists of doctrines like the second coming and the investigative judgment. Still other sections are more opaque prophecies reserved for biblical scholars. This slicing and dicing of the book of Daniel destroys the overarching missional activity that is within the text. Sung Ik Kim notes that only a few scholars have probed the book of Daniel for missiological insights and perspectives.[16]

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[13]Charles R. Taber, "Missiology and the Bible," *Missiology* 11.2 (1983): 232.

[14]Wright, *The Mission of God,* 49.

[15]Shawn B. Redford, "Innovations in Missiological Hermeneutics," in *The State of Missiology Today: Global Innovations in Christian Witness*, ed. Charles E. Van Engen, Missiological Engagements (Downers Grove, IL: InterVaristy Press, 2016), 43.

[16]Sung Ik Kim, "Contextualization in Daniel's Use of God's Names for Cross-Cultural Witness to Nebuchadnezzar," *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies* 4.1 (2008): 18. Some authors have dealt with complex mission issues in the Old Testament in relation to how God has related with people who do not know him. See Andrew Tompkins, "God's Mission to the 'Nations' and Hindus: Three Old Testament Narrative Models" (MA thesis, Andrews University, 2012); Cristian Dumitrescu, "Cosmic Conflict as a Hermeneutical Framework for Mission Theology in the Old Testament" (PhD diss., Andrews University, 2010); Wright, *The Mission of God*; Walter C. Kaiser Jr*., Mission in the Old Testament: Israel as a Light to the Nations*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012).

The book of Daniel, though valuable for its prophetic content, must also be seen as involving the missional movement of God towards the nations of Babylon and Medo-Persia in general and King Nebuchadnezzar in particular. The fact that Babylon acted as a biblical antagonist against Israel makes us forget the yearning in God's heart to find spiritual and relational connection with the lost people of Babylon. Imprecatory psalms, such as Ps 137, which speak of the happiness to be found in dashing Babylonian babies against stones, make us hesitant to admit that probation might have still been open for the captors of God's people. However, the mission activity in the book of Daniel confirms that God still strives to save individuals from even the most sinful nations.

The first missional move that God makes is tragic for Israel but perhaps lifesaving for some Babylonians: he sends Babylon to take Israel captive, thus placing Israel—the light to the nations—literally within Babylon's borders. The Hebrews are told to live peaceably, to pray for the prosperity of their captors, and continue normal lives (e.g., Jer 29:4–7).[17] Surmising that Israel's basic moral system and religious practices would remain relatively intact during their seventy-year stay in Babylon, God effectively placed several thousand missionaries in an unevangelized region. This is not to say that the primary purpose of the captivity was missional since the Israelites were sent into captivity because of their idolatry and their failure to remain true to their covenant with Jehovah—not primarily to demonstrate their faith, which was presumably very weak. Countless lives were ended in the judgment, and it would certainly create theological complications were we to suggest that the Babylonian captivity was God's ideal for His people. Nevertheless, we have to admit that the text seems to support the idea that at least some of the captives (such as Daniel and his three friends) were used by God for missional purposes.

God's missionary activity did not stop with placing Israelites in close proximity to the Babylonians. He began communicating with King Nebuchadnezzar through mysterious dreams. In a manner that was expertly contextualized to the king's worldview and existential needs, God answered the very heart questions he was asking. The dream contained an image, probably styled after the manner of pagan Babylonian idols that he would have recognized. Intriguingly, the dream could only be interpreted by one of God's agents living in captivity, the prophet Daniel, who carefully utilized cross-cultural religious terminology to introduce his God.[18] By the end of Dan 2, Nebuchadnezzar has met God and recognizes something of his power, but has failed to submit to him.

In chapter three, King Nebuchadnezzar saw the Son of God walking in the midst of the fiery furnace, and trembled at the miracle of the unscathed

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[17]While it is true that God was "punishing" Israel through exile, there was more taking place, as this passage suggests. Part of the reason for the punishment was probably rooted in Israel's reluctance to share God with the surrounding nations, therefore God pushed them into a situation where sharing God was more readily doable.

[18]Kim, "Contextualization," 19–20.

Hebrews. At this point, King Nebuchadnezzar had met God, had actually *seen* the Son of God, and now made a decree that no man could blaspheme the God of the Israelites. However, he still failed to make a personal submission to God. As a God on a mission, the Lord did not give up yet. In chapter four, the king was finally struck with madness because of his incredible hubris against God in order to prepare Nebuchadnezzar's character so that he would be willing to pay complete obeisance to the King of Kings.

Early Christian history is replete with stories of conversions among pagan people groups after the conversion of the king. The Bible records no such mass conversion in Babylon, but the fact that chapter four is written by the king himself seems to suggest that he felt it was important to tell his personal testimony. It seems that God wants these narratives to serve as guides for how God and people must work together in mission, with a focus more on how we partner with him.

Similar miracles and spiritual overtures were made to King Darius after Medo-Persia captured the land. God's mission knew no ethnic or national boundaries. The rest of the book of Daniel then transitions into prophetic records of how God literally shared with Daniel some of his strategic plans for mission to Planet Earth. These plans are intricately bound up in the Great Controversy theme, wherein God allows evil to become fully mature as a demonstration (perhaps, a missional demonstration) before rising to execute judgment upon the earth. These prophecies are, in and of themselves, missional tools that have been used for many years to demonstrate the power and foreknowledge of God. The book ends with a shadowy glimpse into future glory, the culmination of all mission, wherein "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake . . . to everlasting life" (Dan 12:2).[19]

The Bible can come alive in fascinating ways for missional practitioners when biblical events are viewed as missional movements towards humanity. Not every passage has an explicit mandate or methodology for mission, but the general movement of an active, passionate God towards a lost world can be traced in many passages.[20] A missional hermeneutic seeks to uncover these traces as it interprets the text—viewing more than just the immediate context and subject and seeing how the passage relates to the overall mission of God.[21]

In addition to viewing Scripture within a theocentric missional framework—the *missio Dei*—there are a number of other hermeneutical presuppositions that significantly affect the conclusions reached via exegesis. The next one has its roots in the Reformation.

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[19]For more on Daniel and mission, see chapter four of Andrew Tompkins, *God's Mission to the Nations: An Old Testament Study Applied in the Hindu Context* (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2015), 35–39.

[20]Wright, *The Mission of God,* 31.

[21]Ibid. See also Michael W. Goheen, ed., *Reading the Bible Missionally*, The Gospel and Our Culture Series (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016).

Sola Scriptura

Richard M. Davidson has written cogently on the hermeneutical presuppositions and process of extracting meaning from scripture.[22] The prime directives of *sola Scriptura, tota Scriptura,* and *prima Scriptura* center us on the Bible as our sole and sufficient source of truth. Having these principles in place continually draws us back to the biblical text, compelling us to test everything against its precepts. Since the Bible does not rigorously prescribe every detail of human life, holding these principles produces a helpful tension between ancient text and modern context. Although the word "critical" has certain connotations in the hermeneutic realm, even adherents to the historical-grammatical approach use critical thinking skills to interpret the text. The Bible is supreme (*prima Scriptura*), it stands alone (*sola Scriptura*), and it stands in its royal entirety (*tota Scriptura*). Humans come humbly, yet with a certain amount of critical thinking skills, to learn how to apply the text to their current context and life. It is important to note that with these classic Protestant presuppositions, we have already made a crucial break with Islamic epistemology.

Although Islam produced some philosophical giants during the golden era of Islam—such as Avicenna (Ibn Sina), Al-Ghazali, and Averroes (Ibn Rushd)—in today's world, the Islamic religion would greatly benefit in practice if more critical thinking or textual analysis of the Qur'an was generally encouraged. Epistemologically speaking, the primary mode of ascertaining truth in the Islamic world is via authority figures and traditions. The Qur'an itself is a religious text that is meant to be orally and aurally experienced as a form of worship understood to have inherent virtue in the listening and reciting process—actual understanding of the text is not necessary, particularly for those Muslims who do not speak Arabic.[23] These factors combined lead to decreased emphasis on critical thinking skills and more dependence on authority-based decrees to settle religious beliefs.

The authority figures in the Muslim world carry enormous influence and should not be underestimated as a source of truth for Muslims around the world. To make the shift from authority-based learning to Bible-directed, Holy Spirit-inspired, critical-thinking type learning takes time for an MBB. Every year, thousands of *fatwas* are issued from leading imams and scholars around

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[22]See, for example, Richard M. Davidson, "Interpreting Scripture." There have been a good number of articles written in regards to methods in biblical interpretation. They can be accessed at the website of the Biblical Research Institute (https://www. adventistbiblicalresearch.org). Also, an important article is the official statement of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists on "Methods of Bible Study—Bible Study: Presuppositions, Principles, and Methods," *Official Statements: Documents*, 12 October 1986, http://www.adventist.org/en/information/official-statements/ documents/article/go/0/methods-of-bible-study/. This document was approved and voted by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Executive Committee at the Annual Council in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 12 October 1986.

[23]C. T. R. Hewer, *Understanding Islam: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006), 58.

the Muslim world. These *fatwas* dictate even the smallest details of life for the believers—such as whether playing Pokémon is permitted, whether polio vaccines are allowed, and whether or not the earth actually revolves around the sun.[24] Although technically, Muslims are encouraged to understand the Qur'an, in everyday practice it is rare to find Arab Muslims with more than a surface understanding of the Qur'an.[25]

With this in mind, it must be stated that, although there are times that the Qur'anic text may be used as a bridge during early engagement, Islamic texts should never be given a permanent place in the MBB community. With the principles of *sola Scriptura*, the Bible alone, and *tota Scriptura*, the entire Bible, nothing else but the Bible should be used as the foundation for a missional hermeneutic. Ganoune Diop and Gottfried Oosterwal have produced excellent articles arguing for and against the use of Qur'anic verses in Muslim evangelism, and we do see some diversity of application among Adventists working in Islamic contexts.[26]

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[24]Pokémon is forbidden on the grounds of encouraging worldly behavior, such as gambling. See KSA fatwa number 21,758. A fatwa was issued saying that the sun actually revolves around the earth, and any teachings or textbooks that state the contrary must be rejected as false science. See KSA fatwa number 15,255, http://www.alifta.net/Search/FatwaNumSrchDisplay.aspx?languagename=en.

[25]Ganoune Diop, "The Use of the Qur'an in Sharing the Gospel: Promise or Compromise?" in *Faith Development in Context: Presenting Christ in Creative Ways,* ed. Bruce L. Bauer (Berrien Springs, MI: Department of World Mission, Andrews University, 2005), 151–179. Gottfried Oosterwaal, "Response to Ganoune Diop's Paper," in *Faith Development in Context*, 180–188. See also the complete work, Bauer, *Faith Development in Context.*

[26]To borrow Oosterwal's terminology, the majority of workers in the Middle East or North Africa that are dedicated to working with Muslims utilize the phenomenological method of relating to the Qur'an in early stages of conversations. That is, they make comparisons between lifestyle issues or doctrinal beliefs in the Qur'an and the Bible that are similar or congruent. Discussing how Adventists believe in the judgment and the second coming of the Messiah, or that Adventists do not drink alcoholic beverages or eat pork are phenomenological ways of utilizing the Qur'an, even if a verse is not being directly quoted. This method starts spiritual conversations quickly and can be extremely useful in building bridges. However, if used alone, it can be insufficient because it often overlooks the deeper core differences that also need to be considered. The Functional-Comparative Approach uses the Qur'an as a springboard to introduce the topic (prayer, forgiveness, heaven, etc.) and discusses how these concepts *function* in both Christianity and Islam. Allowing for functional difference prevents the practitioner from distorting the text into a forced agreement with the Bible. The Core-Comparative Method of utilizing the Qur'an compares the core ideals and inner logic of the Qur'an and Islam as a whole. Some have come to the conclusion that there are no real bridges between the Qur'an and the Bible, while others see no core connections but still have no qualms about using the Qur'an as a missional tool. With these methods in mind, "using the Qur'an" or "not using the Qur'an" is not so black-and-white as we may think. There are layers of considerations that must answer the "how" and "when" questions.

In an official guideline on Adventist Mission in 2003, the Global Mission Issues Committee stated,

> In building bridges with non-Christians, the use of their "sacred writings" could be very useful in the initial contact in order to show sensitivity and to lead persons along paths which are somewhat familiar. They may contain elements of truth that find their fullest and richest significance in the way of life found in the Bible. These writings should be used in a deliberate attempt to introduce people to the Bible as the inspired Word of God and to help them transfer their allegiance to the biblical writings as their source of faith and practice.[27]

It is important to notice that this guideline refers to non-Christian "sacred writings," such as the Qur'an, as useful during the period of *initial contact.* To secure a permanent position for the Qur'an in MBB worship services would be an affront to the principle of *sola Scriptura.* The committee went on to delineate recommendations for how such non-Christian "sacred writings" can be utilized during early stages of contact without endangering the primacy of the Bible.

> a. The Bible should be recognized as the teaching instrument and source of authority to be used in leading a person to Christ and to a life of faith in a society where another religion is dominant.
> b. The Church should not use language that may give the impression that it recognizes or accepts the nature and authority assigned to the "sacred writings" by the followers of specific non-Christian religions.
> c. Those using "sacred writings" as outlined above should develop or create a plan indicating how the transfer of allegiance to the Bible will take place.
> d. The nurture and spiritual growth of new believers in non-Christian societies shall be accomplished on the basis of the Bible and its exclusive authority.[28]

The phrase, "the Bible and its exclusive authority," echoes the hermeneutical principles of the Reformers and Adventist pioneers. Therefore, if Muslim ministry practitioners have a plan in place as to how they will move their Muslim contacts along a trajectory that culminates in a transfer of allegiance from the Qur'an to the Bible, it would surely seem that the principles of *sola Scriptura* and *prima Scriptura* retain their integrity.

A Seventh-day Adventist hermeneutic for mission in Islamic contexts is a hermeneutic that first and foremost recognizes its limitations and challenges. It is a hermeneutics that involves constant dialogue with God through his self-revelation, most clearly seen in Scripture, but also in other forms of revelation

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[27]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, "Engaging in Global Mission," *Official Statements: Guidelines*, 1 June 2003, https://www.adventist.org/en/information/official-statements/guidelines/article/go/-/engaging-in-global-mission/. See also "Roadmap for Mission," *Official Statements: Documents*, 13 October 2009, https://www.adventist.org/en/information/official-statements/documents/article/go/-/roadmap-for-mission/.

[28]General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, "Engaging in Global Mission."

(i.e., nature, dreams and visions,[29] personal testimony, the church as a body, the works of the Spirit, etc.). However, Scripture is the norm that norms all other revealed truths. By Scripture alone the other sources of God's revelation to humans are to be tested. But it must also be pointed out that because of the dynamic nature of Seventh-day Adventist mission in Islamic contexts, for hermeneutics to bear healthy fruits it must always be engaged in frontline application.[30] The Bible itself demonstrates that "correct interpretations of Scripture are most often surrounded by correct understandings and practices of God's mission."[31] Furthermore, correct praxis also leads to correct interpretation. Hence the concept of a "hermeneutical spiral."[32]

Believers from Muslim backgrounds bring with them a whole parcel of presuppositions that can easily distort their understanding of the biblical message. Their view of Allah is highly Hellenic—he is transcendent beyond any human knowledge and unknowable except for the direct transmissions he has sent down to his prophets.[33] All anthropomorphisms in the Qur'an are generally held to be metaphorical,[34] but arguments still rage within Islamic circles about whether or not we will actually see the face of Allah in Paradise.[35] The agonizingly strict views of the oneness of Allah—the doctrine of *Tawhid*—also bases itself upon a Platonic rendering of a God that can have no parts, no partners, and no division.[36] Allah is so pure and unified that nothing can be added or subtracted from his being—the core reason Muslims find it impossible to conceptualize God with an inner Trinitarian plurality.

Another presupposition that could easily distort the biblical text includes the Islamic view of human nature or *fitra* as inherently good,[37] which is intimately tied to views of sin and salvation. A human that is inherently good

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[29]See Bruce L. Bauer, "Towards an Adventist Theology of Dreams and Visions with Missiological Implications," (paper presented at the meeting of the AU/MEU Research Group on Adventist Theology of Islam, Beirut, Lebanon, 13–16 March 2017).

[30]See Wagner Kuhn and Andrew Tompkins, "Theology on the Way: Hermeneutics from and for the Frontline," *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies* 12.1 (2016): 7.

[31]Shawn B. Redford, *Missiological Hermeneutics: Biblical Interpretation for the Global Church*, American Society of Missiology Monograph Series 11 (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012), 8.

[32]See Grant R. Osborn, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006).

[33]James W. Sire, *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog*, 5th ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 257.

[34]Sh. Nuh Keller, "Literalism and the Attributes of Allah," 2014, http://www.masud.co.uk/ISLAM/nuh/littlk.htm.

[35]David Waines, *An Introduction to Islam,* 2nd ed. Introduction to Religion (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 117.

[36]Ibid.

[37]Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 18.

needs no salvation outside of himself, but merely needs to "remember" their primal condition. Islamic soteriology focuses on "remembrance" through deeds that will cultivate religious awareness rather than "salvation."

There is also the Islamic view of the human soul as immortal and separate from the body. At death, the Muslim's soul is drawn out through his nostrils, questioned by two angels, and taken to the gates of Paradise for a sort of pre-judgment.[38] Afterward, the soul is then dressed either in a filthy haircloth or in a fine, perfumed robe and sent back to its grave to wait—in full soul consciousness—until the day of resurrection.[39]

Foreign missionaries working in Islamic regions do have the ethnocentric option of interpreting the Bible *for* MBBs and controlling all missiological decisions. However, in most cases, missiological decisions should not be made in isolation from indigenous believers. As is often the case, foreign missionaries and indigenous MBBs sit at the same table to search God's word and make decisions together.[40] Although these Muslim believers have consciously made decisions for Christ, they may be at varying stages of detaching from their old Islamic presuppositions that they have absorbed from a lifetime of exposure to Islam. For this reason, it is important to be patient and consider the macro-hermeneutics that exist, in varying degrees, even within the church in the Middle East and North Africa.

Macro-hermeneutics: The Principle of Reality and the Principle of Articulation

Many of these major presuppositional stumbling blocks—such as the nature of God, the nature of man, and the nature of reality—can be countered by Canale's two macro-hermeneutics: The Principle of Reality and the Principle

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[38]Shams C. Inati, "Soul in Islamic Philosophy," n.d., http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ip/rep/H010.htm. Islamic theology contains elements that support both the idea of man as a unitary being that is sleeping in the grave, as well as the concept of soul suffering after death.

[39]H. Lammens writes about the apparent contradiction by saying, "This problem has caused acute embarrassment to the Muslim schoolmen, no doubt because the *Sūras* furnish no clear solution. Certain verses, in conformity with ancient Arab beliefs, suppose the dead to be either sleeping or insensible in the tomb (Qur'an 22:7, 50:18). The tradition of the Sunni and Imamites has seized upon this suggestion and deduced therefrom its theory of the 'Torment of the Tomb.' This theory does not succeed in making clear the nature of the sufferings which torment simultaneously body and soul, in spite of their separation and of the bodily insensibility which follows it" (*Islam: Beliefs and Institutions* [London: Frank Cass, 1968], 53–54). As a frontline worker, I have looked into the eyes of Muslim women and asked them what their greatest fear is and heard them respond, "The Torment of the Tomb." Whatever conclusions are reached by Islamic scholars, the reality is that some Muslims view the time between death and resurrection with great fear.

[40]For an excellently proposed process of integrating foreign missionaries and indigenous believers in the process of developing scriptural understanding together, see Tom A. Steffen, *Reconnecting God's Story to Ministry: Cross-Cultural Storytelling at Home and Abroad* (Waynesboro, GA: Authentic Media, 2005).

of Articulation. The Principle of Reality is diametrically opposed to the Islamic view of God and the immortal soul. Reading the biblical text with the above Islamic presuppositions will produce radically different readings than if the interpreter understands and applies the Principle of Reality.

As an example, we can see how mainstream Protestant Christianity has largely retained a Neoplatonic and Aristotelian view of God and the human soul. Although they read the exact same Bible and have highly trained theologians, they arrive at different conclusions than Adventists.[41] Without intentionally applying the Principle of Reality in our mission work with MBBs, we should not expect them to reach similar interpretations as we do.

The Principle of Articulation sees the Bible as a connected whole, Christocentrically anchored in the gospel message, and articulated through the Great Controversy metanarrative and the Sanctuary doctrine.[42] It likewise plays a large part in replacing other major stumbling blocks to an accurate interpretation of the Bible. The narrative of man's perfection, fall, and subsequent experience of salvation communicates a sense of depravity that replaces an innately good and worthy *fitra.* The chronological, overarching narrative of God's interaction with Israel convincingly demonstrates that "remembrance" as a means of securing favor with God has never been enough—Israel's many failures to remember God and their final rejection of Christ demonstrates once more humanity's depravity and need of a savior. A holistic view of human nature as expressed in the Great Controversy metanarrative cannot coexist with the view of the human soul as immortal.

From these few examples, we can begin to see the tip of the iceberg as to how some Islamic presuppositions and biblical presuppositions affect the interpretation process. As religious/cultural outsiders (i.e., Western missionaries approaching the Islamic world), these Christian presuppositions may seem obvious and easy for Muslims to adopt. But what about for the young MBB who has been sent back to his home country to evangelize his people group? Can we be sure that his or her hermeneutic presuppositions are aligned in such a way that we will reach similar interpretations? How long does it take for a believer from a Muslim background to lose his Islamic presuppositions? Can they make the shift without assistance?

On the other hand, however, is the humble realization that exegetes from certain parts of the world do not have a monopoly on theologizing. While some may feel a passion to secure Seventh-day Adventist theology from being adjusted to fit pre-Christian worldviews, the missional practioner should also be open-minded to the possibility of valuable theological contributions that may not fit his or her expectations. It is important to remember that much of the Western hermeneutic tradition is informed by Greek and Enlightenment ways of reasoning. Therefore, how does one find the delicate balance between promoting correct hermeneutical processes without imposing foreign logic systems?

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[41]Canale, "Message and the Mission," 270.

[42]Ibid., 278.

The Principle of Relational Life

From eternity past, the glorious and love-filled members of the godhead have related to each other from within the unspeakable councils of the inner Trinitarian communion. The concept of "Relationship" has existed as long as God has. All three persons of the godhead are seen, imminently participatory and present during Creation Week, as a new planet is spoken into existence.[43] Genesis 1 introduces the Creator as אֱלֹהִים, "God." As soon as man is created in Gen 2, the name switch is apparent: The Creator is now addressed as יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים, "LORD God." Once humans appear on the scene, the narration immediately switches to using the relational title of God.[44] This first narrative proliferates with relational language as God lays the foundation for subsequent generations to view Him as God-With-Us—not the clockmaker god that created and walked away, or a disinterestedly transcendent being.

The Bible is pockmarked with the tragic relational consequences of sin. Adam and Even had to leave the presence of God. Cain, the firstborn human child, committed fratricide. Family members were sold into slavery and friends were murdered for the fulfillment of lust. Isaiah lamented the relational impact of sin when he declared, "But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear" (Isa 59:2).

That Christ came to restore broken relationships is one of Christianity's favorite themes, one that was stunningly embodied as the Lord of the universe took on flesh to tabernacle with us, to be Immanuel, God-With-Us. This topic of relational wholeness and interconnectedness becomes even more fascinating when we analyze it from the perspective of missiology and hermeneutics.

One of the most emotionally moving passages that portrays missionaries as spiritual relationship-builders is 2 Cor 5:18–21.

> Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

God has committed to us the ministry of reconciling the broken relationships between heaven and earth. Paul uses strong language to communicate this concept. God is *pleading through us;* we implore people to respond to God's relational invitation.[45] At its core, missionary activity

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[43]Woodrow W. Whidden II, Jerry Moon, and John W. Reeve, *The Trinity: Understanding God's Love, His Plan of Salvation, and Christian Relationships* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2002), 246.

[44]Michael L. Gowens, *A Study of God's Hebrew Names* (Shallote, NC: Sovereign Grace, 2016), 53–54.

[45]In the English language, we do not commonly use such terminology in everyday speech. It would be odd to say, "I implore you" or "I plead with you." However, this

involves an element of relationality that connects people with people and people with God.

The concept of the harmonious interconnectedness that existed at Eden goes beyond interpersonal relationships. Man also had a harmonious way of relating to the various aspects of his own life. His pattern of communicating, eating, sleeping, working, recreating, and worshiping all contributed to the ultimate good in his life. He experienced a healthy relationship with his own inner emotions and related properly to his surrounding environment.

It is only after the fall that we see turbulent emotions like self-justification and shame and we also begin to see the results of chaotic patterns of relating to self, others, and the environment (Gen 3:7–13). In today's society, people eat food that ought to kill them and then take pills to stay alive longer. Energy drink addicts have been reported to have died from lack of sleep.[46] Promiscuity has proven to lead to sexually transmitted diseases, but rather than relating harmoniously with nature's design, mankind has invented various kinds of barrier devices that allow multiple sexual partners without the danger of disease.

It is on the plane of everyday human existence that theological and philosophical ideas are played out. Language, communication, marriage, family relationships, work patterns, rest and recreation patterns, eating habits, housing customs, environmental awareness, clothing customs, worship styles, music preferences, and exercise habits[47]—these all are the places of human life and experience where the gospel must reach. Jesus promised to bring *abundant life*. This life is not a conceptual idea; it is a real experience that can be found through relating in healthy ways to every category of life. The life created in the Garden of Eden was a relational, interconnected experience where all things related harmoniously to each other;[48] the abundant life

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is not unusual in Islamic contexts. The Arabic language is very vivid and descriptive; one of the highest qualities of social grace is to be an eloquent speaker. The Arabic language commonly uses impassioned verbs such as "beg" or "plead." We have often had refugees that are desperate for humanitarian assistance using the same words to say tearfully, "I beg you, please do anything you can," or heard desperately delinquent grade school students cry out, "I *beg* you, Miss!" with great zeal. These kinds of words are laden with powerful emotion. Paul does not say that we are merely "asking" on God's behalf. How might our sense of mission change if we *felt* with God in this process? If we could feel God's impassioned pleas as he literally begs for their hearts through us? What would be the personal, existential implications for mission if we recognize the emotional overtones in this passage?

[46]Ryan Gorman, "Copywriter Dies After Tweeting about Working 30 Hours and Energy Drinks Blamed," *Daily Mail*, 17 Dec 2013, http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2525584/Copywriter-dies-tweeting-working-30-hours-energy-drinks-blamed.html.

[47]See Andrew Tompkins, "Culture and Religion in Genesis 1–3," (unpublished research paper, Andrews University, 2016). Especially interesting is the section titled "Cultural Elements of Genesis 2" (8–22), where the following topics are listed: work and rest, food and eating, language, human relationships and marriage, and clothes.

[48]"How beautiful the earth was when it came from the Creator's hand! God

that Jesus promised in John 10:10 brings us back to this experience.[49]

This presupposition has at least two implications for developing a hermeneutic of mission. First of all, it presupposes that the Bible has answers to every dimension and facet of human reality. Rather than dealing in abstracts, it should lead exegetes to search for principles that promote abundant life in which new believers can relate wholesomely to God, to themselves, to others, and in community. It will not stop at rejecting the biblically impermissible behaviors such as polygamy, honor killings, and widow burning—rather, it goes deeper to discover how people in any given place can experience the fullness of Christ's abundant life. Missional hermeneutics allows itself to be concerned with details of one's personal life and sees the whole person as a fully unitary being, each part of the whole in need of restoration.

Is the "good news" only meant to transmit doctrinal beliefs, a few new values, and a slightly shifted worldview? Or can the gospel be "good news" and "enhanced quality of life," too? Can the "abundant life" seep down into every crack of human reality, changing behavior patterns, health, social connectedness, and emotional well being? The Principle of Relational Life sees humans as whole individuals, who are composed of a web of internally connected parts and pieces that deserve to be impacted by the gospel message.

It should be noted that the interconnected web of human experience is *not* the interpretive tool; it is that important body of subject matter that demands answers and guides interpreters to know what questions to ask. To view human experience as the interpretive tool itself (i.e., whatever seems "best" and most "abundant" for my life must be truth) is not a correct application of the Principle of Relational Life. Imagine, for example, the man who decides not to keep Sabbath because it would have negative consequences for his quality of life if he were to lose his job. Rather than serving as an interpretive tool, the Principle of Relational Life is a presupposition that all of life is connected and all of its connected parts can find answers in Scripture. This mindset forces missiologists to go beyond doctrinal discussions and touch people's lives where they feel the most need.

Internally complex humans are connected in relationship to families, which are connected to communities, which are connected to nations, which are connected to the vast global populace. Ellen G. White speaks of this reality with the phrase "mutual dependence." She writes, "We are children of God, mutually dependent upon one another for happiness."[50]

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presented before the universe a world in which even His all-seeing eye could find no spot or stain, no defect or crookedness. Each part of His creation occupied the place assigned it and answered the purpose for which it was created. Like the parts of some great machine, part fitted to part, and all was in perfect harmony" (Ellen G. White, *Christ Triumphant* [Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1999], 8).

[49]The creator God had to be born into humanity to restore the wholesomeness of creation. "And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him" (Luke 2:40, NIV).

[50]Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 9 vols. (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1855–1909), 4:71.

All human beings are mutually dependent upon others, but this sense of community distills itself in a highly condensed form within the church relationship. "The bonds of unity which unite member with member of the church are to be as firm and harmonious in their operation as are the different parts of the natural body. The hands, head, and feet are so closely united, and so mutually dependent, that one member cannot live and act independently of the other members."[51] It is in this sense of mutual dependence that we arrive at our second hermeneutical application of the Principle of Relational Life. If the world church is living in mutually dependent relationship with each other, is it possible to look to the world church as partners in the task of interpreting scripture?

One of our field administrators worked for more than two decades in Africa. In a recent conversation, he described how, a number of years ago, African pastors in his region were not permitted to preach about how to deal with the spirit world. Church members were being assaulted by demons and having curses cast upon them, but received no biblical basis on how to deal with these attacks. The pastors were routinely told they could not preach about dealing with spirits because this was not part of the (then) twenty-seven fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and not in the *Church Manual*. Rather than presenting biblical answers to their members, the pastors were forced to pretend as if there were no such problems occurring among their members.

The administrator recounted how thrilled the pastors in his region were when the fundamental beliefs were updated to include the eleventh fundamental belief statement titled "Growing in Christ," which emphasizes the complete victory of Christ over Satan and the forces of evil.[52] The pastors

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[51]Idem, *Manuscript Releases*, 21 vols. (Silver Spring, MD: Ellen G. White Estate, 1981–1993), 19:370.

[52]This fundamental belief statement reads as follows: "By His death on the cross Jesus triumphed over the forces of evil. He who subjugated the demonic spirits during His earthly ministry has broken their power and made certain their ultimate doom. Jesus' victory gives us victory over the evil forces that still seek to control us, as we walk with Him in peace, joy, and assurance of His love. Now the Holy Spirit dwells within us and empowers us. Continually committed to Jesus as our Saviour and Lord, we are set free from the burden of our past deeds. No longer do we live in the darkness, fear of evil powers, ignorance, and meaninglessness of our former way of life. In this new freedom in Jesus, we are called to grow into the likeness of His character, communing with Him daily in prayer, feeding on His Word, meditating on it and on His providence, singing His praises, gathering together for worship, and participating in the mission of the Church. We are also called to follow Christ's example by compassionately ministering to the physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual needs of humanity. As we give ourselves in loving service to those around us and in witnessing to His salvation, His constant presence with us through the Spirit transforms every moment and every task into a spiritual experience. (1 Chr 29:11; Pss 1:1, 2; 23:4; 77:11, 12; Matt 20:25–28; 25:31–46; Luke 10:17–20; John 20:21; Rom 8:38, 39; 2 Cor 3:17, 18; Gal 5:22–25; Eph 5:19, 20; 6:12–18; Phil 3:7–14; Col 1:13, 14; 2:6, 14, 15; 1 Thess 5:16–18, 23; Heb 10:25; James 1:27; 2 Peter 2:9; 3:18; 1 John 4:4)" (General Conference of

then felt free to address this important topic with their churches, and have since developed books and resources addressing this very thing—an issue that is remote and almost unreal to Western theologians, but that touches the lives of many African Seventh-day Adventists.

Can missiology and theology be done by Africans, Arabs, and Asians, or in the Global South? Most likely we will all answer "yes." But what happens when their exegesis differs from ours? Or when ethnocentrism blinds our hermeneutics?[53] Wright makes a point that a missional hermeneutic must contain multicultural hermeneutics. At the beginning of the twentieth century, ninety percent of Christians lived in Europe and North America; today, at least seventy-five percent of Christians live outside these nations.[54] The Seventh-day Adventist Church assumes and encourages members in all countries to study the Bible. It is inevitable that different people from different cultures will see different gems of truth in the same book.

> A missional hermeneutic must include at least this recognition—the multiplicity of perspectives and contexts from which and within which people read the biblical texts. Even when we affirm (as I certainly do) that the historical and salvation-historical context of biblical texts and their authors is of primary and objective importance in discerning their meaning and their significance, the plurality of perspectives from which readers read them is also a vital factor in the hermeneutical richness of the global church. What persons of one culture bring from that culture to their reading of a text may illuminate dimensions or implications of the text itself that persons of another culture may have not seen so clearly.[55]

The Principle of Relational Life recognizes, first of all, that mission happens in relationship: God in relationship to the world, the missionary in relationship to his or her host culture, individuals in relation to their families, their communities, environments, and their selves. A missional hermeneutic will attempt to touch each of these connecting points that form the web of being for the individual in his/her personal or public life. This emphasis on

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Seventh-day Adventists, "Growing in Christ," *Beliefs: Salvation*, 2018, https://www.adventist.org/en/beliefs/salvation/growing-in-christ.

[53]Some time ago I [Esther Happuch] sat and discussed some popular Bible narratives with an Adventist MBB couple from North Africa. We mentioned stories and tried to agree what the "core concept" of each story was really about. When we came to the story of Joseph, I felt sure that the core concept was forgiveness, or perhaps dependence on God. The North African MBB was sure that the core concept was family honor and obedience to parents. After we finished the conversation, I thought back to the individual's "incorrect" understanding of the story and could not help feeling a little twinge of pity. *Poor guy, he's still learning,* I thought. *Everyone knows the story of Joseph is a lesson in forgiveness.* In hindsight, my ethnocentric claim of having the correct interpretation could not have been more shamefully clear.

[54]Wright, *The Mission of God,* 38. See also Craig Ott and Harold A. Netland, eds., *Globalizing Theology: Belief and Practice in an Era of World Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academics, 2006).

[55]Wright, *The Mission of God,* 39.

human experience will not act authoritatively over the text, but rather provide the palette of questions that suggest subject matter for biblical study.

The Principle of Relational Life, secondly, recognizes the value of a multiplicity of perspectives in the hermeneutic process. As humans, related together in mutual dependence, we need and value perspectives from biblically sound, committed scholars in every world culture. A missional hermeneutic that operates within the body of Christ allows for diversity of interpretation without subscribing to pluralism as a hermeneutic ideology or allowing for relativism.[56] This process is validated and enhanced when utilized in everyday life, as we will try to demonstrate next by looking at mission in Islamic contexts.

The Development of Hermeneutical Practices

A recently held church planting retreat offered training to many of its frontline church planters that live and work in Islamic contexts. The main thrust of the meeting was to redefine church planting in terms of house churches rather than traditional structures, and to discuss factors leading to mass movements. One of the themes that surfaced prominently was the recommended use of the Discovery Bible School method. This method features minimal missionary control and high empowerment for new believers—something that has supposedly sparked mass movements in other parts of the world. Biblical narratives are discussed, and three simple questions are asked: what does this story tell us about God, what does this tell us about human beings, and who can we tell this story to?

The Discovery Bible School (DBS) method is highly acclaimed because of its simplicity and reproducibility. However, as we discuss the topic of macro hermeneutics and Islam, there are a few points to consider before adopting the DBS method in exactly the same way as Evangelical missionaries have used it.

First of all, many Evangelical Christians have founded their theology on Hellenistic views of reality, as has Islam.[57] Therefore, the standard DBS questions—what does this story tell us about God and what does it tell us about human beings—are not designed by Evangelicals to shift Muslim macro-hermeneutics. It is designed to shift beliefs and some aspects of worldview, such as allegiance, values, etc. However, Seventh-day Adventists are attempting to do something more than Evangelicals are doing. We are

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[56]Ibid., 40.

[57]The influence of Aristotelian thought is more clearly documented in early Islamic history than Platonic thought. No Arabic manuscripts of Platonic dialogue exist from the tenth century golden period of *falsafa* (classical Islamic philosophy); however, many Aristotelian commentaries and translations exist from the same period. Al-Farabi, a famous Platonist from this period, was measured against the writings of Aristotle, not Plato. Though the extant texts seem to indicate that there seemed to be an obvious preference for Aristotelian work rather than Platonic, Paviz Morewedge notes that "the philosophers under Islam were so transparently Neoplatonists and were, at the same time, so oblivious to the true nature of their Platonism" (*Islamic Philosophical Theology* [Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1979], 15–17).

attempting to shift the macro-hermeneutics part of the MBB's worldview, which is a matter closely tied to epistemology and ontology. If church planters adopt a methodological structure like DBS, which is low missionary control and high MBB empowerment, can we expect this kind of shift to happen organically, as a result of Holy Spirit enlightenment?

The answer is yes and no. While we affirm that the Holy Spirit can illuminate minds without any human intervention, history demonstrates that the process takes much longer without assistance. It took more than a thousand years before Christianity experienced its first hermeneutic revolution—what we call the Reformation.[58] It is only recently that Lutheran theologians in Germany and Japan, staggering from the existential shockwaves of World War II and Hiroshima, began questioning the impassibility of God. These recent movements in the Protestant world have only begun to uncover the subtle but significant influence of Greek philosophy on Christian belief.[59]

It simply takes a long time for worldview and macro hermeneutics to shift organically from within the culture. Yet this would be necessary if we relied solely on the DBS method without any supplemental plan to help facilitate key hermeneutical shifts. Evangelicals have had great success with this method and there is no doubt that it is one of the most effective ways to ignite mass movements and bring Muslims to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. However, if we wish to go beyond what our Evangelical friends have done and shift the macro hermeneutics of new believers to the point of creating Seventh-day Adventist theologians and Bible students within the MBB community, we may need to provide more scaffolding. This may look like resources and materials, it may look like discipleship, or it may look like trainings and seminars. The only other alternatives to scaffolding some form of hermeneutic shift would be either to retain a level of foreign missionary control (in which case correct orthodoxy and orthopraxy would be more likely), or to allow hermeneutic shift to take place naturally from within the culture (which would likely take a long time, during which there would be varying levels of doctrinal correctness produced by the MBB community).

A Seventh-day Adventist biblical hermeneutic for mission in Islamic contexts affirms five core presuppositions: The *sola Scriptura* Principle, the *missio Dei* Principle, the Principle of Reality, the Principle of Articulation, and the Principle of Relational Life. It is also recommended that missiologists conceive of ways to transmit these interpretive principles to new believers as quickly as possible in order to empower the new generation of indigenous theologians.

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[58]See Wright, *The Mission of God,* 38.

[59]Stephen Voorwinde, "Does God Have Real Feelings?" *VR* 67 (2002): 35.

Critical Contextualization, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit[60]

Moving beyond hermeneutic presuppositions for a missional hermeneutic in Islamic contexts, it is important to review critical contextualization as an important methodology. It is crucial to understand that critical contextualization is born out of the relationship between the *missio Dei* Principle, the Principle of Relational Life, and the *sola Scriptura* Principle. God's mission to the lost people of every nation on Planet Earth is viewed within the paradigm that the Bible contains an answer for all dimensions and facets of human existence. Critical contextualization is the methodological approach to Scripture that seeks to understand how the Bible affirms, judges, and transforms the various elements of human existance.

Typically, as missiologists attempt to form responses to religion, culture, and life as a whole, three common reactions surface: (1) wholesale acceptance (uncritical contextualization) of local customs, often based on a deep respect for culture, with its inherent weaknesses; (2) wholesale rejection (denial of the old): virtually all cultural forms are thought to be linked negatively to traditional religions; and (3) critical or integral contextualization, which attempts to communicate the gospel in a new context in ways that it is understandable to people there, including the development of church life and ministry that are biblically faithful and culturally appropriate in that context.[61]

The process of critical and faithful contextualization[62] is of major importance in the cross-cultural missionary enterprise. In it, old beliefs and customs are first analyzed in terms of meanings, and then evaluated in the light of biblical principles and norms. The need to deal biblically with all areas of life is recognized, and this leads the church to avoid adopting dating, wedding, funeral practices, music, entertainment, economic structures, and political traditions from around itself or other places indiscriminately.

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[60]Parts of this section have been adapted from Kuhn, "Adventist Theological-Missiology: Contextualization in Mission and Ministry," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 27.1–2 (2016): 197–199.

[61]See A. Scott Moreau, Gary R. Corwin, and Gary B. McGee, *Introducing World Missions: A Biblical, Historical, and Practical Survey*, Encountering Mission (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 12.

[62]Paul G. Hiebert has used the term "critical contextualization" to mean the intentional, selective, disciplined, thoughtful incarnation of the normative gospel into particular cultures. See his landmark 1987 article, "Critical Contextualization," *International Bulletin of Mission Research* 11.3 (1987): 104–112. Gorden R. Doss has adjusted the term to "faithful contextualization" and builds on Hiebert, but adds the emphasis that being faithful to the Bible is primary and adaptation to culture is secondary, though essential. See "Faithful Contextualization: Crossing Boundaries of Culture with the Eternal Gospel," *Ministry* 87.12 (2015): 6–9. See also *Introduction to Adventist Mission* (Silver Spring, MD: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2018), 211–221. Charles H. Kraft refers to this concept as "appropriate contextualization," where he emphasizes, and perhaps over-emphasizes, the role of culture. See "Appropriate Contextualization of Spiritual Power," in *Appropriate Christianity*, ed. Charles H. Kraft (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2005), 375–395.

In order for missionaries to avoid a wholesale acceptance or a wholesale rejection of the culture they encounter, four steps in critical contextualization are recommended. First, uncritically gather as much information as possible about the meaning of local traditions, customs, and the practices related to the issues at hand (without criticizing people, otherwise they will not share openly). This focuses on understanding the old ways, and it involves both the expatriates (cross-cultural workers) and members of the local community. The information-gathering stage is a group effort with people on both sides. Second, engage in critical Bible study on the tradition, custom, or practice under scrutiny. Third, evaluate the custom (or tradition) in light of biblical understandings. In this process, the congregation has to be involved in order to grow in their own abilities to discern truth as they get involved in biblical exegesis as well. The missionary helps as a hermeneutical bridge. It needs to be noted that people are in a better position to evaluate critically their own past customs in the biblical light, since they know their culture better than anyone else. They know the deeper, hidden meanings of old customs and their significance in their cultural context. Fourth, apply and practice the new ethic. Acceptance and rejection needs to take place. People will have to make a decision: with freedom (encouragement) to experiment, following evaluation, and adjustments as needed. It is possible that in this process some things will be maintained, others will be modified, and some will have to be rejected. As necessary, functional substitutes may need to be developed or borrowed, and perhaps there will be the need for the creation of new forms as the church members understand and practice the biblical message.[63]

As seen above, the theological principle guiding the faithful and critical contextualization methodology is that the Bible is the final arbiter or authority for belief and practice of church members everywhere. Thus, the Bible is its own hermeneuter, but it is the Holy Spirit that helps the believer in the interpretation, understanding, and application of its content and truths. Paul stated long ago that spiritual things are "spiritually discerned" (1 Cor 2:14), and this can only happen through the enlightenment and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Davidson notes,

> Since the Bible is ultimately not the product of the human writer's mind but of the mind of God revealed through the Spirit (cf. 1 Cor 2:12–13), it is not possible to separate "what it meant" to the human writer—to be studied without the aid of the Holy Spirit, from "what it means"—to be applied by the help of the Spirit. Both the original meaning and its present application involve the thoughts of God, which according to Paul can only be adequately comprehended if we have the aid of the Spirit of God.[64]

Conclusion

Indeed, missiology is concerned with hands-on, frontline mission work. In this context, we have attempted to show that all our mission endeavors must

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[63]See Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insignts for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1985), 171–192.

[64]Davidson, "Interpreting Scripture," 28.

flow from *missio Dei*, must be anchored in *sola Scriptura*, and are demonstrated through a Relational Life framework whereby the members of the body of Christ are guided by the Holy Spirit to fulfill God's purposes. Frontline mission work in Islamic contexts must take into account macro hermeneutics such as the Principle of Articulation and the Principle of Reality, and must operate with intention to purposefully transmit these hermeneutics principles to new believers.

This article has attempted to demonstrate the necessity for a missional hermeneutic for the transmission of the biblical message in Islamic contexts. This has been done by surveying some of the questions, purposes, issues of presuppositions, and practices surrounding this challenging topic. We have also attempted to provide guidance to mission practitioners by describing and applying important core presuppositions, interpretive principles, and methodologies through reviewing the literature, the use of case studies, as well as examples from Scripture.

It has been with great indebtedness to biblical scholars and theologians who have done solid work in hermeneutics that we have cautiously proceeded to present some additional suggestions that may be helpful in forming a missional hermeneutic, particularly for use in Islamic contexts.

As for now, "we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. . . . For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known" (1 Cor 13:9–10, 12, ESV).

MISSIO DEI AS HERMENEUTICAL KEY
FOR SCRIPTURAL INTERPRETATION

Boubakar Sanou
Andrews University

Abstract

Scripture, as a whole, is the narrative of the various missionary endeavors undertaken by God to redeem sinful humanity. Because humans are all influenced and limited by the assumptions of their social location, God sometimes took into consideration their less-than-perfect contextual frame of reference in the process of revealing his Word so that they could meaningfully relate to him. From this perspective, besides being aware of their own subjective reading of Scripture, all biblical interpreters need to exegete the social locations of their intended readers with the same rigor they apply to the exegesis of biblical texts so that their readers can respond to and make intelligent decisions in favor of the gospel.

Keywords: Hermeneutics, interpretation, social location, mission

Introduction

Mission is a central theme in the divine revelations recorded in the Bible. The Bible not only reveals God as the prime initiator and mover of mission, but it also reveals him as creative in ways that may sometimes seem unorthodox to his creatures. In his missionary endeavors, God may seem unorthodox to humans because he uses human culture as a contextual frame of reference in his interactions and communication with humans.[1] If "the biblical documents were produced in and to some extent influenced by culture,"[2] three questions come to mind. First, why would the omnipotent and omniscient God take into consideration the less-than-perfect human contextual framework in the process of revealing his Word? Second, if there is an interplay of influences between divine revelation and human context, should one also assume that contexts shape the way people understand and interpret Scripture? And third, should the social locations of receptors be given due consideration in the process of biblical hermeneutics?

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[1]See Ángel Manuel Rodríguez, "Culture's Role in Writing Scripture," *Biblical Research Institute*, 12 October 2000, http://adventistbiblicalresearch.org/materials/cultures-role-writing-scripture. Here, Rodríguez argues that, instead of totally uprooting Israel from its ancient Near Eastern cultural environment, "sometimes God took over what was not Israelite and adapted it to the theocracy."

[2]Philip C. Slate, "The Culture Concept and Hermeneutics: Quest to Identify the Permanent in Early Christianity," *Encounter* 53.2 (1992): 145.

This article seeks, first of all, to establish that there is scriptural evidence that God used existing cultural modes in the process of revealing himself to humans. Then, it will argue that, for the Bible to impact the lives of its hearers, its interpretation and application need to take into consideration the social location of both the interpreters and their intended audiences.

The Use of Cultural Logics and Symbols in Divine Revelation

God works in redemptive ways within human contexts. His revelations in the Old and New Testaments took into consideration various aspects of human cultures. Those cultural contexts served as the incubator for peoples' thought and literature during biblical times.[3] There are several scriptural examples of God's usage of existing cultural logics and symbols to communicate his purposes to humans. The following two examples (Gen 15 and John 1:1, 14)[4] provide a unique perspective on the process of divine revelation in human context.

God's Covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15)

Covenant-making was one of the most widespread cultural practices in the ancient Near East. Donald Wiseman comments that "the covenant idea and its terminology formed the warp and woof of the fabric of the ancient Near East society."[5] In this context, covenants were understood as a new form of relationship that brings two separated parties into a close bond of fellowship.[6] Agreement on mutual obligations was part of entering into a covenant. Stuart Foster explains that in entering into a covenant, "the parties invoked the gods to punish any failure to keep the commitment. This invocation could be in words or in ritual—for example, the sacrificial dismembering of an animal stood for what should happen to the person who broke covenant."[7] The dismembered animals were laid on the ground and those making the covenant had to pass between them to symbolize the seriousness of their intentions to keep their end of the covenant. In this type of covenant ceremony, the dismembered animals and the action of walking through them signified the identification of the covenanters with the cut animals and a pronouncement of a self-imprecation if the stipulations of the covenant were violated.[8]

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[3]Henry Jackson Flanders, Robert Wilson Crapps, and David Anthony Smith, *People of the Covenant: An Introduction to the Hebrew Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 40.

[4]I do not aim to be exhaustive in my description of these biblical examples.

[5]Donald J. Wiseman, "'Is It Peace?'—Covenant and Diplomacy," *VT* 32.3 (1982): 311. See also Gerhard F. Hasel, "The Meaning of the Animal Rite in Genesis 15," *JSOT* 19 (1981): 61–78.

[6]Ibid., 61.

[7]Stuart J. Foster, "The Missiology of Old Testament Covenant," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 34.4 (2010): 205.

[8]Jacques B. Doukhan, *Genesis*, The Seventh-day Adventist International Bible Commentary 1 (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2016), 224; John H. Walton points out that "examples of the slaughter of animals in such ceremonies but not for sacrificial

Some scholars believe that the development of the Israelite belief in a covenant between God and them as a nation or as individuals was influenced by the widespread use of covenant-making in the ancient Near East that regulated relationships between an imperial overlord and his vassals.[9] It is interesting to see God using this means of covenant-making in Gen 15.

In Gen 15, the first discussion topic between God and Abraham centered around an heir. This seemed fitting because the realization of God's promises to Abraham depended on Abraham having a son. In Abraham's mind, Eliezer would be the one to inherit from him since it was customary for a childless couple to adopt a trusted slave as a son. At the moment Abraham probably saw this as his only option.[10] God responded to Abraham's fear by assuring him that his heir would be his biological son and not one through adoption (v. 4). To further reassure Abraham, God brought him outside and said, "'Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.' And He said to him, 'So shall your descendants be.' Then He said to him, 'I *am* the Lord, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it'" (vv. 5–7). An uninformed reader of the next part of the story would think that God's promises in verses 4–6 would be enough to reassure Abraham. But in verse 8, Abraham asked, "Lord God, how shall I know that I will inherit it?" Jacques B. Doukhan sees that question as Abraham's skeptical reaction to God's promises. He points out that "the Hebrew phrase *bammah* 'how?' (lit. trans.: 'in what?') is used when more supporting evidence is requested (Exod 33:16; Mal 1:6–7)."[11] It is interesting to note that "God shows no frustration or disappointment at Abraham's request for surety."[12] Instead, God offered to go through a covenant ratification ceremony that Abraham could relate to as definite surety (Gen 15:9–21).

When God used this widespread ancient Near Eastern cultural practice associated with entering into a covenant, he spoke the language Abraham could unmistakably understand. God helped Abraham understand very clearly his good intention to keep his promise to give him a son. There was

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purposes are numerous. In tablets from Alalakh, the throat of a lamb is slit in connection to a deed executed between Abba-El and Yarimlim. In a Mari text, the head of a donkey is cut off when sealing a formal agreement. In an Aramaic treaty of Sefire, a calf is cut in two with explicit statement that such will be the fate of one who breaks the treaty" ("Genesis," in vol. 1 of *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Old Testament*, 5 vols. [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009], 85).

[9]Doukhan, *Genesis,* 223; René Lopez, "Israelite Covenants in the Light of Ancient Near Eastern Covenants," *CTS Journal* 9 (2003): 97–102; C. Amos, "Covenant," in *Dictionary of Mission Theology: Evangelical Foundations* 73; Klaus Baltzer, *The Covenant Formulary: In Old Testament, Jewish, and Early Christian Writings*, trans. David E. Green (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), 10; Moshe Weinfeld, "The Covenant of Grant in the Old Testament and the Ancient Near East," *JAOS* 90.2 (1970): 185.

[10]Walton, "Genesis," 84.

[11]Doukhan, *Genesis*, 223.

[12]John H. Walton, *Genesis*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 423.

no commitment on the part of Abraham in this covenant. That is why only God passed between the divided carcasses, thus identifying himself with the slaughtered animals, to show Abraham his seriousness to meet the requirement of the covenant. It was as if God was swearing by himself to be cut in two if he ever failed to uphold his promises.[13] By basing the covenant only on himself, God was undoubtedly putting his reputation on the line. Thereafter, Abraham took to heart God's commitment to follow through on his promises. He had received the divine surety that all that was promised would be fulfilled. This whole covenant ceremony is a testimony that, to fulfill his redemptive purposes on behalf of humans, God is willing and able to come down into their sphere.[14]

God in Human Form (John 1:1, 14)

John begins his gospel by introducing Jesus as λόγος, "the Word." Soon after, he adds that the λόγος became σάρξ "flesh." At the time of John, λόγος was loaded with different meanings. To some Jews, λόγος "conveys the notion of divine self-expression or speech (cf. Ps. 19:1–4)"[15] or an agent of creation (33:6). To Greek philosophers, λόγος was the principle of reason that ruled the world.[16]

With these different understandings, it was unthinkable for many Greeks to say that "the *Logos* became flesh" (John 1:14), because for them "the separation of the divine spirit and the mundane world (flesh, *sarx*) was an axiom of belief."[17] For that reason, to say that Jesus took on flesh was to suggest an image of lowliness.[18] For Jews, it was blasphemous to state that "the *Logos* was God," (v. 1), that is, inferring "some personal identity between the *Logos* and God."[19] It was also shocking for Jews to hear that the *Logos* became flesh and made his dwelling among human beings because "the verb for dwelling is employed in the Greek Old Testament for the tabernacle of God. In other words, Christ is the locus of God's dwelling with Israel as he had dwelt with them in the tabernacle in the desert (Exod 25:8–9; Zech 2:10). Hence the glory of God, once restricted to the tabernacle (Exod 40:34), is now visible in Christ (John 1:14b)."[20]

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[13]Paul Borgman, *Genesis: The Story We Haven't Heard* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 68.

[14]Doukhan, *Genesis*, 227.

[15]Andreas J. Köstenberger, *John*, BECNT 4 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 25.

[16]Charles L. Campbell, "John 1:1–14," *Int* 49.4 (1995): 395.

[17]Gary M. Burge, *John*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 59.

[18]George L. Parsenios, "Incarnation," *DJG* 400.

[19]Burge, *John*, 54.

[20]Ibid., 59.

In that religiously pluralistic context, it was a risky hermeneutical activity for John to introduce Jesus as *Logos* to his audience (both Jews and Gentiles) since each group would be inclined to understand it from their cultural perspective. For John, however, "the different understandings proved to be the key to begin a creative dialogue with his context and explain the Jesus tradition through this dialogue."[21] In this dialogue, John leads his audience to understand the λόγος not only as a divine creative attribute or as a simple principle of order in the universe, but as a fully divine being alongside God. In verses 1–18, John employs universal terms such as "word" and "light" to engage adherents of religions and worldviews in his religiously pluralistic context.[22]

Through the incarnation, God revealed himself in the fullest possible way in human terms. This was "the ultimate expression of the immanence of the transcendent Creator God, who, without ceasing to be holy, entered into the sinful world to make human beings holy and to enable them to participate in his glory. . . . [The] incarnation is the identification of Christ with the human condition and culture. The incarnation was therefore the most spectacular instance of cultural identification in human history."[23] Charles H. Kraft argues that Jesus's incarnation into the cultural life of first-century Palestine to communicate with people is sufficient proof that "God takes culture seriously and . . . is pleased to work through it to reach and interact with humans."[24] God created humanity with a culture-producing capacity and "views human culture [although tainted by sin] primarily as a vehicle to be used by him and his people for Christian purposes, rather than an enemy to be [always] combated or shunned."[25] In the same vein, Timothy C. Tennent argues that God acts in a redemptive way within human culture as its author and sustainer. He views the incarnation of Jesus as not only a revelation of God to humanity but also as a protection from "complete ethical despair, even when we are reminded daily of the utter sinfulness of the world."[26] While Tennent warns against the uncritical divinization of culture, he emphatically states that "the true union of God and man in one person is the ultimate rebuke against the *secularization of culture*."[27]

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[21]Daniel Rathnakara Sadananda, *The Johannine Exegesis of God: An Exploration into the Johannine Understanding of God,* BZNW 121 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004), 172.

[22]Köstenberger, *John,* 31.

[23]Sudhakar Mondithoka, "Incarnation," *Dictionary of Mission Theology: Evangelical Foundations* 177–178.

[24]Charles H. Kraft, *Anthropology for Christian Witness* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996), 33.

[25]Idem, *Christianity in Culture: A Study in Biblical Theologizing in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005), 81.

[26]Timothy C. Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions: A Trinitarian Missiology for the Twenty-First Century*, Invitation to Theological Studies 3 (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2010), 179.

[27]Ibid., 181; emphasis original.

Richard W. Engel sees Christ's incarnation in the first-century Jewish cultural setting as a perfect model of the interplay between the gospel and human contexts. He observes that Christ's incarnation as a human being serves as a foundation for presenting the gospel in human contexts without compromise. Through the incarnation, God met a specific people in a specific culture where they were and as they were."[28] Alluding to Jesus's incarnation as a foundation of missiological contextualization, Gorden R. Doss argues that Christ's "life style [*sic*] would have been somewhat different had he been incarnated into another culture."[29] Finally, for Allan Neely, the prologue of John's Gospel, especially verses 1 and 14, is foundational for understanding the implications of the interplay between the gospel and human contexts. He asserts that the fuller context of verses 1 and 14 "suggests that in Jesus, God identified thoroughly with humankind, and that God came in Jesus for the express purpose of disclosing not only God's love but also God's salvific intent for the world" (see also 3:16–17).[30] God did not stay aloof from humanity in his effort to save them. Instead, he bridged the gap by taking human nature, experiencing human sorrows and temptation within the context of human culture. By so doing, Christ reformulated the concept of God's love so that people could experience it and fully understand it.

Toward A Missional Hermeneutics

In this article, missional hermeneutics is defined as a reading and interpretation of the Bible that focuses on the mission of God (*missio Dei*) and the role of God's people in God's mission as the core of the biblical narrative. Missional hermeneutics seeks to recover biblical interpretation from a mere creedal and academic reading of the Bible and refocus it on *missio Dei* as both the central interest and the unitive theme of the scriptural narrative. From this perspective, biblical interpreters will see in Scripture, as a whole, a missional thrust rather than having to focus only on the theme of mission in select texts.

Thus, missional hermeneutics is about the triune God's redemptive activities in the world and the way he covenants with people to be part of his mission.[31] Through this partnership with God in what he is doing, the church becomes better informed and inspired in its missionary praxis to fully

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[28]Richard W. Engel, "Contextualization in Missions: A Biblical and Theological Appraisal," *Grace Theological Journal* 4.1 (1983): 93.

[29]Gorden R. Doss, "The Jerusalem Council," in *Adventist Responses to Cross-Cultural Mission: Global Mission Issues Committee Papers 1998–2005*, ed. Bruce Bauer, 2 vols. (Berrien Springs, MI: Department of World Mission, Andrews University, 2007), 2:192.

[30]Alan Neely, "Incarnational Mission," *Evangelical Dictionary of World Mission* 474.

[31]Michael W. Goheen, "A History and Introduction to a Missional Reading of the Bible," in *Reading the Bible Missionally,* ed. Michael W. Goheen, Gospel and Our Culture Series (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016), 15.

participate in the *missio Dei*.[32] In this way, *missio Dei* becomes a foundation of biblical theology. Contrary to many biblical scholars who largely exclude the church from their implied audience,[33] missional hermeneutics seeks to put the church in perspective as the primary human agency in the fulfillment of God's mission.

Missiology and Biblical Studies: Complementary Disciplines

According to systematic theologian Martin Kähler, "mission is the mother of theology."[34] This understanding of theology as coming out of missiological reflections is also echoed by Scott Sunquist when he states that "theology starts with mission."[35] To be specific, both in the Old and New Testaments, theology was done in the context of the *missio Dei* as humans reflected on divine revelations and the missional questions those revelations often raised. From this perspective, it is à propos to say, for example, that the whole of the New Testament is a narrative of a church, which because of its missionary encounters outside the Jewish context, reshaped its theology in order to reach different contexts (e.g., Acts 15).[36] The early church's theology was, to a greater degree, fertilized, driven, and necessitated by mission. As such, *missio Dei* is both the mother of theology and the mother of the church.[37] Because theological and biblical reflection arises out of engagement with the mission of God,[38] Vidar Leif Haanes proposes the view of "mission as the future of theology."[39] This means that, for the sake of its own future, theology needs

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[32]Richard Bauckham, "Mission as Hermeneutic for Scriptural Interpretation," in *Reading the Bible Missionally*, 28–29.

[33]Ibid., 29.

[34]Martin Kähler, *Schriften zu Christologie und Mission: Gesamtausgabe der Schriften zur Mission, mit einer Bibliographie,* ed. Heinzgünter Frohnes, Theologische Bücherei 42 (Munich: Kaiser, 1971), 190, as cited in David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, American Society of Missiology Series 16 (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 16. Because biblical theology is the product of human reflections on divine revelations, mission in Kähler's statement could be understood as referring to the *missio Dei*.

[35]Scott W. Sunquist, *Understanding Christian Mission: Participation in Suffering and Glory* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 9.

[36]Paul S. Chung, *Reclaiming Mission as Constructive Theology* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2012), 260.

[37]Matt Jenson and David Wilhite, *The Church: A Guide for the Perplexed*, Guides for the Perplexed (London: T&T Clark, 2010), 154.

[38]Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden, eds., *Mission as Transformation: A Theology of the Whole Gospel* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2009), xiii.

[39]Vidar Leif Haanes, "Theological Education and Mission," in *Mission to the World: Communication the Gospel in the 21st Century: Essays in Honour of Knud Jørgensen,* ed. Tormod Engelsviken et al., Regnum Studies in Mission (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2009), 394.

insights from missiology. Van Rheenen brilliantly elucidates the interplay between the disciplines of theology and missiology as follows:

> Missiology and Theology should not be seen as separate disciplines but as clasped hands, two parts of an interpenetrating whole. Not only does theology help the Christian minister understand the message and motivation for missions but it also provides the ethical lens through which missionaries evaluate human cultures and determine practical strategies of missions. Missiology, moreover, helps Theology focus on God's redemptive purposes, enables theologians to analyze cultural contexts, and guides future ministers to develop strategies for church transformation, local evangelism, church planting, and leadership development. In healthy theological education, Theology and Missiology actively shape each other.[40]

Thus, the voices of biblical studies, systematic theology, church history, and missiology are all necessary for a full perspective on biblical hermeneutics. While biblical studies seek to prevent biblical interpreters from reading their own presuppositions into the biblical text, missiology seeks to help biblical interpreters move beyond the original meaning of a text to its contemporary meaning and application.[41]

Components of a Missional Hermeneutics

The following four elements are essential components for sound missional hermeneutics: *missio Dei*, biblical hermeneutics, social location, and a frank conversation between the biblical text and the social location of readers.

Missio Dei: *A Hermeneutical Key for Biblical Interpretation*

The starting point toward the development of a missional hermeneutics is to approach Scripture in its entirety as the narrative of the various missionary endeavors undertaken by God to redeem sinful humanity. For Charles R. Taber, biblical narratives are an "incontrovertible evidence of the God who refused to forsake his rebellious creation, who refused to give up, who was and is determined to redeem and restore fallen creation to his original design for it."[42] Unfortunately, mission has very often been narrowly defined as what believers do, since mission has generally been associated only with the activity of the church. This misconception has often caused the Christian Church to see itself both as the initiator of and authority for mission. Although the Bible supports and even mandates that mission as the raison d'être of the church, many scholars have voiced their dissatisfaction with defining mission exclusively in relation to what the church does for human beings in the name

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[40]Gailyn Van Rheenen, "The Missiological Foundations of Theology," *Missiology.org: Resources for the Study of Mission*, 12 August 2002, http://www.missiology.org/mr-21-the-missiological-foundations-of-theology/.

[41]Craig G. Bartholomew, "Theological Interpretation and a Missional Hermeneutic," in *Reading the Bible Missionally,* 81.

[42]Charles R. Taber, "Missiology and the Bible," *Missiology, An International Review* 11.2 (1983): 232.

of God. However, it needs to be stressed that this dissatisfaction with the way mission has generally been narrowly defined does not at all call into question the validity of every Christian's active involvement in mission. The objective of these scholars is to argue for "the theological priority of God's mission"[43] so that the church's missionary endeavors will not continue to be conceptualized apart from the mission of God.[44]

Jürgen Moltmann addresses this misunderstanding about mission by pointing out that "it is not the church that has a mission of salvation to fulfill in the world; it is the mission of the Son and the Spirit through the Father that includes the church."[45] Echoing the same thought, Christopher J. H. Wright posits that "*fundamentally, our mission (if it is biblically informed and validated) means our committed participation as God's people, at God's invitation and command, in God's own mission within the history of God's world for the redemption of God's creation.*"[46] In other words, the missionary movement of which the church is a part has its source in the Triune God.[47] Rightly understood, therefore, mission is primarily God's prerogative. It is first of all about God and his redemptive purposes and initiatives in the world. Mission should be perceived as primarily about God and who he is rather than about what the church does,[48] for not everything the church does fulfills principles of God's mission.

In an attempt to help Christians "see not just that the Bible contains a number of texts which happen to provide a rationale for missionary endeavor but that *the whole Bible is itself a 'missional' phenomenon,*" Wright suggests a paradigm shift from speaking about the biblical basis of mission to the missional basis of the Bible.[49] He insists elsewhere that "the processes by which biblical texts came to be written were often profoundly missional in nature. . . . Most of Paul's letters were written in the heat of the missionary efforts: wrestling with the theological basis of the inclusion of the gentiles; affirming the need for Jew and gentile to accept one another in Christ and in the church."[50]

From this unique perspective, the agenda for biblical interpretation should be centered around the story it tells of the *missio Dei* and the

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[43]Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 22.

[44]Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions,* 59.

[45]Jürgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit: A Contribution to Messianic Ecclesiology*, trans. Margaret Kohl (London: SCM, 1977), 64.

[46]Wright, *The Mission of God,* 22–23; emphasis original.

[47]Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions,* 55.

[48]Ibid.

[49]Wright, *The Mission of God,* 22; emphasis original.

[50]Idem, "Reading the Old Testament Missionally," in *Reading the Bible Missionally*, 109.

community God calls to participate in what he is doing.[51] Since the mission of God constitutes the core of the biblical narrative, asking missional questions of every passage of the Bible should be an inherent part of any approach to biblical interpretation.[52] In other words, since God's revelations recorded in the Bible are about mission, "interpreting any specific biblical material requires attending to this pervading story of which it is a part. The parts must be read in light of the whole."[53] Dean Flemming suggests that "we will read Scripture more faithfully if we read it with an ear tuned to the music of God's mission."[54] However, this does not mean that exegetes should attempt to interpret every single biblical text as having a missionary message.

The Bible needs to be approached from the perspective of the mission of God and the missionary nature he intended for his people. In so doing, missional hermeneutics seeks to ascertain what God meant by a specific revelation, how that revelation was understood by the original author and audience, and finally what that revelation means for contemporary recipients.

Biblical Hermeneutics: Discovering the Meaning and Implication of a Text

Missiology is concerned with overcoming barriers to the full reception of the gospel. Many of those barriers are cultural. To be faithful to God's intended missionary purposes, missiological thinking should always flow from firm scriptural principles.[55] Thus, the need for biblical hermeneutics. Grant R. Osborne defines hermeneutics as the "science, art, and spiritual act of interpreting the Scriptures"[56] in order to determine their meaning. As a science, biblical hermeneutics follows both principles and methodology of interpretation.[57] As an art, biblical interpretation brings together different texts in a way that they perfectly fit into the whole biblical narrative.[58] As a spiritual act, hermeneutics aims to help recipients apply the Word of God to their lives in a way that leads to their spiritual transformation.

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[51]George R. Hunsberger, "Proposals for a Missional Hermeneutic: Mapping a Conversation," *Missiology, An International Review* 39.3 (2011): 310.

[52]Michael Barram, "The Bible, Mission, and Social Location: Toward a Missional Hermeneutic," *Int* 61.1 (2007): 53.

[53]Hunsberger, "Proposals," 311.

[54]Dean Flemming, "Exploring a Missional Reading of Scripture: Philippians as a Case Study," *EvQ* 83.1 (2011): 7.

[55]Boubakar Sanou, "A Biblical and Missiological Framework for Cross-Cultural Mission: A Case Study of the Lobi Funeral Rites in Burkina Faso" (PhD diss., Andrews University, 2015), 12.

[56]Grant R. Osborne, "Hermeneutics," in *Evangelical Dictionary of World Mission* 430.

[57]Jiří Moskala, "Toward Consistent Adventist Hermeneutics: From Creation through De-Creation to Re-Creation," in *Women and Ordination: Biblical and Historical Studies*, ed. John W. Reeve (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2015), 2.

[58]Ibid.

Therefore, discovering the meaning and implication of a biblical text constitutes the two primary aspects of missional hermeneutics. The meaning of a text is concerned with searching for the biblical writer's original message. Context, exegesis, and biblical theology play a big part in understanding the author's original message. The context of a biblical text has to do with understanding the kind of literary context surrounding it. Exegesis deals with grammatical, syntactical, and semantic analysis. Biblical theology focuses on the emerging theological message from a text by pinpointing the primary themes of the book of the Bible that text is a part of.[59]

The implication of a text is concerned with the reformulation of the author's original message so that various cultural contexts can understand and relate meaningfully to it. Systematic theology and contextualization constitute the primary components of the implication. While systematic theology is concerned with "the study and articulation of an orderly and coherent account of Christian beliefs,"[60] contextualization seeks ways to effectively communicate and apply biblical and theological truths in cross-cultural contexts.[61] All this must be done carefully, in such a way that the Word of God always remains the norm, while the cultural context only serves as the setting within which biblical and theological truths are rearticulated.

The end goal of biblical interpretation should not be merely providing a well-written academic essay or commentary but giving strong roots to the never-changing Word of God within the various contexts of our ever-changing world. The understanding of biblical truth must be cognitive, affective, and evaluative for it to have a life-changing impact on its hearers.[62] It needs "to make practical application of each passage to the individual life . . . in order to bring the hearers or readers to salvation and an ever closer, personal relationship with God."[63] Jiří Moskala concisely sums up the end goal of biblical hermeneutics as follows: "The *raison d'être* of biblical interpretation is not primarily to understand biblical history, though this is crucial, or to know doctrine, even though doctrine is indispensable for an intelligent following of Christ. The primary reason to interpret the Bible is to be engaged in a personal relationship with the loving and holy Lord and to grow in Him, in the experiential knowledge of His character and saving actions."[64]

This line of reasoning about biblical hermeneutics fits well with the purpose of mission as a call to participate in "*God's redemptive, historical initiative on behalf of His creation*."[65] Because missional hermeneutics

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[59]Richard M. Davidson, "Interpreting Scripture: An Hermeneutical 'Decalogue,'" *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 4.2 (1993): 95–114.

[60]John C. Peckham, "The Rationale for Canonical Theology: An Approach to Systematic Theology After Modernism," *AUSS* 55.1 (2017): 84.

[61]Osborne, "Hermeneutics," 432.

[62]Ibid.

[63]Davidson, "Interpreting Scripture," 109.

[64]Moskala, "Toward Consistent Adventist Hermeneutics," 7.

[65]Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions*, 54; emphasis original.

approaches mission as a central thrust of the whole of Scripture,[66] missiologists must make use of the principles of other ways of approaching biblical texts, such as canonical and narrative interpretations, to reach the spiritual transformation of the gospel recipients as the end goal of true biblical interpretation.[67]

Social Location of Interpreters and Readers

Social location refers to a socially constructed perspective on life. It influences people's "perception of how things work, what is real, where things belong, and how they fit together."[68] Because every person's social location influences their ontological and epistemological perspective on the world and their own lived experiences,[69] it is inevitable that their social location will also inform their reading and interpretation of Scripture.[70] In other words, whether we "like it or not, our view of the world and our understanding of reason, religion, language, and so forth will shape the way we work with the Bible."[71] Unfortunately, taking into consideration the impact of social location on the reading and interpretation of Scripture has long been a missing ingredient in the majority of biblical scholars' approaches to hermeneutics. Fortunately, this is no longer the case today. The significance of social location in biblical hermeneutics is increasingly receiving recognition among biblical scholars.[72] A growing number of them are recognizing that all readings of Scripture "are located readings that cannot escape their own cultural and historical limitations."[73] Stephen B. Bevans adds that among fallen, limited human beings, "there

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[66]Though mission is a central thrust of the biblical narrative, this does not mean that mission constitutes its comprehensive subject matter.

[67]Bauckham, "Mission as Hermeneutic," 29–30. A canonical interpretation of the Bible refers to the reading of Scripture as a canonical whole. Missiologists also need to adopt a narrative interpretation of Scripture because of its ability to open up new possibilities of living that change the readers and their world in order to give them new identities through the narratives of their own lives, as well as the wider biblical narratives.

[68]Vernon K. Robbins, "The Social Location of the Implied Author of Luke–Acts," in *The Social World of Luke–Acts: Models for Interpreters,* ed. Jerome H. Neyrey (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), 306.

[69]Kesha Morant Williams and Omotayo O. Banjo, "From Where We Stand: Exploring Christian Listeners' Social Location and Christian Music Listening," *Journal of Media and Religion*, 12.4 (2013): 197.

[70]Bruce L. Bauer, "Social Location and Its Impact on Hermeneutics," *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies* 12.1 (2016): 75.

[71]Craig G. Bartholomew, *Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics: A Comprehensive Framework for Hearing God in Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015), 216.

[72]Barram, "Bible, Mission, and Social Location," 44.

[73]Goheen, "A History and Introduction," 9. See also Barram, "Bible, Mission, and Social Location," 58; Hunsberger, "Proposals," 309–321.

is no such thing as ['pure'] theology; there is only contextual theology."[74] Michael W. Goheen agrees with Bevans as he insists that "we are, each of us woven into a particular historical place, and that context will always shape our interpretation [of the Bible]."[75] Because of our engrained worldviews with their prejudices and the fact that we now only know in part (1 Cor 13:9–12), it would basically be naïve to think that a human being could approach Scripture from a totally neutral or absolutely objective point of view.

By adopting the historical-grammatical method of interpreting the Bible as its preferred method instead of the historical-critical method, and asking the who, when, where, to whom, why, what, and so what questions in relation to the historical background of a text,[76] the Seventh-day Adventist Church indirectly recognizes the need for considering the social location of both the biblical writers and that of the contemporary interpreters and readers. Michael Barram echoes the same idea by stating, "Every interpretation comes from a 'place' to the extent that no interpreter can fully avoid the influences of personal history, gender, ethnicity, race, nationality, place of residence, education, occupation, political perspective, economic status, religious views or commitments, and so forth. As we read the biblical text, therefore, what we see, hear, and value is inevitably colored by our own situations, experiences, characteristics, and presuppositions."[77]

This means that every biblical interpreter's understanding of a biblical text is influenced by his or her own subjectivity. Biblical interpreters therefore need the humility to acknowledge that the established categories they use to make sense of a text may sometimes blind them from discovering the true meaning and implication of that text.[78]

The reality of the impact of social location on the reading and understanding of Scripture also means that biblical scholars need to make some effort to exegete their intended readers' social location with the same rigor they apply to the exegesis of biblical texts. Effective biblical interpretation is not built only around the ability to do good biblical exegesis. If theology is really "centered in the process of reflecting on and applying biblical truth to a particular situation,"[79] the exegesis of the context in which the biblical text is to be applied cannot be ignored as separated from the process of doing theology. It is only by associating the exegesis of a particular social location to

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[74]Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, Faith and Cultures Series (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002), 3.

[75]Goheen, "A History and Introduction," 10.

[76]Moskala, "Toward Consistent Adventist Hermeneutics," 4–6.

[77]Barram, "Bible, Mission, and Social Location," 44. See also Bauer, "Social Location," 74–83.

[78]Goheen, "A History and Introduction," 10.

[79]Jon Dybdahl, "Doing Theology in the Doctor of Ministry Program," *Doctor of Ministry Program, Andrews University*, 1 August 2011, https://www.andrews.edu/sem/dmin/about/theological-reflection/.

the exegesis of biblical texts that our theology will be both equipped to answer questions that our parishioners are asking and to confront different cultures with God's revelation in a way enables their response to and intelligent decision-making in favor of that revelation. This double exegesis will help biblical scholars to successfully address the cognitive, affective, and evaluative dimensions of their intended readers' lives. It is not out of context to say that a useful biblical scholar is one whose theology is relevant to their context.[80] Therefore, because mission and theology never take place in a social and cultural vacuum, understanding the social location of the recipients of the gospel must occupy a prominent place in biblical hermeneutics.[81]

Since the whole of Scripture has a missional thrust, its interpretation and application needs to be patterned after how God's self-disclosure encountered people within their specific social locations. Glenn Rogers captures that missional perspective on hermeneutics in the following way:

> God interacted with Abraham, Israel, and the Prophets, with Jesus, with the apostles, and with every one of us (including you and me) not in some otherworldly or heavenly context, but in the context of this material world, a world of human culture. . . . God uses human culture as a vehicle for interaction and communication with humans because human culture is the only context in which humans can communicate. This is not because God is limited. It is because humans are limited. Human culture is the only frame of reference humans have. If God wants to communicate with humans it must be within the framework of human culture.[82]

For Christian witness to be effective in any context, the presentation of the gospel must not only be biblically sound but also "culturally relevant and receiver-oriented thus minimizing rejection by and alienation of the people to whom it is presented."[83] Further, because the gospel cannot be heard in the abstract apart from a social location,[84] the Word of God must speak to an African as an African, and not as to a Middle Easterner or as a North American. In other words, for the gospel to meaningfully engage recipients, its communicators must use ways to encode the biblical message in such a way that it makes sense to the receptors in terms of its relevance and challenges them, given their social location. The rationale for this is that people cannot be confronted with things that are beyond their frame of reference and be expected to respond positively. As such, for biblical interpreters to make a lasting impact on their readers, especially in missional settings, they need to

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[80]Sanou, "Biblical and Missiological Framework," 167–168.

[81]Barram, "Bible, Mission, and Social Location," 58.

[82]Glenn Rogers, *The Bible Culturally Speaking: The Role of Culture in the Production, Presentation and Interpretation of God's Word* (Bedford, TX: Mission & Ministry Resources, 2004), 27–28.

[83]Boubakar Sanou, "Motivating and Training the Laity to Increase their Involvement in Ministry in the Ouaga-Center Adventist Church in Burkina Faso" (DMin diss., Andrews University, 2010), 42.

[84]Dean Flemming, *Contextualization in the New Testament: Patterns for Theology and Mission* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 138.

pay attention to the social location assumptions of those readers.[85] Just as people can run into the danger of misreading Scripture if they neglect basic principles of biblical interpretation, they can also run into the danger of misapplying Scripture if they fail to take into consideration the impact of social location in the process of hermeneutics.

Biblical Text and Social Location in Engaged Dialogue

The purpose of this last step in approaching a text from a missional hermeneutics perspective is to bring the biblical tradition into an open and honest conversation with a particular social location.[86] This conversation needs to be open and honest because not everything in a social location is in agreement with biblical principles. When God revealed his will within human contexts, he quite often challenged those contexts because human activity has been tainted by sin. Although God very often used the cultural modes available to his hearers to express his will for them, he purged the available cultural modes of any evil implications.[87] In the same way, the Bible should be the final, authoritative, and all-sufficient source of truth and practice in every human context,[88] thus sitting in judgment over all cultures and calling all of them to change.

In contemporary missional settings, this can be done by uncritically gathering, describing, analyzing, and evaluating all available information on specific cultural practices in light of biblical teachings. In the process, it is important for both the exegete and the intended audience to form the "hermeneutical community"[89] that critically evaluates social and cultural practices and makes a decision regarding what to do about them. In most cases, cultural practices can be kept if there are no unbiblical elements present in them. They can also be modified to infuse them with explicit Christian meanings,[90] or simply rejected if they prove to be unbiblical.[91] The end goal

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[85]Rogers, *The Bible Culturally Speaking*, 27, 36, 41.

[86]George R. Hunsberger, "Mapping the Missional Hermeneutics Conversation," in *Reading the Bible Missionally*, 59.

[87]Boubakar Sanou, "Divine Revelation and Context: An Interplay of Influences," *Journal of Adventist Mission Studies* 12.1 (2016): 107.

[88]See Richard M. Davidson, "Interpreting Scripture According to the Scriptures: Toward an Understanding of Seventh-day Adventist Hermeneutics," *Biblical Research Institute*, 20–21 May 2003, http://adventistbiblicalresearch.org/sites/default/files/pdf/interp%20scripture%20davidson.pdf.

[89]Paul G. Hiebert, "Critical Contextualization," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 11.3 (1987): 110.

[90]This appears to be the case for John's use of λόγος in referring to Christ in John 1:1, 14. For full discussion, see above for section on "God in Human Form (John 1:1, 14)."

[91]Sanou, "Biblical and Missiological Framework," 112. For full discussion, see Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1985), 186–190.

of this critical engagement of Scripture with social location is to align the social location of readers with the meaning and implication of the biblical text by asking the "so what" question. This serves as a good antidote against syncretism in Christian living.

Conclusion

The purpose of this article is to show that an interplay exists between divine revelations and the social location of the recipients of these revelations. Because humans are all influenced by the assumptions of their social location, God often takes into consideration their less-than-perfect contextual framework in the process of revealing his Word so that they can meaningfully relate to him. From this perspective, besides being aware of their own subjective reading of Scripture, all biblical interpreters also need to exegete their intended readers' social location with the same rigor they apply to the exegesis of biblical texts so that their readers can respond to and make intelligent decisions in favor of the gospel.

Missio Dei is at the heart of the scriptural narratives. Genesis 15 and John 1:1, 14 attest that, in the process of revealing his will to humans, God took into consideration their social location because contexts shape the way people understand and relate to divine revelation. Rightly conceptualizing God's mission is therefore essential, as this is the unique perspective that gives purpose to the church, its mission, and its theology. As such, mission should also be a valid component of biblical interpretation. A missional approach to Scripture stems from the fact that the whole of Scripture portrays God as a missionary God. If Martin Kähler and other scholars are right in stating that "mission is the mother of theology,"[92] the insights from missiology and the practice of mission should never be neglected in biblical studies.

Just as the Trinity is united in purpose and intimately collaborates in the fulfillment of the *missio Dei*, biblical studies and missiology need to join hands and work together toward the fulfillment of the command of the Great Commission to make disciples of all nations for Christ (Matt 28:18–20). This is not an option. It is an imperative. On one hand, without a solid biblical and theological foundation, missiology will "become captive to a modern secular worldview in which human control and technique replace divine leading and human obedience as the basis of mission."[93] On the other hand, neglecting missiology in biblical and theological discussions "is nothing other than asking the church to cease" from its God-given purpose.[94]

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[92]Kähler, *Christologie und Mission*, 190, as cited in Bosch, *Transforming Mission,* 16. See also Sunquist, *Understanding Christian Mission*, 9; Chung, *Reclaiming Mission,* 260; Jenson and Wilhite, *The Church,* 154; Samuel and Sugden, *Mission as Transformation,* xiii.

[93]Paul G. Hiebert, "De-theologizing Missiology: A Response," *Trinity World Forum* 19 (1993): 4. David J. Hesselgrave notes that in major mission journals, such as *Missiology*, *International Review of Missions*, and *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, the social sciences and history have been given more attention than theology in the study of missiology. See *Today's Choices for Tomorrow's Mission: An Evangelical Perspective on Trends and Issues in Missions* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), 139–144.

[94]Jenson and Wilhite, *The Church,* 154.

A THEORY BASE AND MISSION-SENDING MODEL FOR
THE SOUTH AMERICAN DIVISION OF THE
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

Problem

Effective missionary work depends on a combination of three equally indispensable preconditions: (1) a body of committed and adaptable personnel who are prepared to transmit to another cultural group the relevance of the Christian message; (2) an organization that is equipped to recruit, train, fund, send, and care for such a missionary force; and (3) sustained access to international unreached areas. Throughout its history, the missionary movement has been based on these three factors and the absence of one or more of them has resulted in less than optimum achievement and has sometimes led to failure. In 2014, the South American Division of Seventh-day Adventists decided to actively engage in the worldwide mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church by sending twenty-five families to serve as frontline missionaries in different countries in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. Even though the South American Division can positively identify the first and third requirements, it lacks the second.

Purpose

The purpose of this research is to provide a mission-sending model that will enable the South American Division to engage in cross-cultural missionary work as a growing and continuous activity.

Methodology

This dissertation analyzes biblical and theological principles, historical lessons, and successful practices of current mission-sending organizations in order to provide the South American Division with a mission-sending model that fits the organizational structure and theological presuppositions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. First, an attempt was made to provide a theological basis for the establishment of mission-sending organizations by conducting an analysis of the *missio Dei* through a literature review, observing the missionary-sending nature of God, and the missionary-sending nature of the church as fundamental principles of how God operates in His universal mission. Moreover, an exegetical study of Acts 3:1–3 pointed out the Holy Spirit's initiative in leading the Antioch church to cross-cultural missionary work, as well as to the formation of missionary bands, marking the beginning of the church's engagement in organized mission. Second, historical research

of mission structure manifestations in different epochs, formats, and locations was conducted through an analysis of primary and secondary sources. Five movements were observed: the Celtic Christian communities, the Waldensians, the Moravians, mission societies, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The purpose was to extract applicable missionary lessons. Factors such as the role of the leaders of these movements, beliefs, practices, training, and mission strategies were considered. Third, ethnographic research was conducted through observation, questions based on participant observation, and interviews. A description and analysis of the functioning of current successful mission-sending organizations in Europe, the United States, and Brazil was conducted in order to present best practices related to key aspects of the execution of missionary work.

Conclusions

The study suggested a mission-sending model for the South American Division that was based on three fundamental characteristics of mission-sending structures since the apostolic times: (1) flexibility; (2) decentralization; and (3) a self-reproductive system. In addition, special characteristics of the division, such as (1) number of members, (2) number of institutions, (3) finances, (4) qualified workers, and (5) youth were considered in order to orient the model. The suggested model proposed that, while the South American Division should remain the official voice of missionary work within its territory, universities, unions, and conferences of the division whose leaders felt called to engage in cross-cultural missionary activity should establish Mission Institutes. These mission-sending organizations will be equipped to perform all the crucial tasks related to the execution of mission work: (1) an organized structure, (2) recruiting, (3) training, (4) providing mission opportunities, and (5) funding. The envisioned Mission Institutes are expected to observe the fundamental principle of partnership, being both sending organizations as well as receiving communities, in order that the blessings of the worldwide church can be received back in South America.

READING AS A DISCLOSURE OF THE THOUGHTS OF THE HEART: PROTO-HALAKHIC REUSE AND APPROPRIATION BETWEEN TORAH AND THE PROPHETS

Name of researcher: Kenneth Bergland
Name of faculty adviser: Richard M. Davidson, PhD
Date completed: March 2018

How should we then live? This has been the guiding question throughout the study. In a world that offers a myriad of answers to this one question, I have sought the answer in the Bible, more specifically in the Hebrew part of the Bible. Instead of asking the straightforward question how can the Bible function as a norm for contemporary ethics, the following is based on the assumption that an authentic reading and appropriation of the text needs to understand and emulate how the biblical authors themselves read the Bible. While scholars have studied biblical law, reuse within the Bible, and memorization of revered texts in the ANE, I have tried to combine the three areas in an attempt to clarify how biblical authors read normative texts.

This study is divided into two parts. In the first part, I argue that Torah is best characterized as normative covenantal instruction and that Torah and the Latter Prophets (hereafter Prophets) participated in a scribal culture that did not conform to our standards of literary exactness. In the second part, I have selected four cases of parallels between Torah and the Prophets: (1) Divorce and Remarriage in Deut 24:1–4 and Jer 3:1–10, (2) Sabbath Instructions in Exod 20:8–11; Deut 5:12–15; and Jer 17:19–27, (3) Manumission Instructions in Exod 21:2–11; Lev 25:10, 39–46; Deut 15:12–18; and Jer 34:8–22, and (4) Fasting in Lev 16; 23; 25; and Isa 58:1–14. Finally, I discuss Jer 7 and Ezek 18 as these display a different type of reuse than the preceding four. I have limited myself to cases where reuse and direction of dependence can be demonstrated with reasonable confidence, in order to give an adequate basis for a discussion of how normative texts were appropriated in the specific cases.

Repetition with variation is typical in these texts when reusing a normative text. Neither conflict nor harmony adequately explain the phenomena. In the borrowing text, we rather see a close reading that reads its source(s) expansionistically. There is a response interwoven into the reading, with trajectories the borrowing author might have seen indicated in the very source(s). We find a challenge both to a literalistic reading that limits religion to the plain sense of the text on the one hand, and a creative reading that is not controlled by the text on the other. The cases studied attest to the importance of an immersion into the normative texts for clarifying how we should live, and at the same time giving them new life through texts and forms of life that creatively reuse them while staying rooted in the old words.

"WITNESS" AND "BEARING WITNESS" IN THE LEGAL SETTINGS OF THE PENTATEUCH AND THE GOSPEL OF JOHN: AN INTERTEXTUAL STUDY

Name of researcher: Franklin A. Marti
Name of faculty adviser: Jiří Moskala, ThD, PhD
Date completed: May 2017

This dissertation studies the words "witness" and "to bear witness" in the Pentateuch and in the Gospel of John, and at the same time presents an intertextual connection between these books. The study begins with an introduction in which I present the background and statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the delimitations, and the methodology.

Following the introduction, chapter one deals with the review of the literature from ANE documents to ancient Jewish interpretation. I conclude that, even though the Code of Hammurabi and the Hittite treaties are documents with different purposes, they reflect a similar feature: gods are called to be witnesses and judges between the Great King and his vassals. These gods are summoned to bring blessings or inflict curses, depending on the obedience or disobedience of the vassal.

In relation to ancient Jewish literature, the members of the Qumran community believe that they are the faithful remnant of Israel with whom God has established his covenant and those who are living under his blessings, while all Jews living outside the community are living under curses (Deut 28). Philo, on his part, is well acquainted with the topic of more than one witness for a just judgment (Deut 17:6; 19:15). Josephus debates the reliability of women's testimonies in court, and the Talmud establishes the punishment that has to be inflicted on false witnesses.

Chapter two shows the arguments of modern scholars about the witness motif in the Old Testament from Hermann Gunkel to Paul J. N. Lawrence, and in the Gospel of John from Théo Preiss to Andrew T. Lincoln. This chapter verifies that most scholars agree to the relation of the witness motif in the Old Testament with treaties of second millennium BCE, and that the witness motif in the Gospel of John is connected to the Old Testament through judicial language.

Chapter three examines, exegetically, the Pentateuchal passages in which the word עֵד and its cognates appear, and test their connection with the Code of Hammurabi, and ANE treaties.

Chapter four is an analysis of the words "witness" and "bearing witness" in the Gospel of John, and identifies that many of the stories of this Gospel are built on the judicial language of the Pentateuch in order to show testimonies about Jesus, either in favor of him or against him. The Gospel of John uses this motif to demonstrate that Jesus is righteous and true, and the Son of God. Likewise, the judgement made by Jesus is similar to him (righteous and true). In this manner, his identity and origin are settled.

Chapter five surveys the many passages of the Gospel of John that are infused with Pentateuchal language in order to demonstrate that the Evangelist wants to show, from the beginning of his Gospel, that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God who fulfills the promises of the Pentateuch. The conclusion is a summary of the main points of this investigation in which I also offer its main implications for biblical studies and further research.

A STUDY OF THE POKOT CULTURAL WORLDVIEW: MISSIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST WITNESS AMONG THE PASTORAL NOMADS OF KENYA

Name of the researcher: Haron Nyamweya Matwetwe
Name of faculty adviser: Wagner Kuhn, PhD
Date completed: July 2017

Seventh-day Adventist witness among the nomadic peoples of the East Africa region is faced with a number of challenges. Although the Church enjoys relative success in reaching most communities, its growth and development appears restricted to locations occupied by the settled communities. Unfamiliarity with nomads' cultural structures and values is a partial explanation for why missionaries have failed to connect with the nomads.

This research seeks to describe the Pokot cultural worldview as a step toward understanding barriers to effective mission and developing bridges to close the gap between the Church and the pastoralists. An ethnographic study involving interviews, participant observation, artifact examination, and casual dialogue was completed. Data collected assisted in describing the Pokot cultural worldview by exposing the cognitive, evaluative, and affective dimensions of their culture.

In response, a model for mission among nomads was developed. Since sociocultural factors were identified as the main deterrents to mission initiatives, the model examined seven key strategies to guide effective mission in that region.

ETHICAL ANALYSIS OF ABUSES OF POWER IN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP—A CASE STUDY OF "KINGLY POWER" IN THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

Name of researcher: Zorislav Plantak
Name of faculty advisor: Denis Fortin, PhD
Date Completed: December 2017

Problem and Purpose

Power is an integral aspect of all types of leadership. The term "abuse of power" describes an inappropriate and corrupt application of power. The exercise of power becomes an abuse of power when a person in a position of power acts in a manner that cannot be justified in terms of truth or morality (goodness, kindness, justice, or obedience). While abuses of power have always been a part of Christian leadership, including the Seventh-day Adventist Church leadership, no scholarly study on the moral dimensions of abuses of power in the Adventist Church has been done. Although such abuses are well known, without an ethical analysis of these experiences important lessons of how Christian leaders might deal with the corruptive nature of power cannot be learned. An analysis of the misuse of power is a necessary first step to learn how to avoid the traps of power abuse and to find possible solutions for enhancing Christian leadership.

Methodology

The ethical analysis in this study concentrates on only a single aspect of leadership–the misuse of power. Since it is universally accepted that the abuse of power is a deviation from true Christian leadership and morally inappropriate, the ethical analysis did not include typical moral dilemmas, such as discerning between good and bad, or right and wrong. Instead, the analysis in this study searched for the causes of the abuses of power.

As a case study, this study investigates the well-known "kingly power" incident in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which took place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and analyzes the leadership of two prominent leaders involved in the controversy: John Harvey Kellogg, leader of the medical branch of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and Arthur Grosvenor Daniells, leader of the ministerial branch and president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Based on its causes, this research categorizes the abuse of power in the following seven groups: abuses related to misuse of authority, to mistreatment of subordinates, to preservation of power, to misconduct of a leader, to corrupted character traits, to ignoring Christian principles, and to misplaced responsibility, authenticity, and presence.

Conclusions

The analysis of the abuses of power is followed by some proposed measures for their prevention. This prevention starts with the awareness that spiritual leaders are servants of God who are in service to His people. It requires transparency and well-defined and limited mandate of the leader. Additionally, subordinates and leaders are supposed to act as checks and balances for each other. Leaders must be reminded that they are not irreplaceable. Practical solutions for the problem would include limiting a leader's time in office, mandating changes or rotations in the leadership position, clearly defining the boundaries and limits of a particular position, and educating leaders regarding the extent and limitations of their position. Consequently, sharing responsibility, empowering the whole body of the church, and making decisions through committees have the purpose of shifting power from the hands of the individual to the whole church. The purpose of the election process is to elect a leader with clear principles, one who practices them, and one that has the least amount of vices, since no one is perfect.

While the Seventh-day Adventist Church attempted to deal with the abuses in its leadership by implementing changes in organizational structure, the discrepancy between Christocentric theory and abusive practice proves that abuses of power depend on the personal conduct of the leader and on how much his subordinates allow that leader to exercise such inordinate power. The steps suggested in this study are a simple attempt to propose some potential solutions, with the goal of starting a constructive discussion of practical steps to prevent power abuse.

"LET US MAKE אדם": AN EDENIC MODEL
OF PERSONAL ONTOLOGY

Name of researcher: Marla A. Samaan Nedelcu
Name of faculty adviser: Richard M. Davidson, PhD
Date completed: December 2018

Personal ontology studies human constitution and human nature, an increasingly debated topic in Christian theology. Historically, the most prominent models of personal ontology in Christian theology have been substance dualist models. More recently, physicalist models have offered prominent alternatives. This dissertation studies the conflict of interpretations between these two major model groupings: substance dualism and physicalism. By applying a canonical theology, it then presents an Edenic model of personal ontology that can address the current conflict of interpretations.

Towards this end, chapter one delineates this study's problem, background, purpose, and delimitations. It also introduces the methodology and procedure that will be employed, which includes the final-form canonical approach and phenomenological-exegetical analysis. Chapter two then identifies substance dualism and physicalism as two of the main model groupings of personal ontology prominent in Christian theology today, briefly analyzes them according to the rubrics of constitution and nature, and traces some of their historical development. Additionally, it offers a preliminary comparison between them, and asks whether a model based solely on the normative source of the biblical canon might prove beneficial to the current debate.

Chapter three explores this very question through a close reading of the Eden narrative, which is the biblical pericope that is most foundational to a study of personal ontology. In turn, this reading delivers answers to the questions of constitution and nature, and reveals an Edenic model of personal ontology. Chapter four then compares the Edenic model with substance dualism and physicalism using the same two rubrics, and seeks to determine which models may have the highest explanatory powers in dealing with current questions of personal ontology. Finally, chapter five summarizes the work of this dissertation, presents some implications of it, and offers suggestions for further study.

TOWARD A MODEL OF THE ONTOLOGY OF DIVINE-HUMAN INDWELLING: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF JOHN WESLEY AND JOHN COBB

Name of researcher: Cory D. Wetterlin
Name of faculty adviser: Martin F. Hanna, PhD
Date completed: November 2017

Problem and Purpose

This dissertation addresses the problem of the conflicting views of the ontology of divine-human indwelling that have been manifested in the historical discussion and specifically demonstrated in the models proposed by John Wesley and John Cobb. The purpose of this research was to survey and analyze the writings of Wesley and Cobb, in order to present their models of the ontological nature of the divine-human indwelling. Their models are evaluated on the basis of their interpretations of Rom 6–8 compared with each other and representative current scholarship.

Methodology

The method for this research includes the following: Chapter one consists of an introduction and historical background. Chapters two and three present a survey and analysis of the writings of Wesley and Cobb, respectively, in order to describe their models of divine-human indwelling. This is done using the following three categories: ontology of God, ontology of humanity, and their understanding of an ontological nature for divine-human indwelling. In order to evaluate whether these models of divine-human indwelling are biblically adequate, chapter four compares and contrasts Wesley's and Cobb's interpretations of Rom 6–8 as a focused scriptural lens. This chapter focuses on the final category of comparison, the ontological nature of divine-human indwelling. In chapter five, following the summary and conclusions regarding Wesley's and Cobb's models, the results of the biblical comparison are used to suggest possible implications for moving towards a more biblical model for the nature of divine-human indwelling.

Conclusions

The specific definition of ontological indwelling for this dissertation is the interpenetration/intermingling of the divine and human beings/realities. John Wesley taught an ontological indwelling of the Holy Spirit following the classical theological tradition, in which the timeless eternal divine being/reality is united with the timeless being/reality of the human soul. The Holy Spirit is then the formal and efficient cause of transforming the human being/reality. John Cobb teaches a panentheistic ontological indwelling based on non-substantive process philosophy, which inclusively intermingles the human being/reality within the being/reality of the divine. Each human individual

has the opportunity to respond to the primordial creative will of God, thus being transformed by that response and becoming part of the consequential will of God.

An evaluation of Wesley's and Cobb's understandings of the ontological nature of divine-human indwelling by representative scholars using the exegetical lens of Rom 6–8 reveals some affirmations and some challenges for these two systems. The primary challenge for Wesley and Cobb is a rejection by representative scholars of ontological indwelling defined as the interpenetration/intermingling of divine and human beings/realities. This study then calls for further research to be done on other conceptions of ontological and non-ontological divine-human indwelling and on the biblical conception of divine-human indwelling.

WORSHIP MUSIC AS SPIRITUAL IDENTITY: AN EXAMINATION OF MUSIC IN THE LITURGY AMONG BLACK AND WHITE ADVENTISTS IN THE UNITED STATES FROM 1840 TO 1944

Name of researcher: David A. Williams
Name of faculty adviser: John W. Reeve, PhD
Date completed: January 2018

Topic

This study examines Black and White Seventh-day Adventist liturgical music along with its historical context in the United States from 1840 to 1944. Little scholarly attention has been given to the development of Adventist liturgical practice, the function of music in the liturgy, and the effect of music upon the spiritual identity. This study utilized liturgical history, ritual studies, musicology, and liturgical theology to derive and compare the spiritual identity fostered through music in the liturgy by these ethnic groups. This study considered both the shared and distinct spiritual identities of Black and White Adventists, as cultivated by the music in the liturgy, and as situated in the context of the American racial climate, from the first colonies to the middle of the twentieth century.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to describe the development of spiritual identity among Black and White Seventh-day Adventist worshipers as derived from their experience of music in the Sabbath liturgy, in the United States through 1944. To do so, this study created a methodology for deriving spiritual identity from music in liturgy, in order to support the thesis that music in the liturgy promotes, develops, and often establishes spiritual identity in the existential experience of the worshiper. It tested the hypothesis by situating the historical context of liturgy and music among Black and White Christians in the United States before 1840, and tracing the development of music in liturgy among Black and White Americans from 1840–1944. Within this historical development, the study explored the historical spiritual identity of these communities, as fostered through the music in the liturgy.

Sources

This documentary study primarily relies on published and unpublished primary sources produced in Seventh-day Adventist churches through 1944. Primary and secondary sources provided historical context and perspective. Archives housed some of the primary sources useful in this study. Four Adventist congregations were targeted for the study, two Black and two White, respectively: Ephesus Seventh-day Adventist Church, New York City; Oakwood University Church, Huntsville, Alabama; Battle Creek Tabernacle, Battle Creek, Michigan; and Takoma Park Seventh-day Adventist Church,

Takoma Park, Maryland. Bulletins of the orders of worship provided important liturgical context. Oral histories were also conducted for this research, featuring interviews with twenty-nine persons with memories of Adventist music in the liturgy in the 1920s, 30s, and 40s. Most of those interviewed for this study were members of one of the four churches.

Conclusions

Adventism developed within the context of American revivalism, drawing from this tradition for its early liturgical practice, including fervent singing of spirituals and gospel hymnody. Black and White Adventist pioneers augmented this milieu with their developing views on the great controversy between Christ and Satan, conditional immortality of the soul, Jesus Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, His soon second coming, and God's love. Adventist hymnody contributed significantly toward establishing these beliefs into their spiritual identity. Though early White Adventists were ardent abolitionists, by the late nineteenth century, few Adventists championed social justice for Black Americans. Society's systemic racism had infected Adventist leadership, liturgy, and music publishing. In 1908, as a misappropriation of Ellen G. White's counsel, Blacks and Whites throughout the country began worshiping in separate meeting houses. In 1944, the denomination instituted regional conferences to advance the gospel ministry among Blacks, without White oversight. Throughout the denomination's first one hundred years, Black and White Adventists worshiped through music similarly, due to a shared identity in the Adventist message. Differences in worship can be attributed to differences in the experience of privilege or oppression. Black Adventists always sang the Black spirituals and leveraged European composers, like Bach and Beethoven, in order to express their praise to God and their protest of social injustice.

THE ORIGINS AND THE ANTECEDENTS OF JOACHIM OF FIORE'S (1135–1202) HISTORICAL-CONTINUOUS METHOD OF PROPHETIC INTERPRETATION

Name of researcher: Dojčin Živadinović
Name of faculty adviser: P. Gerard Damsteegt, PhD
Date completed: December 2017

Problem

In an age of biblical idealism dominated by allegorical hermeneutics, the works of Joachim of Fiore (1135–1202) created a shift in biblical exegesis, directly impacting the development of both Catholic and Protestant eschatology. Although a manifest interest has been expressed concerning the influence of Joachim of Fiore on the eschatology of the late Middle Ages, very few scholars have attempted to explore the antecedents of Joachim's ideas, specifically his historical interpretation of Daniel and Revelation and the application of the year-day principle. The purpose of this study is to explore the origins of Joachim's eschatological views and to suggest the sources or literary traditions that might have influenced him in developing a systematically unique historical scheme for interpreting the book of Revelation.

Methodology

This dissertation attempts to highlight and evaluate similarities between Joachim's apocalyptical thought and major medieval and Early Church eschatological sources. This is achieved through two major steps. The first step is to accurately depict Joachim's method of prophetic interpretation. The second step is to systematically compare Joachim's method of interpretation with the sources antecedent and contemporary to Joachim. Included is an analysis and evaluation of commentaries on Revelation from the Latin, Byzantine, and Near-Eastern Christian sources, as well as an examination of sources from the medieval Jewish tradition.

Results

The analysis of the eschatological commentaries antecedent to Joachim of Fiore reveals that, besides a number of unique features, Joachim's hermeneutical framework primarily combines: (1) the historical periodization of Church history characteristic of the expositors in the Latin High Middle Ages, in the early Byzantine period, and Near-Eastern Christian exegesis; (2) Latin medieval tradition of Revelation exegesis dominated by the recapitulation principle; and (3) a Near-Eastern Christian (Armenian, Syrian, and Coptic) and Jewish system of prophetic interpretation using the "year-day" principle, coupled with the expectation of the future Sabbatical period, sometimes referred to as the millennium.

Conclusions

Joachim's system of interpretation does not have a direct antecedent, but instead has several sources. The historicist method of biblical interpretation, although rare in the early Latin Middle Ages, appears to revive in the High Middle Ages. Historicism was a particularly prominent approach to the book of Revelation in the Byzantine and Near-Eastern Christian traditions. Potentially surprising are several similarities between Joachim and Near-Eastern Christian expositors. This seems to be a neglected area in the field of Joachite studies, as very few contemporary scholars have linked Joachim's historicist ideas with the Near-Eastern exegesis of the book of Revelation.

BOOK REVIEWS

Barclay, John M. G. *Pauline Churches and Diaspora Jews*. Grand Rapids:
Eerdmans, 2016. xvi + 454 pp. Softcover. USD 48.00.

In this volume, one of the leading scholars in New Testament studies and early
Judaism, John M. G. Barclay, collects nineteen essays composed throughout
two decades of research focusing on both early Christianity and Diaspora
Judaism. *Pauline Churches and Diaspora Jews* was originally published in the
Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament (WUNT) series
(Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011) and included three previously unpublished
essays: an introductory chapter, and the final two chapters. The current version
maintains the same content, but is more accessible to scholars who wish to
add this book to their private collection.

Barclay's research stems from the observation that "in the urban Roman
world of the first century the early churches and the Diaspora synagogues
were closely parallel and sometimes overlapping social phenomena" (xii),
which allows for comparison and analysis of their unique characteristics
and identities. The introductory chapter, "Pauline Churches, Jewish
Communities and the Roman Empire: Introducing the Issues," provides an
overview of the contemporary socio-historical research on early Christianity
before introducing the three main sections of the book. Barclay provides
the reader with a rationale for the comparisons found in the subsequent
essays and he discusses methodologies and the usefulness of applying social
theories to the study of Paul's communities.

The first main section of the book consists of seven essays that compare
different aspects of "Pauline Churches and Diaspora Jews." Paul's approach
to the law and circumcision are found to be radically different from his
contemporary Jewish counterparts, such as Philo, which, according to Barclay,
rightfully threatens the "social and cultural identity of the Jewish community"
(59) and the "historical continuity of the Jewish tradition" (79). Barclay also
considers how Paul's strategy for community formation compares to Josephus's
ideal of government, and how issues such as money and communal gatherings
were conducive to the development of such early Christian communities.
Apostasy in Judaism and early Christianity is compared and analyzed using
deviance theory, and different paradigms of pagan hostility against Judaism
are compared to the emerging hostility against the early church.

The next section contains five essays that focus on issues regarding the
development of Christian identity in Paul's churches. Barclay insightfully
compares, for example, Thessalonica and Corinth, and questions the cause
of the numerous differences between the two churches, considering that both
were founded by Paul within a short period of time. He ultimately concludes
that the differences were partly due to contrasting levels of conflict with
the broader community. Death in Thessalonians, the household codes in
Colossians, and ideologies of age are also considered in order to analyze the
uniquely Christian identity promoted by Paul.

The final part of the book includes six essays under the title "Josephus, Paul and Rome." Barclay uses postcolonial theory to study Josephus's rhetoric in *Against Apion*, arguing that "the openness to complexity (even ambiguity) in this approach, and the awareness of power-relations and constraints, is precisely what is needed in analysis of Josephus" (305). In contrast to Josephus, Paul, according to Barclay, is not directly concerned with Rome. Instead, the author concludes that "Paul does not oppose Rome *as Rome*, but opposes anti-God powers wherever and however they manifest themselves on the human stage" (387). This analysis goes directly against recent tendencies in Pauline studies to see hidden references to the imperial cult throughout Paul's epistles.

The first and last essays in the book are perhaps the most valuable in terms of depth, insight, and relevance. In the introductory chapter, Barclay emphasizes the contemporary focus of theological studies on "social and economic realia, with emphasis on the particular (not the general) and the communal (not the individual)," in which the scholar is encouraged to ask fresh questions from new perspectives (4). Much of Barclay's discussion flows from the premise that social interactions between early Christians, Diaspora Jews, and their broader communities have direct implications for the development of faith and Christian identity in the first century, thus aptly demonstrating the benefits of this "social turn" in Pauline studies. The extensive interaction with secondary literature provides evidence that the author's approach is well thought out, up-to-date, and reflects years of research. The introductory debate on the subsequent sections of the book provides a valuable and thorough overview of the main observations and conclusions reached in the ensuing essays. If the reader is looking to save time and would rather not go through the entire book, Barclay's opening essay is all one needs to read.

The final essay, "Why the Roman Empire Was Insignificant to Paul," is written mainly in response to N. T. Wright's argument that Paul's theology was directly opposed to the imperial cult, a view that has become quite popular in recent scholarship. This essay is timely and deeply significant, not only for its content, but especially because it addresses the dangers of reading ancient texts through the lens of modern trends and concerns. This tendency of reading Paul's theology as radically antagonistic to the Roman Empire is attractive, according to Barclay, for it first allows for a fresh framework for Pauline interpretation "free of any possible hint of 'supersessionism'"; second, it challenges modern distinctions between religion and politics; and third, it provides the basis for "contemporary critique of empires" and global powers (367). However, Barclay cautions his readers that the appeal of allowing such political and social concerns to regulate the interpretation of the text leads to the danger of distorting Paul's theology. The refinement of this essay is marked by the author's ability to raise broader questions of hermeneutics, reflect a balanced and mature approach to the task of exegesis, and demonstrate legitimate applications of comparative social theories in Pauline studies.

Although many of the other essays in the book were interesting to read, they were mainly examples of Barclay's core arguments in the introductory

chapter, which demonstrate how social theories can be applied to Pauline studies. In some cases, it is possible to see the value of such comparative studies between the Diaspora Jews and Pauline communities. In others, Barclay raises more questions than he provides answers, leaving the reader wondering whether social comparisons are actually valuable in cases where so much data is lacking. After all, Paul's epistles are mainly concerned with addressing theological issues, and not with providing us with a description of the ins-and-outs of early Christian communities. Another pitfall of such associations is the danger of over-generalization, as Barclay himself admits (120). Perhaps it would be important to remind the reader that comparative studies should not replace the task of sound exegesis. If the apostle is not, first and foremost, studied and interpreted on his own terms, whatever analogies are subsequently drawn will invariably be skewed.

All in all, *Pauline Churches and Diaspora Jews* will stimulate both seasoned scholars and young students of Paul to look at his epistles with fresh eyes, while at the same time providing them with innovative tools with which to explore the world of early Christianity. As the author repeatedly emphasizes, there is still much to uncover, if one is willing to ask the right questions.

Collegedale, Tennessee   Keldie Paroschi

Brewer, Brian C. *Martin Luther and the Seven Sacraments: A Contemporary Protestant Reappraisal.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017. xviii + 253 pp. Softcover. USD 26.99.

In *Martin Luther and the Seven Sacraments*, Brian C. Brewer—associate professor of Christian theology at George W. Truett Theological Seminary, Baylor University—"intends to outline each of Lombard's seven sacraments, which became traditional to Roman Catholicism, to examine how Luther understood each practice, evaluate why it was or was not a sacrament, and explore how the rite might be properly understood and positively used in the Protestant tradition still today" (35).

At the heart of Brewer's argument lie the following key thoughts: First, while Luther and the other reformers reduced the number of the sacraments, they did not abandon the practices related to them. In other words, Luther spoke against the sacramentalization of certain practices, but not against the practices themselves. Secondly, many Christians from Protestant traditions today—in contrast with Luther and other Reformers—have either ignored or do not fully engage in important church disciplines that are considered sacraments by the Roman Catholic Church because of their misunderstanding of Luther's intentions.

To be clear, the book is not an appeal for Protestantism to return to seven sacraments, but to re-assess the two Protestant sacraments (Lord's Supper and Baptism) as well as the other ecclesial practices that can strengthen the Christian's life and the life of the church (xii), in light of Luther's theology and practice. In other words, the fact that the nomenclature "sacrament" was deemed inappropriate by Luther and other Reformers in reference to five

important practices of the church does not mean that those practices should be minimized, neglected, or altogether forgotten—as is often the case in many Protestant churches. On the contrary, careful consideration and special attention should be given to each one. Moreover, Brewer suggests that the writings of Luther can provide answers for today's church in its quest to introduce "important rites for its ongoing practice and renewal" (36).

This work is a valuable contribution to the modern church, particularly its main thrust: to call Protestantism's attention to the careful re-evaluation of the seven sacraments. While not considering them sacraments, as such, the call remains to assess the (perhaps lost) significance and usefulness of each practice for today's church. The relevance of, and response to, Brewer's specific proposals under each of the sacraments, however, will most likely vary depending on the tradition of the reader.

The book is composed of an introduction and seven chapters. The generous introduction clearly states the main thesis of the book, and then provides an encompassing historical review of the development of sacramental theologies and understandings spanning from the early church through the Reformation. These are divided into four historical subsections: The first subsection deals with the first few centuries of Christianity, emphasizing that theology rose out of practice in this period, not the other way around. The second subsection presents the debates over the sacraments by medieval theologians (9). The third subsection paints a picture of Luther's views on the sacraments, pointing out that while Luther criticized the sacramental system, he still utilized "the logic of his medieval theological ancestors" (19). The fourth and last subsection provides a succinct, yet clear, depiction of the broader context of the Reformation and its bearing on the issue of the sacraments.

Each of the seven chapters is dedicated to one of the seven sacraments, in the following order: penance, confirmation, marriage, ordination, extreme unction, baptism, and the Lord's Supper. Each chapter follows the same pattern, consisting of four distinct parts: First, a concise, yet solid, historical account of the development of the sacrament until Luther's time; second, Luther's position on the sacrament; third, other Reformers' positions in contrast with Luther's; and finally, a reflection and possible applications for the Protestant tradition today.

Brewer's gentle yet direct challenge to the church, to re-consider the sacraments "as usages" in light of Luther's understanding, is a positive move. His general observation that many Protestant churches today have misunderstood Luther's views and therefore neglected or completely ignored these important practices is valid. At the same time, it seems important to be cautious not to get overly carried away with this train of thought, falling into irresponsible or inaccurate generalizations. While Brewer is correct in the general direction of his argument, the idea that Protestants only practice two, doing absolutely nothing with the other five practices that Romans Catholics consider sacramental, is erroneous to say the least.

Brewer has done an excellent job in his historic appraisal of the development of the sacraments—both in the robust introduction and in

each of the seven chapters. While not an exhaustive historical account, these sections are comprehensive and instructive, clearly setting the broad historical and theological backdrop to which Luther reacted, along with the fertile soil out of which the Reformer built his sacramental views. In this sense, the section in each chapter that exposes what other reformers taught on these issues provides even greater clarity and shows Brewer's predominantly objective approach to his study.

When it comes to each specific sacrament, Brewer's observations and propositions may be considered either extremely valuable or totally irrelevant, depending on the tradition of the recipient. For example, churches that have strong small group programs with well-established accountability partners, may find Brewer's ideas on penance and confession redundant and obvious; while other churches may see those same ideas as needed and beneficial in their particular context.

Regarding *penance,* or confession, Brewer rightfully signals the privatization of faith and the loss of genuine community as potential outcomes of the church's removal of this practice (64). I find Brewer's appeal relevant for the church today, though each tradition's application in this area might vary, and despite the fact that a full return to medieval practices of confession is less than desirable. It appears that the offices of counselors and psychologists have become the confessionals of the twenty-first century for much of the population. Not that Christianity should oppose the service of these valuable professions; however, perhaps a healthier practice of the biblical mandate to confess our sins to one another might reduce the need for such consultations. Simply put, the discontinued practice of the biblical principle of healthy confession has resulted in a great loss for the Christian church today.

In relation to *confirmation* and *baptism,* evaluated here together because of their obvious connection, churches that practice believers' baptism should take heed of Brewer's advice to practice the dedication of babies as a rite that both initiates infants into, and acknowledges them as part of, the covenant community in Christ. Another welcome observation is the well-established preparation for baptism, one that is more evidently celebrated in the life of the congregation. Regarding baptism, Brewer rather unsatisfactorily resolves Luther's paradox of emphasizing faith as that which makes baptism efficacious, on the one hand, while still maintaining infant baptism, on the other.

On *marriage*, Brewer proposes no new elements for the contemporary church. He suggests that, "by removing the 'sacramental' label from the estate, Luther intended to promote marriage beyond Christians to all people as the divine intention for living in God's created world" (111). However, this point is not completely convincing, and even if it was, it does not provide anything innovative for the church today. In other words, most (if not all) Protestant churches do practice marriage and consider it a crucial and sacred divine institution.

Pertaining to *ordination* and the issue of authority in the church, much remains to be resolved within Protestant denominations. It is clear that the

central catalyst of the Reformation—church authority—is still a challenging issue for the church today. There is a difficult balance between the cherished egalitarian Protestant principle of "the priesthood of all believers," and the practice of order and authority in the day-to-day life of the church. Brewer clearly describes this challenge, but the solutions are obviously beyond his reach.

Regarding *extreme unction*, for many traditions, including Adventism, Brewer's proposed ideas are mainly a description of standard practice. For all intents and purposes, this places the author's suggested ideas in full agreement with Adventism. It still seems important, however, to support Brewer's appeal for the church to maintain a healthy practice of the biblical mandate to pray for the sick, as well as those on their deathbeds, and to offer anointing to those that request it.

Regarding the *Lord's Supper*, it is hard to see the extent to which Luther's views are useful today; though Brewer's suggestion to consider Luther's views as a way to balance Zwingli's "mere symbolism" seemed understandable and logical. Perhaps the most helpful part is Luther's rejection of philosophy as the basis for explaining spiritual/theological matters and his proposal that biblical mysteries be accepted by faith, without the attempt to explain that which has not been clearly revealed in God's word.

Brewer's message tends to lose some strength when he moves from the general to the specifics of his discussion. While the historical sketches are rich and provide a solid backdrop for each of the discussions on the sacraments, the possible applications for the church today are not as strong. Still, this book is an excellent read for college students, as well as for practitioners, and can be used as a primer on the historical development of the sacraments, from the early church to the time of the Reformation, written from a Protestant perspective. Perhaps a section with questions to ponder at the end of each chapter would strengthen the application sections.

Brewer's appeal to contemporary Protestantism to take a fresh look at the seven sacraments, and consider them as relevant practices for the church, using Luther as a filter, should be taken seriously. Overall, this is a book worth reading for everyone interested in observing and evaluating the Protestant Church of the past, in order to enhance the Protestant Church of the present.

Berrien Springs, Michigan   Gerardo Oudri

Cartwright, John, Gabriel Etzel, Christopher Jackson, and Timothy Paul Jones. *Teaching the World: Foundations for Online Theological Education.* Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2017. xviii + 188 pp. Softcover. USD 24.99.

This book by Cartwright, Etzel, Jackson, and Jones is a collaborative effort to examine the question of whether online education can be as good as traditional learning on a physical campus. Some schools reject online training categorically (Beeson Divinity School), while a few *only* use online venues for education (Rockbridge Seminary). In 2012, the Association of Theological

Schools (ATS) made "the momentous decision to grant exceptions to the on-campus requirement. Already more than a dozen ATS-accredited seminaries are offering fully online masters of divinity degrees" (10), such as Fuller Theological Seminary and The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Additionally, in 2017, "145 out of 271" of ATS schools "offered at least six online courses" (18). In this growing trend towards online education, Timothy P. Jones, associate vice president for the Global Campus at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (Louisville, KY), has pooled together three dissertations on the subject, written by Cartwright, Etzel, and Jackson. The three sections in the book correspond to the labors of these three students. In an opening chapter, Jones shares the book's key suggestion and main argument against the critiques of online education, stating that the local church "as an essential part of the curriculum" might serve the need for face-to-face community better than the traditional school campus (13).

Christopher Dwight Jackson explores "Better Foundations for Online Learning" (section I, 15–66). Taking his cues from Robert Funk's article "The Apostolic *Parousia*: Form and Significance" in *Christian History and Interpretation: Studies Presented to John Knox*, ed. W. R. Farmer, C. F. D. Moule, and R. R. Niebuhr (London: Cambridge University Press, 1967) 249–268, Jackson highlights that Paul not only "believed that his presence could be mediated by means of the epistle" (32) but that "in some circumstances his personal presence would be less effective than an emissary or a letter" (33; see 2 Cor 2:3–4; 9:5). Jackson then borrows from "contemporary social presence theory" (37) a distinction between "intimacy" (feeling of closeness) and "immediacy" (i.e., face-to-face, telephone, letter/online) (38). He highlights that "the displaying of immediacy behaviors by a teacher is correlated to student success, whether in face-to-face or online formats" (41). An "ideal approach to theological education" respects the fact that the online format is more effective for some courses, such as systematic or historical courses, than for others, like homiletics (49). The final chapter interacts in some detail with Paul House's "Hewing to Scripture's Pattern: A Plea for Personal Theological Education," *Colloquy* (2010): 2–6, in which he used theological arguments against online theological education (57–59). Jackson finds House's case overstated and highlights that there "are far more similarities and fewer differences between Pauline epistolography and theological education than there are between God's incarnational self-disclosure and theological education" (64).

Gabriel Etzel elaborates on "Better Faculty for Online Learning" (section II, 67–130). After a very general theological frame of reference (ch. 5, "Online Faculty and the Image of God"), Etzel focuses on "Online Faculty and Theological Competency" (ch. 6, 89–106). The online medium converts the role of the teacher "from the conveyer of information to the 'creator of learning environments'" (98, see also Ruth Lester, "Converting My Course Converted Me: How Reinventing an On-Campus Course for an Online Environment Reinvigorated My Teaching," *Teaching Theology & Religion* 9.4 [2006]: 236–242), in which the student changes from "a passive listener

or reader to an active participant in the learning process" (99). Theological competence should take priority over pedagogical and technological skills when hiring online faculty. Etzel reviews various studies about spiritual formation with online media (108–115) before describing the best possible online professor: A person who is involved in ministry and models Christ as a person of character that is willing to suffer, displays strength with humility, and leads through serving (118–129).

In the last section, John Cartwright elaborates on "Better Practices in the Classroom" (131–182). Given that "the average age of the undergraduate online learner" is thirty-four years of age (140), Cartwright first applies ten best practices from "Adult Learning Theory" to online education (142–144). In the next chapter, Cartwright draws from his doctoral research, in which a group of seventeen evangelical educators generated forty-four statements about how to achieve the "four program learning outcomes . . . associated with the ATS M.Div. program" (154). The most important contribution of this research is a discovery of a student's local church as a context for ministerial training: "It is the power of real mentors in real churches that takes personal development to a much deeper level" (162). The last chapter, "The Advantage of Ministry Training in Context," cements the main suggestion of this book. Describing examples such as the associate pastor, the volunteer at a church, and the soldier who is deployed oversees, Cartwright points out that "a master of divinity degree that does not require relocation is not only possible today, but also may be ideal" (170). And it is ideal because "online students can immediately practice what they are learning in their in-context community" (171). When combined with an intentional strategy and an academic structure, online theological training in partnership with the student's church of origin "can combine the best of both theory and practice, achieving the desired learning outcomes" (180–181).

The collaboration of three dissertations bundling one argument in under 200 pages is a great model for harnessing the power of technical research in order to make it relevant for a specific subject. Jones has done a wonderful job of conceptualizing and executing a team project that should serve as an example in other disciplines of theology.

There are some concerns, however, with Jackson's methods. His theological argument for online education relies too heavily on Paul's letters and yet, at the same time, does not read them deeply enough. First, is not the concept of the "absent presence" a pervasive theologoumenon in the Bible? God walking with Adam in the garden (Gen 3:8), his face-to-face communication with Moses (Deut 34:10), and Jesus's short time of incarnation are nothing more than brief exceptions to the rule of God's "absent presence" among his people. Whether the theophanies consisted of visions (Gen 15:1), dreams (Gen 20:3), a voice from heaven (Dan 4:31), a cloud (Exod 14:19) or thunderstorms (Exod 19:16, 19)—God's mode of self-disclosure is usually partial and indirect. As Christian believers, we "fix our eyes on what is unseen" (2 Cor 4:18) because we are "away from the Lord" since "we live by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor 5:6–7). These few references might suffice to show that indirect modes

of communication between God and humanity dominate biblical history, imposed by the distance between transcendence and immanence. Second, although Jackson goes to great lengths to establish the argument of the "absent presence," the need for it becomes less urgent considering the book's overall thesis of shifting the face-to-face communication to the local church community. Third, Paul says more about his means of creating intimate presence in his letters than Jackson indicates. When he says, "we opened wide our hearts to you" (2 Cor 6:11) or "you have such a place in our hearts that we would live or die with you. I take great pride in you" (2 Cor 7:3–4), the apostle reveals a disposition far beyond that of the typical classroom environment. Such depth of relationship between the teacher and the student might tip the vote for an ideal context of theological training in the direction of a church rather than a college campus.

Cartwright's suggestion that the local church become an integral part of the M.Div. online curriculum deserves full attention. Having worked through three degrees on the campus of three different seminaries, I frequently met highly experienced pastors and evangelists who came from all over the world to be nothing but full-time students. Their home churches were deprived of their service. The churches in the cities of the seminaries were flooded with more gifts and talents than they could absorb. In addition, a workers' ministry muscles can atrophy for their lack of use during the many years of academic training. Asynchronous models of online training, on the other hand, are able to decentralize and contextualize the contents of the curriculum without disconnecting the student from the vast history of pastoral care.

This proposal, however, still needs to be tested by real-life experiments. Not every church is set up to provide the intellectual space needed for critical thinking beyond tribal attitudes and opinions. Additionally, some important questions would need to be considered, such as whether the leadership of a church would fund and protect *important* hours of learning without calling the student into *urgent* matters of ministry, or whether a college and church could become accountable to each other based on independent standards of quality control. Would a church even submit to policies and obligations required by accrediting agencies? Do colleges have the budget to build their programs in close cooperation and communication with local churches? Until the authors are able to answer this slew of questions, the key proposal of this book is a great idea, but perhaps nothing more than that.

Newburgh, Indiana   Lars Kierspel

Chryssides, George D. *Jehovah's Witnesses: Continuity and Change*. London: Routledge, 2016. xii + 308 pp. Hardcover. USD 160.00. Softcover. USD 49.95. eBook. USD 24.98.

George D. Chryssides's *Jehovah's Witnesses: Continuity and Change* features a historical and theological narrative that spans from the time of Charles Taze Russell until 2014. Chryssides was well-equipped to undertake this task; he completed a BD in Systematic Theology from the University of Glasgow and

a DPhil in Philosophy of Religion from the University of Oxford. He spent his career studying new religious movements and currently serves as an honorary research fellow at York St. John University and the University of Birmingham. Previously, he published the *Historical Dictionary of Jehovah's Witnesses*, Historical Dictionaries of Religions, Philosophies, and Movements 85 (Plymouth: Scarecrow, 2008) and *The A to Z of Jehovah's Witnesses*, The A to Z Guide 104 (Plymouth: Scarecrow, 2009).

Chryssides's three books on Jehovah's Witnesses compliment the small corpus of recent academic monographs focused on this religious community. Three are worthy of mention: Shawn Francis Peters, *Judging Jehovah's Witnesses: Religious Persecution and the Dawn of the Rights Revolution* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2000); Andrew Holden, *Jehovah's Witnesses: Portrait of a Contemporary Religious Movement* (London: Routledge, 2002); and M. James Penton, *Apocalypse Delayed: The Story of the Jehovah's Witnesses*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015). The first two works are focused studies: Peters's book is the best source on the challenging experience of Jehovah's Witnesses during the World War II period, and Holden's text is an excellent ethnographic study on a congregation in Blackburn, England. By contrast, Penton's book, now in its third edition, remains the most comprehensive historical narrative on the history of the Jehovah's Witnesses. Chryssides's primary contribution in his most recent book is its emphasis on continuity and change, particularly in relation to the Jehovah's Witnesses beliefs and practices.

As Chryssides states, "The aim of this book is to provide an accurate account of the Jehovah's Witnesses, showing how the Watch Tower organization originated, how it has progressed throughout time, and highlighting the issues it faces in the twenty-first century" (6). He accomplishes this goal through a combination of historical and thematic approaches. By his own admission, Chryssides is "particularly interested in exploring the theology that underpins the Watch Tower Society's teaching and practices" (12), and each chapter reflects this focus.

This book is particularly useful in dispelling popular misconceptions about the Jehovah's Witnesses. The reader is informed, for example, that the Witnesses have not (and do not) continually set new dates for the end of the world, they do not teach that only 144,000 people will be saved, potential Witnesses are not required to convert two people before they can be baptized, and members of this religion are no longer opposed to vaccinations. Furthermore, Chyrssides points out that Jehovah's Witnesses do not identify as fundamentalists, premillennialists, or pacifists.

Chryssides also critiques some of the theoretical framework that has been used to explain the Witnesses. For example, the Jehovah's Witnesses organizational history cannot be adequately explained by Max Weber's theory regarding the institutionalization of new religious movements—there is not a clear shift from charisma to institutionalization. Similarly, since Jehovah's Witnesses did not predict that Christ would return on a number of consecutive dates (1874, 1914, 1918, 1925, and 1975) this religious movement

cannot be correctly understood through the lens of cognitive dissonance, as proposed by Leon Festinger, Henry W. Riecken, and Stanly Schachter in their influential text, *When Prophecy Fails* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1956).

Jehovah's Witnesses: Continuity and Change is an excellent book and receives my full recommendation, yet it (like every other text) has some drawbacks. Though Chryssides demonstrates a scrupulous understanding of Watchtower theology, he at times contrasts this group with Seventh-day Adventism, which he is less familiar with. Accordingly, Chryssides asserts that the Witnesses's understanding of the Archangel Michael originated with Ellen G. White. This suggestion is misleading because White did not believe that Christ (or Michael) was a created being. Unlike the Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh-day Adventists point out that the Greek word for "angel" also means "messenger" and that Michael is an angel only in this latter sense—he is God's Archmessenger, not a created being at the top of the angelic hierarchy. In a similar vein, Seventh-day Adventists are Trinitarian, Jehovah's Witnesses are not.

Chryssides also claims that Seventh-day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses both celebrate the Memorial on Easter Sundays. Adventists have never celebrated the Memorial, which is a practice unique to Jehovah's Witnesses. Rather, Seventh-day Adventists hold communion quarterly, along with many other Protestant groups, and do not typically gather for worship on Easter Sunday since they observe Saturday as the Sabbath. Chryssides misses this point, however, and further suggests that "both Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses prefer to emphasize the Memorial, since it is the death of Jesus and his ransom sacrifice for the world's sins that lies at the heart of their theology, rather than the resurrection, which, despite its undoubted importance, does not have the same soteriological function" (202). Contrary to this assertion, Seventh-day Adventists emphasize that Christ's death *and* resurrection are critically important for human salvation.

Finally, Chryssides claims that "Seventh-day Adventists continue to celebrate these [Jewish] festivals" as outlined in the Old Testament (208). Though Seventh-day Adventists do observe the biblical Sabbath, they do not observe (and have not observed in the past) any Old Testament festivals or feasts. As with his comparison regarding the Memorial, Chryssides provides no source for his information about Seventh-day Adventism on this point. This raises an important issue regarding comparison: when comparison is done, it should be based upon similar types of sources or information. Chryssides bases his understanding of the Witnesses on official organizational sources, but does not do the same with Seventh-day Adventists.

Though there are issues with some—and it is only some—of Chryssides's comparisons, it should be stressed that these minor problems do not detract from the overall importance of his work. This text is highly informative in regard to its primary subject, the Jehovah's Witnesses. In reference to this, however, a final point should be made. Chryssides's book is an institutional/intellectual work, focused on leaders and official teachings. This

focus is useful because it contributes to the scholarly understanding of Watchtower ideology, but it also masks as much as it reveals. Chryssides argues that Jehovah's Witnesses are highly uniform in their belief and practice. This may be true, but religious groups tend to be highly diverse, especially if they have members spread throughout the world and are numbered into the millions. Therefore, cultural and social histories of Jehovah's Witnesses still need to be written so that this religious group and their history is better understood.

In spite of any issue that might be raised, *Jehovah's Witnesses: Continuity and Change* is an excellent study on this "older new religion." Very few authoritative studies regarding the Jehovah's Witnesses have thus far been conducted and this new book is a masterful text. Therefore, it should be recognized for what it is: a significant contribution to the scholarly corpus on Jehovah's Witnesses, as well as an important work in the broader field of religious studies and new religious movements. Scholars and non-specialists alike will benefit greatly from Chryssides's work.

Tallahassee, Florida   Kevin M. Burton

Collins, John J. *Scriptures and Sectarianism: Essays on the Dead Sea Scrolls.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016. xi + 329 pp. Softcover. USD 45.00.

This book provides a collection of journal articles and book chapters on the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) written by John J. Collins and published between 2004 and 2013. Although not the original edition, there is much to be gained from this reprint of WUNT 332 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014). Initiatives like these make expensive volumes from European publishers easily accessible to students who might not usually have access to them—an important step in the flourishing of DSS scholarship. From the early days of the discovery of the DSS, there were accusations that a selected few were hiding the important knowledge about Christianity and Ancient Judaism found in the manuscripts of Qumran. Although things have changed dramatically since all of the readable Qumran fragments have been published, it is still true that not everybody has access to specialized studies on these documents. This is because most of the cutting-edge scholarship on the DSS is produced by European publishers at a high cost. Eerdmans and SBL Press attempt to popularize this knowledge by reprinting expensive volumes of prestigious series, like WUNT (Mohr Siebeck) and STDJ (Brill), at an affordable price, and this book is an example of this important effort.

This collection also demonstrates the value of gathering materials from leading thinkers on the DSS and consolidating them into one place. Until recently, most studies on the manuscripts from Qumran were produced by the selected few who were part of the publication project. Their reflections were frequently published in journals and conference volumes which were not easily accessible to the broad academic community. Collections such as this one, which include Collins's reflection on the DSS, are quite helpful and can save hours of searching among different volumes. A highlight of this volume is

the size of its bibliography (33 pp.), which is quite comprehensive on Qumran scholarship and related literature up to 2014 and becomes a valuable reference guide to beginning scholars on the DSS. This compilation also provides a way of evaluating the development of DSS scholarship, through exposing a diachronic picture of an influential author within one volume. This has already been noted in Florentino Martínez's preface to the collection he organized featuring Lawrence Schiffman's research on the Temple Scroll (*The Courtyards of the House of the Lord: Studies on the Temple Scroll,* STDJ 75 [Leiden: Brill, 2008]). Hopefully additional collections such as these will be made available in the near future. Especially helpful would be a collection of Jörg Frey on the DSS and the New Testament (NT), for example.

The breadth and thoroughness of Collins's engagement with the sources is truly impressive. This is a result of approximately four decades of biblical scholarship, distilled into his later publications. Collins has a remarkable ability to summarize concepts on opposite sides of a debate evenly, almost always coming to a judicious and objective conclusion. As a foreigner, with English as my second language, I also found Collins's style of writing very pleasant to read. His articles reveal several trends in DSS studies which relate to the understanding of the history of Israel, sacred Scriptures, and sectarianism. These trends are valuable to those trying to get a big picture of the major issues within DSS scholarship. It quickly becomes clear that the key documents of the DSS, subject to debate for their historical value on the reconstruction of the community of Qumran, are CD, 1QS/4QS, 1QH, and 4QMMT. Summarizing the positions and evaluating point-by-point, Collins concludes that the historical information that can be derived from the Qumran manuscripts "is quite limited" (149) regarding the origin of the DSS community. What is clear is that they were a group of Israelites who parted from Jerusalem over issues of biblical interpretation around the time of the Maccabeans. Collins develops new angles in tackling the dichotomies regarding religiosity in the second Temple Period, created by scholars who divide groups of literature and communities by ideas, such as Determinism versus Freedom; Apocalyptic versus Mosaic; and Wisdom versus Deuteronomist. His conclusion points to how misleading this debate can be, "insofar as it presupposes that there were pure streams of traditions and that a text must draw" ideas either from one or other (252). In my opinion, he has aptly demonstrated that the DSS draws a more complex relationship between the Israelites and these ideas. He sees in the DSS a community which upheld both Mosaic law and Wisdom law, as well as both freedom and determinism in a "serious revision of the traditional covenant" (192).

In the complex system of Jewish religious belief in the second Temple Period, the reader might experience some incongruence if he or she does not agree with the DSS author's framework. This is a point that should be stressed. Too often, a scholar comes to the text with ideas of coherence that are not congruent with the objects being analyzed, thus, in order to make "sense" of the apparent confusion, he/she may impose his/her ideas on the texts, dissecting and separating bits and pieces where there is no such composite

text after all. A good example of this reflection is found in Collins's chapter on *The Essenes and Afterlife*, where Collins demonstrates that previous scholarship assumed that only Josephus or Hippolytus could be right about the Essenes, based on apparent contradictory information about bodily resurrection. Collins, however, goes in a different direction, showing that if one carefully evaluates the evidence of the DSS, "neither bodily resurrection nor conflagration" is clearly articulated in the manuscripts of Qumran, necessitating the critical consideration of both Josephus's and Hippolytus's information on the Essenes (226). This is not to say that the DSS were not written by the Essenes mentioned by Josephus and Hippolytus, or even that these authors were misrepresenting the DSS. It just points to the fact that these Greek authors were probably "not very well informed" or that the extant fragments of the DSS do not give a complete picture of Essene belief (assuming that DSS were produced by the Essenes) (226). This posture is more cautiously descriptive than others that reconstruct history from hypothetical scenarios, trying to see beyond the presented evidence. Although Collins is very precise in his analysis, I see some instances where Collins himself is guilty of doing this. For example, he assumes that the book of Daniel was produced after the Maccabean revolt, but other places, he indicates that the Enochic view of history and *pesharim* style of exegesis were influenced by Daniel and that this apocalyptic trend in Judaism did not consider the Torah important because "Moses does not appear in it at all" (115). This conclusion, however, is based on silence and mere assumptions of the date when Daniel was written, as well as an acceptance of the clear dichotomy that he generally seems to reject earlier regarding Mosaic versus Apocalyptic literature.

Be that as it may, the book provides J. J. Collins's mature reflection of the importance of the DSS for the understanding of the Bible's origins. In the introductory essay (of the original), which has been expanded in his recent volume *The Invention of Judaism: Torah and Jewish Identity from Deuteronomy to Paul* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2017), he argues that the Bible, as we know it, was finally produced (fixed) in the late second Temple Period (around the time of Jesus). The collection (canon) and texts of these sacred books were actually quite malleable, causing the ideas about these texts to fluctuate throughout that period. Israelite religiosity in the late second Temple Period was diverse and so both Rabbinic Judaism and Christianity were side products of this process of defining Hebrew religiosity through biblical interpretation. In his epilogue on the interpretation of Isaiah 53, and in his chapter on the interpretation of Psalm 2, Collins aptly demonstrates that the messianic identification given by the NT was both in accordance with the exegetical trend found in the DSS, but also innovative, since these authors (of the DSS and the NT) had a typological/prophetic view of history. In other words, they would see current events in light of prophecy, assuming that the biblical texts foretold events that were taking place and therefore could only be fully understood and explained after they came to

pass. For the reasons mentioned above, I recommend this book as a great introduction to the DSS in general, as well as a good collection of articles helpful to the understanding of particular topics related to Israelite beliefs, the canon of Scriptures, and Christian origins.

Berrien Springs, Michigan   Rodrigo Galiza

Cosgrove, Mark. *The Brain, the Mind, and the Person Within: The Enduring Mystery of the Soul*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2018. 180 pp. Softcover. USD 18.99.

The Brain, the Mind, and the Person Within is not a textbook on the neurosciences, nor does it aspire to solve the mysteries of the soul. The subtitle puts it well: *The Enduring Mystery of the Soul*. Cosgrove does not want to solve the mystery. Rather, his aim is to establish and call attention to it. *The Brain, the Mind, and the Person Within* is a textbook on awe, attempting to re-enchant those who have gained the impression that the brain is almost fully understood and that the person within has been shown to be an emergent product of matter relating to itself in very complex, but ultimately scientifically explicable ways.

For a number of reasons, *The Brain, the Mind, and the Person Within* is a good introductory book for Christian scholars and students who haven't had much contact with actual neuroscience, but wonder about the matter of consciousness and mind. It is written in non-academic language (as much as possible when talking about the brain) and also uses the less formal endnotes rather than footnotes. Furthermore, at the end of each chapter, the reader is presented with two suggestions for additional reading. Each chapter starts off with a fascinating little scientific anecdote, often giving insights about cutting edge research from somewhere around the world. The writing is exuberant, bordering on poetic, as Cosgrove tries to impress upon his audience the sheer complexity and wonder contained in the three pounds of grey goo-ish stuff in our cranium.

A chapter of special interest to Cosgrove's Christian readership should be chapter six: "God Spots on the Brain: Putting God Back Where He Belongs." This chapter describes the role of the parietal and temporal lobes in the spiritual experience. It is a fact that spiritual exercises are associated with increased activity in these areas of the brain. Furthermore, temporal lobe epilepsy can cause strong religious experiences. This can be replicated by a device, called a god helmet, that produces electrical activity in the temporal lobes.

These observations have been taken by some as evidence that religion is a consequence of overactive neurons. Cosgrove argues against this idea by giving a plausible alternative. If there are brain regions especially equipped and capable of connecting human consciousness with what is experienced by the person as spiritual, then there may be an actual spiritual dimension to connect to, just as there is an actual visible world, which can be experienced via our visual sense. Basically, it comes down to this: if there is a God-Creator, it is likely he has made our brain with the necessary properties to contact us

when necessary. If there is no God-Creator, this is some weird phenomenon that needs further explanations as far as its function in human evolution is concerned.

The topic Cosgrove speaks about most extensively, though, is the problem of consciousness, or rather the problem of explaining how consciousness comes about. In neuroscience, this is called "the hard problem." As Cosgrove describes on many occasions, it is easily possible nowadays to relate certain behaviors, sensory inputs, or categories of thinking to areas within the brain. However, that does not explain how we have a conscious experience of it all. It is also clear that we lose consciousness under certain circumstances—and that, too, is then mirrored by certain phenomena measurable in the brain. But, and this is Cosgrove's primary contention, the physical phenomena of the brain do not make the person, nor do they cause our consciousness. Cosgrove argues that there is something that is not mere matter involved in our being persons, a non-physical, non-chemical entity (38) that somehow fuses with the brain to generate consciousness, but is not part of it. This assumption he calls a top-down approach (13–14) to neuroscience. It is opposed to the common materialist notion of "bottom-up" or emergentism—the contention that consciousness emerges from matter alone.

Cosgrove's suggestion is mainly based upon the apparent inexplicability of consciousness and the unified complexity of the person behind the brain. To simply continue working with a materialist assumption, hoping that all will become clear later on, he calls a science of the gaps (19). The brain is so complex and mysterious that it is naïve to believe that one day we will find the answer for consciousness in the matter of the brain. However, this contention is to be viewed with some skepticism, as far as this reviewer is concerned. The fact that, so far, we have not been able to explain it does not show with any degree of certainty that there is no explanation, or that we are not biologically equipped to find it. Consequently, there is no obvious logical connection between the observation of our current non-understanding of consciousness and the idea that there is no explanation to be found in the matter of the brain. Nevertheless, Cosgrove's case, though not a tight proof, remains strong when one considers the scope of things to be learned.

The Human Connectome Project is the state-of-the-art attempt to map out the neurons and axons of the brain. It is a very ambitious project indeed and may take decades to complete its work, because so far, the process of accurately collecting and reproducing the data is slow and tedious. Once it is finished, it can be used to greatly further our understanding of ourselves. As was the case with the Human Genome Project, faster and more cost-effective methods for viewing and reproducing the architecture of the brain may be found in the process. But, does this bring us closer to solving "the hard problem?" Cosgrove likens the Human Connectome Project to an effort to understand New York by mapping its streets and measuring the traffic (39). It gets you somewhere, but nowhere close. There are dozens of different neurons, firing according to different rules, that will not be mapped in the Connectome. According to Roger Penrose, there are possibly processes within the neurons

which use quantum effects to determine the behavior of the cell, as well as Glial cells that influence whole regions of neurons at once by releasing transmitter chemicals into the brain. Furthermore, the brain is not static. It displays amazing plasticity, especially in childhood, but at other times also, should the need arise.

If there were any place, therefore, to speculate about the impossibility of humans' understanding of something, it would be in regard to consciousness and the brain. This is a point which should be well-received by all Christians. Even though science has progressed substantially, creation remains full of wonder and mystery, a fact which is not likely to change even as our knowledge about ourselves increases.

Given this point, I do find one problem with the general direction that Cosgrove takes in his approach to the hard problem. Even if consciousness is an exceedingly hard problem to explain, there is no logical necessity to the assumption that a nonmaterial entity, a.k.a. the soul, must have an active part in it. This is neither necessary from a scientific, nor a Christian point of view. Specifically, in light of the discussion concerning God Spots on the brain, this reviewer sees no reason why a Christian God-Creator would not, or could not, use the properties of the matter he created to imbue his creatures with the ability to communicate with him, or to experience consciousness. The question of how consciousness might arise, with or without non-material support, is not settled as far as this discussion goes. However, because we know little, yet experience much, we remain in awe. This is what Cosgrove sets out to show. It is the great takeaway from *The Brain, the Mind, and the Person Within*, and the reason why I would recommend it to all who are interested in neuroscience.

Graz, Austria   Valentin Zywietz

Ellis, Dirk R. *Holy Fire Fell: A History of Worship, Revivals, and Feasts in the Church of the Nazarene*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2016. xxii + 227 pp. Softcover. USD 31.00.

This monograph presents a significant contribution to the field of liturgical scholarship, not only for the Church of the Nazarene, but also for denominations in the Wesleyan tradition, free-church traditions, and the broader discipline of liturgical history. This volume builds upon current liturgical methodology that blends the reading of liturgical texts with ritual descriptions, utilizing a variety of sources, in order to evidence a rich history and theology of worship. The author, Dirk Ellis, teaches at Northwest Nazarene University (Nampa, Idaho), and brings a pastoral tone to the work, creating an engaging and relevant study for a broad audience. Ellis based this work on his doctoral dissertation, which he completed in the department of Discipleship and Religious Education at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University.

The book comprises the historical section of Ellis's dissertation, with updated language to speak to the Nazarene church at large regarding the

doxological mission of worship. "It is my hope that this history serves as a corrective lens empowering the church to offer worship that is authentic, glorifies God, and leads to the sanctification of her people" (xv). In chapter one, Ellis makes a convincing argument for viewing the entire liturgy as formative for discipleship, not just the sermon. This chapter alone should be read by all Christians in the free-church tradition, especially Seventh-day Adventists. Chapter two addresses the liturgical-theological heritage and inherent spirituality taught by John Wesley. Chapter three traces the development of worship from the American Methodist tradition to the Church of the Nazarene. Chapters four through six explore the characteristics of Sunday worship in the Church of the Nazarene. They give an earnest appeal to Wesley's historical, liturgical theology for the sacraments, addressing also the occasional services such as the love feast, a service of revival indicative of the holiness movement. Chapter seven concludes the work, giving an earnest appeal to doxology in worship, rather than simply a service perceived as "preliminaries" and the sermon. All the rituals of the services, not only the preaching, "communicate meaning" and are "essential" to the life of the Christian (209).

Ellis argues that the Church of the Nazarene needs to draw upon the historical liturgical theology espoused by John Wesley, in order to foster the renewal of revivalism, harkening to the era when "holy fire fell" (199). He laments that the church has lost its revivalistic and Wesleyan liturgical heritage. Due to an over-emphasis on preaching, the Church of the Nazarene—and other denominations in the free-church tradition—lose sight of the significance of the entire liturgy contributing to the development of Christian spirituality. Ellis demonstrates how Wesley conceived of liturgy and theology together, like two sides of the same coin, in his 1784 *Sunday Service* intended for Methodists in North America. Though preaching was important, Wesley leveraged other liturgical rituals that were also indispensable for Christian growth, including the order of the service, prayer, Scripture, hymns, and the sacraments, such as the Eucharist. By embracing Wesley's holistic approach to worship, Ellis envisions a restoration of revivalism in the Church of the Nazarene.

The general tenor of Ellis's argument is desperately needed in Adventism as well. Curiously, Adventists also speak of the elements of the service before the sermon as preliminaries, and the preaching as the main part of the service. The use of the term, preliminary, has caused many Adventists to perceive these other elements as insignificant through statements such as, "I'll wait until the preliminaries are over before I go into the worship service." Ellis argues convincingly that one cannot adequately enter into worship without actively participating in the entire service, precisely because the entire service ought to be designed to foster genuine worship. Given his emphasis on ritual in worship, Ellis would have done well to explore the ritual philosophy of Victor Turner and the liminality of worship. Ellis's pastoral tone could have shown that, within the Nazarene tradition, the sermon may continue to be viewed as the liminal moment, the threshold or rite of passage. In evangelical theology,

the preaching of God's Word is God speaking to the listeners, a process which changes hearts and minds. The other elements of liturgy are indeed preliminary, but not inconsequential; they are essential. More deeply embracing ritual theory could have enhanced Ellis's argument that the entire service is formative for the Christian.

Ellis sought to demonstrate that Wesley's liturgical-theological legacy provides the requisite heritage and potential for future renewal for contemporary Nazarenes. While this may be true, I remain unconvinced that Methodism is the liturgical antecedent for Nazarene and Adventist liturgy, but, rather, American revivalism. Ellis shows that American Methodists abandoned Wesley's liturgy well before the nineteenth century. He briefly mentions that American revivalism ruled the day, and was especially influenced by Charles Finney. I contend that Finney's influence on nineteenth century liturgical practice deserves much more attention. In the book, Ellis seems to emphasize the Wesleyan liturgical theology of the eighteenth century, then jumps to the twentieth century when the Church of the Nazarene had its beginning. Furthermore, the revivalistic nature of the nineteenth century would give valuable context for the holiness movement, total Christian perfection, and the Nazarene understanding of the *via salutis*.

Another angle from which Ellis could have explored this history is culture. One may wonder whether the holiness movement and the Church of the Nazarene actually abandoned Wesley's ideals at all. Perhaps these American Christians contextualized the transcultural elements of the British minister, appropriating his teachings to their own culture. In this way, American revivalism was not a rejection of Wesleyanism, but a cultural extension of it.

The real contribution of the book is on viewing public worship holistically. While attempting to replicate Wesley's two hundred-year-old liturgical theology may be impossible for contemporary Christians, Wesley's principles for worship speak with profound relevance to the churches today. The entire worship service should ask Wesley's fundamental question: "Is thy heart right with God?" (212), not only in an altar call, but throughout the various rituals of the entire divine service.

Ellis presents a compelling history that poses striking similarities to Adventist liturgical history, deserving further attention by Adventist scholars. This book is essential reading for anyone interested in Wesleyan and free-church liturgical history, as well as for the local worship leader seeking to bring "deliberate intention[ality]" to the service (211). Most importantly, Ellis's passionate appeal for worship renewal makes *Holy Fire Fell* a valuable read for all earnest worshipers seeking to bring glory to God holistically through the entire worship service.

Andrews University   David A. Williams

Gertz, Jan C., Bernard M. Levinson, Dalit Rom-Shiloni, and Konrad Schmid, eds. *The Formation of the Pentateuch*. FAT 111. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016. xi + 1204 pp. Hardcover. EUR 269.00.

The Formation of the Pentateuch developed in stages, first with an international long-standing research group meeting at the Israel Institute for Advanced Studies in Jerusalem, 2012–2013, followed by two major international conferences in 2013 and 2014 at the same location. With key scholars in the field involved in the project, the interest has been significant. The volume contains ten parts, with a total of fifty-six essays by forty-nine scholars. Unquestionably, it will remain a standard reference for years to come for those interested in the question of the Pentateuch's formation.

Julius Wellhausen's New Documentary Hypothesis has been the standard theory within Pentateuchal studies since the end of the nineteenth century, and the subject of much debate. It still enjoys a significant number of followers. For some, it appears to constitute a default theory, even with its weaknesses, because no better explanation has been offered. Others treat it with indifference, as their research interests take them in different directions, and some reject it altogether.

The editors of *The Formation of the Pentateuch*, however, point to an even more severe challenge to the field than the debate over the Documentary Hypothesis, namely "the fragmentation of discourse altogether as scholarly communities in the three main research centers of Israel, Europe, and North America increasingly talk past one another" (2). The aim of the volume is to encourage the "move toward a set of shared assumptions and a common discourse" (4).

A relevant question, therefore, is whether the volume succeeds in establishing a set of shared assumptions and a common discourse. Reading through the papers, it is clear that there is still significant divergence in the field. It is also unclear whether the individual authors themselves have moved noticeably in their positions toward a convergence. Nevertheless, the organizers of the conferences and editors of the volume should be credited for the results already achieved. Bringing scholars together from different camps, both in the conference and the volume, is a contribution itself to an ongoing discourse. In my opinion, where the volume appears most successful is in exposing and clarifying the divergent and disparate voices in the field of Pentateuchal studies. Sometimes clarification of differences is a first necessary step in creating a meaningful dialogue.

The introductions to each of the ten parts of the volume provide brief and helpful highlights regarding some of the major issues and tendencies within each subfield of the Pentateuch's formation. These introductions provide a helpful tool for gaining easy access to basic trends in fields of Pentateuchal research that one might not be familiar with.

A review should primarily focus on what is in the book, rather than what is left out. Still, one wonders what the criteria were for selecting certain scholars to contribute and leaving others out. It is not stated. Looking through the

Table of Contents, one quickly notices that several names are missing. I imagine there might be mundane reasons why some key players in the discussion are left out, like scheduling conflicts and workload. One can only encourage an increasing openness and inclusiveness in the discourse on the formation of the Pentateuch, since the text still seems to hide many of its secrets from our modern eye.

In the second part of this review, I would like to briefly reflect on three of the papers. These are selected given the limitations on this review, but also because they seem to contain significant points for future research. The first is Jeffrey Stackert's "Pentateuchal Coherence and the Science of Reading" (253–268). He argues that we need to refine how we talk about coherence in regards to the Pentateuch. He claims that we should distinguish between 'cohesion' which "refers to the meaningful connections within language, or, more specifically, the internal semantic linkages between sentence elements" and 'coherence,' "which is properly an achievement of the reader, even as it is highly dependent upon a text's cohesive ties" (254). While cohesion, therefore, should be understood as a phenomenon within the text itself, coherence is a phenomenon created by the reader. This granted, one may ask how we construe coherence in the Pentateuchal texts. While traditional readers have argued that coherence is found on the level of the final form of the text, critical scholars have argued that coherence is achieved by splitting the final form of the text into various internally coherent sources or layers of redaction. However, as Eckart Otto, among others, has pointed out, in its pursuit of coherence, source criticism has become a *recursus ad infinitum*. Even if we split the Pentateuchal text into respective sources, research has amply demonstrated that we are not left with internally coherent texts according to our modern taste. A key question, therefore, is how we should relate our idea of coherence to the Pentateuchal text as we have it? Was literary coherence a prime quest in the compositional logic of biblical authors?

The second essay I would like to mention is Jan Joosten's "Diachronic Linguistics and the Date of the Pentateuch" (327–344). He writes: "A first inference to be drawn from the diachronic framework is that the Pentateuch is to be regarded substantially as preexilic. Ascribing large parts of the Pentateuch to the Persian period, as is done routinely by many OT scholars, is impossible to reconcile with the linguistic data" (336). And again, "the Pentateuch is, from a linguistic point of view, remarkably unified. It is hard to detect developments from book to book or from one stratum to another" (338). Future research on the formation of the Pentateuch needs to take more note of the linguistic evidence. The essays in the volume do point to limitations and weaknesses with diachronic linguistics, and still the evidence provided from this research should be taken more seriously than it has been in the past. This also highlights the need for more interdisciplinary collaboration in the field.

The final essay I reference is Dalit Rom-Shiloni's "Compositional Harmonization—Priestly and Deuteronomic References in the Book of Jeremiah—An Early Stage of a Recognized Interpretive Technique"

(913–941). This essay reflects the need to take inner-biblical reuse and the relation between Torah and the prophets into consideration when discussing the formation of the Pentateuch. The entrenched debate on the priority of Torah or priority of the prophets demands more rigor and refinement. It appears that the manner in which the biblical authors reused texts has often confused us as modern readers, since it again differs from our literary standards. Rom-Shiloni writes: "Two crucial features of this rhetorical/literary technique within the book of Jeremiah (and prophecy in general) deserve special attention: the thoughtful *intentionality* behind the harmonizations and the prophet's *freedom* in creating harmonizations in what appear oftentimes to be virtuosic ways. The prophet clearly feels completely free to create these wordplays and thematic combinations purely to suit the context of his prophecy" (938–939). While ancient readers clearly were close readers of earlier compositions, which they saw as authoritative, they took freedoms that can easily be misinterpreted with the wrong assumptions. Therefore, more sensitivity to the unique ways in which biblical authors reused texts seems called for when we discuss the phenomena of repetition with variation within the Pentateuch itself.

In summary, one can applaud and welcome *The Formation of the Pentateuch* for present and future scholarship. The divergence and disparate voices exposed in the volume should make all aware that the field of Pentateuchal research is still in formation. While it is a good summary of the state of research in the field, it simultaneously calls for open and determined research to unlock the secrets of the Pentateuch's formation, still hidden to our modern eyes. We can conclude, with a reuse of Wittgenstein's statement, "God grant the [readers of the Pentateuch] insight into what lies in front of everyone's eyes." (Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, ed. G. H. Von Wright, trans. Peter Winch [Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1984], 63).

Vesterålen, Norway   Kenneth Bergland

Hayes, Elizabeth R., and Karolien Vermeulen, eds. *Doubling and Duplicating in the Book of Genesis: Literary and Stylistic Approaches to the Text.* Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2016. xiv + 209 pp. Hardcover. USD 59.50.

Doubling and Duplicating is a collection of essays presented in Vienna, in 2014, at the joint meeting of ISBL and EABS on the stylistics of the book of Genesis. The essays are divided into three parts: First, formal doublets and the whole; second, thematic pairs; and third, doubling plots and duplicating stories.

The multiplicity of approaches characterizes the last several decades of the study of the Hebrew Bible, to the point that many ask whether the future might only contain further scholarly divergence. If it is possible to speak of trends in this period, one trend may be a stronger focus upon literary and synchronic approaches. However, these approaches can be further subdivided between, for example, Genre Criticism, Rhetorical

Criticism, New Criticism, Reader-response Criticism, and studies of Intertextuality/Inner-biblical Reuse.

In the introduction, Karolien Vermeulen situates *Doubling and Duplicating* in the tradition of Robert Alter (3). By experiencing traditional literary approaches as limiting themselves to characters, perspectives, themes, and motives (1), she explains that the volume aims at an analysis of the *stylistics* of the text of Genesis; "The central question is why the text takes the form, shape, or formulation as we have it" (2). This definition aims at including traditional literary approaches, while at the same time being open to "more hybrid methods, bringing in redaction criticism, ideology, and text world theory" (ibid). To modify the subtitle, we can therefore say that *Doubling and Duplicating* presents a sample of literary approaches analyzing the stylistics of the book of Genesis.

From the days of Aristotle's *Poetics* (cf. e.g. *Poetics*, 1451a. 30–39), both traditional and critical approaches have been dominated by a quest for literary coherence in the Hebrew Bible. While traditional approaches have tried to demonstrate the likelihood of a meta-textual harmony behind cases of doubling and duplications, source and redaction critical approaches have tended to explain these diachronically, as layers of internally coherent compositions and redactions, nevertheless posed as mutually incoherent and contradictory between themselves. In such a climate where we all too often seem to have anachronistically projected coherence upon a text that appears to have been composed under a different logic, a sensitive analysis of "why the text takes the form, shape, or formulation as we have it" is most welcome. A better grasp of repetition with variation seems to be a key area toward advancing our understanding of the Hebrew Bible—an area that has still not received the attention it deserves in scholarship on the Hebrew Bible.

The contributors succeed in showing that doubling and duplicating may be part of an intentional literary strategy by the biblical authors. We can give some examples. George Savran makes a case for seeing doubled refusals as "the narrator's way of setting the stage for the second 'urging,' which brings out the moral dimension of the story in a deeper way" (25). Gary Rendsburg argues that Israelite authors used alliteration to enhance the reading pleasure, and that such alliteration could govern the choice of words, even the appearance of *hapax legomena*, in the book of Genesis. Michaela Bauks finds that the ambivalence of the trees in the midst of the garden in Gen 2–3 is part of a discourse on the moral value of humanity's acquiring the knowledge of good and evil. And through an analysis of the text world of the two creation accounts in Gen 1–2, Elizabeth Hayes shows how they can be read as intentionally complementary. These are just some examples in the volume of how doubling and duplicating may be seen as an integrated part of the compositional logic of the book of Genesis.

Even if *Doubling and Duplicating* does not overcome the present pluralism of approaches—not even among literary approaches—in the study of the Hebrew Bible, but rather expands the umbrella to include a greater variety of literary approaches, the analyses of stylistics that it presents contain gems that

may mature into a more holistic approach to the text in the future. I am not convinced that "more inclusive approaches" (6) in themselves are the direction to go. Rather, they seem to be a result of our lack of understanding the literary standards of the biblical authors. However, on our way to gaining a clearer grasp of these, *Doubling and Duplicating* is a valuable resource in this pursuit.

Vesterålen, Norway   Kenneth Bergland

Horton, Michael S. *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit: God's Perfecting Presence in Creation, Redemption, and Everyday Life*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017. 334 pp. Softcover. USD 22.99.

The last few decades have seen an explosion of interest in spirituality and pneumatology within Christianity and throughout the broader world. Recently published pneumatologies usually come in three basic varieties: (a) the charismatic kind that manifests a yearning for experiences of spiritual power primarily via the supernatural χαρίσματα, among which *glossolalia* is often preeminently esteemed and supremely desired; (b) the more contemplative, even pantheistic/panentheistic, type that is influenced by Eastern religions in which a profound connection with the "divine spirit" within oneself is sought via meditative and/or ascetic practices that supposedly lead to self-discovery, clarity, serenity, and mystical "oneness" with the universal, monistic *zeitgeist*; and (c) the polemical sort that craves spiritual power for waging so-called "spiritual warfare" against unseen oppressive forces of evil by identifying, binding up, and casting out cosmic and "local" demonic spirits and their satanic influences. As somewhat of a rejoinder to these more narrowly focused varieties of pneumatology that tend to depersonalize, universalize, and immanentize the divine personal (relational) Spirit, a fourth variety of pneumatology (most rare in this last century) offers a broarder and more wholistic exposition of the person and work of the third person of the Trinity that avoids the excesses and problems of the above three varieties (e.g., Graham A. Cole, *He Who Gives Life: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, Foundations of Evangelical Theology [Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017]). Michael S. Horton (PhD, University of Coventry and Wycliffe Hall, Oxford) provides his readers with a new refreshing and stimulating pneumatology of this kind in his recent book, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit: God's Perfecting Presence in Creation, Redemption, and Everyday Life*, that he hopes will "widen our vision of the Spirit's work" (16).

It is certainly apt for Horton to have taken on such a writing project, as a renowned Reformed scholar, who is well-versed in the fields of systematic and historical theology. His specialties in Reformation studies and soteriology especially equip him to take up the topic of pneumatology, for, as he says, "the Reformation constituted a major rediscovery of the Holy Spirit" (18) and "[a]ny authentically biblical doctrine of creation, providence, Christ's person and work, Scripture, preaching, the sacraments, the church, and eschatology must include a robust account of the Spirit's agency" (17). These areas of specialty also allow him to construct a pneumatological perspective

that is broader than the aforementioned pneumatologies—one that is "personalized"; that properly balances the transcendent and immanent, as well as the objective and subjective, aspects of the Spirit's work; and one that "explore[s] the Spirit's" unity with the Father and the Son and his "distinctive role in *every* external work of the Godhead" (16; emphasis added).

Horton presents his widened vision of pneumatology in the traditional way, by dividing up his discussion into two parts: "(1) the *distinctness* of the Spirit's person and work along with his *unity* with the Father and Son [ch. 1]; and (2) the identification of the Spirit's operations in Scripture, not only with that which is extraordinary, spontaneous, and immediate, but also—and even more frequently—with that which is ordinary, ordered, and performed through creaturely means [chs. 2–12]" (29; emphasis original). The operations of the Spirit to which he gives attention are the following: creation, providence, and his relation to the world (ch. 2); the incarnation and his empowerment of the Son (ch. 3); judgment and power (ch. 4); his Christ-centered, post-ascension ministry (ch. 5); his Pentecostal outpouring and its relationship to the old and new covenants (ch. 6); baptism in the Spirit (ch. 7); regeneration, justification, adoption, and sanctification (i.e., development of the fruit of the Spirit) in the life of the believer (ch. 8); gifting of the χαρίσματα to the church (ch. 9); his work through the Word and sacraments (ch. 10); glorification (ch. 11); and his relation to the church, as body of Christ and kingdom of God, and his empowerment of it for missional expansion (ch. 12).

There is much in this book for which Horton should be commended, some of which will be highlighted here. First, affirmation is to be given to Horton's pneumatology for its broad, robust, and emphatic soteriological and Christological focus. Most other books on the Spirit often fixate on spiritual power and the believer's possession and use of it, for whichever of the three emphases noted above, to the detriment of his/her pneumatology. Horton is rightly more interested in what he deems to be the more "ordinary," yet most essential, actions of the Spirit that other pneumatologies often diminish, overlook, or neglect. These are the Spirit's appropriated works of redemption—regeneration, justification, adoption, sanctification, sealing, etc.—that are conducted in unity and harmony with the Father and the Son in the divine economy (i.e., *opera trinitatis ad extra indivisa sunt*). These realities in the Spirit-filled lives of believers form the vital underpinning of their "extraordinary" experiences of the Spirit. For example, this soteriological and Christological foundation is the basis upon which the Spirit freely empowers the church with χαρίσματα (distributed to "each one individually *as he wills*" [1 Cor 12:11]) and employs its members (they do not "possess" him as a thing to be used), as they voluntarily surrender to his sovereign will, for the accomplishment of the eschatological *missio Dei* ("mission of God").

A second, significant strength of the book can be seen in the way that Horton navigates the polarizing debates regarding pneumatology. His engagement of these heated deliberations successfully (for the most part) allows Scripture to serve as the final arbitrator. This methodology usually

locates him in a mostly balanced, mediating position (although, at times, he feels that Scripture [and sometimes his patristic and Reformed tradition] obligates him to "land" on one side or the other). His discussion of the relationship between the Spirit and the institutional church in chapter twelve serves as an excellent example of this balanced approach. One tendency (as can be seen in many Roman Catholic and mainline Protestant ecclesiologies, especially those of the Western scholastics) is to closely identify the Spirit with the church, which, Horton argues, "leads inevitably to a domestication of the Spirit (as well as of Christ)—reduced to the immanence of ecclesial being and action" (293). "An example of this is the increased lodging of the efficacy of the sacraments" "not in the Spirit but in the priest who was granted in ordination the infusion of a new character that enabled him to transform the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood" (292–293). The other tendency (as manifested in the "spiritual but not religious" motto [300]) is to separate the Spirit from the institutional church, identifying the Spirit "with that which is invisible, individual, inward, voluntaristic, immediate, and spontaneous, which gives rise to a universalistic and pluralistic collection of individual wills," instead of "with the visible, ecclesial, external, verbal, mediated, and official form and ministry of the church with its unity of faith and practice" (ibid.). Horton argues that this is merely "another way of domesticating the Spirit" (ibid.). In his insightful way, he suggests that both tend to confuse the Spirit "with the inner spirit of the self or the inner spirit of the church" turning "the Spirit into *something* that we control or that is simply ourselves" (ibid.; emphasis original). In place of these poles that respectively assimilate the Spirit to, or separate him from the church, Horton proposes a mediating biblical model that views the Spirit as in the church in a manner that prevents him from being "the possession either of pious believers or of the holy church," yet provides him with the "space" to freely work out the purposes of the Trinity in the life of the church, both individually and corporately, by the means that are expressed in Scripture—indwelling, the Word, the sacraments, etc. (304). Additionally, this kind of biblical balance and mediation can be seen in his handling of the debate of enthusiasm versus formalism (i.e., *ex opere operato*) over the Spirit's relationship to the Word and sacraments (ch. 10).

Horton's discussion concerning the controversial issue of baptism with the Spirit demonstrates a theological moment when he felt constrained by Scripture to "stake his post" by one of the two opposing positions (ch. 7). Instead of viewing baptism with the Spirit as a necessary separate event—a "second blessing" that is subsequent to conversion and water baptism, which often leads to *glossolalia* (as do many Pentecostals, charismatics, and other groups heavily influenced by the holiness movements of the nineteenth century)—Horton's reading of Acts leads him to embrace a view that sees the two concepts (Spirit baptism and conversion) as distinct, yet not separate. That is to say, baptism with the Spirit happens along with one's conversion and water baptism, and it involves the converted one being "united to Christ" as his or her "federal head" (Rom 5) by the Spirit, as well as united to him by the Spirit "in his death for forgiveness" and "in his resurrection for

new-creation life" in the Spirit (189). One of the key hermeneutical principles for reading Acts—namely that "the disciples' experience is not paradigmatic for the church" (241; cf. 193)—aids in guiding him to this more biblical conclusion, when it is carefully and prudently employed in close consultation with the biblical text.

Nevertheless, a weakness of the book is also revealed in Horton's overuse of this hermeneutic to another pneumatological controversy—namely, spiritual gifts. He applies his above hermeneutic to the debate between continuationism and cessationism in a way that "tips the scale" in favor of the latter, albeit a slightly more qualified version of it (see 241). Horton can be affirmed for his desire to avoid the many unbiblical excesses that often occur in the continuationist camp; yet a retreat to cessationism—even to his slightly qualified version—should not be the solution. It is difficult to see how either his cessationism or the continuationism of the charismatic tradition adequately accounts for the full canonical revelation on the matter. A mediating biblical view seems to be more helpful. Such a view affirms the Reformed tradition in its insistence on the uniqueness of the office of apostleship and their "extraordinary" experiences that led to the formation of the Christian church and the production of the NT canonical writings (which are indeed closed at the death of John the revelator). It *also* affirms the charismatic tradition in its insistence on the continuing "ordinary" and "extraordinary" work of the Spirit in the life of the post-apostolic church. Furthermore, such a view critiques the Reformed tradition for its relegation of the NT's robust discussions of the χαρίσματα as fully active in Christ's body (such as 1 Cor 12–14), *and* critiques the charismatic tradition for their near obsession with the "extraordinary"; their inattention to Horton's so-called "ordinary" soteriological works of the Spirit; and their often disorderly and unedifying practice of the "extraordinary."

Further issues can be seen in Horton's exploration of the doctrine of the Trinity. When discussing Trinitarian relations *ad intra*, Horton affirms the creedal doctrines of eternal generation and procession of the Son and the Spirit, respectively, as "necessary acts" *ad intra* (34; cf. 36). While there has been a long history of embracing these teachings, the question remains, "Where are these doctrines taught in Scripture?" Intriguingly, Horton provides no biblical support in the book, that I could find, for asserting these doctrines. Furthermore, all of the typical references to the Son as begotten and the Spirit as proceeding are not discussed in terms of eternality and fall within the context of the economy instead of the divine ontology. Seemingly in anticipation of this objection, Horton argues that "[t]he economy—that is, what God chooses to do in history—reveals the truth about the intra-trinitarian life, but does not comprehend or exhaust it. On the one hand, the immanent trinity [*sic*] is truly revealed in the historical economy. . . . On the other hand, we cannot simply deduce the secrets of the immanent trinity [*sic*] from the economy" (34–35). In so doing, it appears that he takes a mediating or analogical view of Rahner's Rule (see Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, trans. Joseph Donceel, Milestones in Catholic Theology [New York: Crossroad, 1997],

22)—for which he should be commended—but gives no rationale as to why we should apply the Father's economic function of sending the Son and the Spirit univocally to the immanent Trinity, and not apply the Spirit's economic function of sending and empowering the Son in a similar manner. I propose that the Scripture itself, through textual indicators, should give guidance as to when and how economic "God-talk" applies to the immanent Trinity.

After reading the economy of processions into the immanent Trinity, Horton makes an odd hermeneutical "move," reading, in tautological fashion, his immanent processions back into the economy. In so doing, he assembles a formula for how the triune God supposedly conducts the divine work in harmony with this purported divine ontology. He writes, "Everything that God does is done by the Father, in the Son, through the Spirit. . . . Consequently, in every external work of the Godhead the Father is the source, the Son is the mediator, and the Spirit is the consummator. . . . Or we can say that the Father works for us, the Son works among us, and the Spirit works within us" (35). However, others have shown that the persons of the Trinity do not have a particular ordering pattern in all their works and that they perform many of the same kinds of operations without such distinctions (e.g., Roderick K. Durst, *Reordering the Trinity: Six Movements of God in the New Testament* [Grand Rapids, Kregel, 2015]; Millard J. Erickson, *Who's Tampering with the Trinity? An Assessment of the Subordination Debate* [Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2009], 123–132; Matthew L. Tinkham Jr., "Hierarchy or Mutuality in the Trinity? A Case Study on the Relationship of the Spirit and Son" [paper presented at the 70th Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, Denver, CO, 13 November 2018]). These studies seem to severely qualify, at the least, Horton's tightly circular formula of the economic Trinity.

In spite of the above weaknesses, Horton's book is a "breath of fresh air" in the current environment of pneumatology. He "re"-personalizes the Spirit and broadens the readers' views of the Spirit's distinct operations. This is accomplished by placing the works of the Spirit in connection with the other persons of the Trinity and then tracing them throughout the plan of redemption, as well as by heavily emphasizing the Spirit's seemingly "ordinary" soteriological roles and functions (as opposed to his "extraordinary" and spontaneous "sign" works of giving the χαρίσματα). As such, *Rediscovering the Holy Spirit* is highly recommended for any scholar and lay person interested in the recovery of profound biblical truths regarding the Spirit's person and work. It may also serve as a useful textbook for specialized seminary classes that focus on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

Berrien Springs, Michigan　　　　　　　　　　Matthew L. Tinkham Jr.

Kolb, Robert, and Carl R. Trueman. *Between Wittenberg and Geneva: Lutheran and Reformed Theology in Conversation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017. xvi + 250 pp. Softcover. USD 26.99.

Traditionally, seminary students have suffered from a twofold problem—the failure to know the differences between being confessional and being Evangelical,

and, similarly, the failure to understand the differences between Lutheran and Reformed traditions. This book is a response, intending to "explain the differences between the two communions" (ix), with the hope that it "will kindle open and frank discussions among like-minded Christians within their own churches and with other brothers and sisters in Christ from other families in the faith" (235), in order "to discover common ground and to explore serious differences" (236).

Two authors wrote the book: one from the Lutheran tradition, Robert Kolb, Professor of Systematic Theology Emeritus at Concordia Seminary, and one belonging to the Reformed tradition, Carl R. Trueman, Visiting Fellow in Religion and Public Life at Princeton University.

United in the same goal of producing a book that reflects their commitment to the catholic faith of the church, along with their mutual respect and admiration, the authors chose a set of eight topics "on which there is both considerable overlap and at times significant disagreement" (x). Each of them contributed a separate chapter to the following topics: "Scripture and Interpretation," "Law and Gospel," "The Person and Work of Christ," "Election and the Bondage of the Will," "Justification and Sanctification," "Baptism," "Lord's Supper," and "Worship." Below is a summary of each chapter, including both the similarities and differences between the two traditions.

There are more similarities than differences regarding "Scripture and Interpretation." The *Sola Scriptura* principle, the centrality of preaching (30), and the notion that God is mainly present in the church through his Word, are good examples of similarities between the two traditions. At the same time, there are some marked differences. The issue of interpretation, particularly the words "this is my body" (17), the law-gospel antithesis (24), the emphasis on the literal meaning of Scripture (Calvin) versus the "direct Christological interpretations of Old Testament passages" (25), and the notion of the analogy of faith (developed in more detail by the Reformed) are the main discrepancies.

There is major overlap in the area of "Law and Gospel." As Trueman puts it, "The Reformed are indebted to Luther for his sharp articulation of the antithesis of the law and gospel in salvation" (58). Regarding the differences, the Reformed divide the law into three categories: moral, ceremonial, and civil; also, they give three functions to the moral law: first use, exposing sin; second use, restraining wickedness; and third use, providing moral principles for guiding the life of the Christian believer (48). It is this last use which divides the two traditions; "the Reformed developed a doctrine of sanctification as the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian guided by the law of God as the aspirational norm of behavior" (54).

Regarding "The Person and Work of Christ," both traditions hold to a multifaceted and ongoing office as Mediator, including the taxonomy of prophet, priest, and king (80). Also, both believe that Christ points to the love and holiness of God, and understand that the full consummation of Christ's kingdom lies in the future, while suffering and contradictions are part of the

Christian's life until Jesus comes (86). At the same time, there are important differences. Mainly, "Christology is the locus about which there is the most disagreement between the Reformed and the Lutherans, primarily because of the way in which it connects to the heated debates over the Lord's Supper" (85).

Regarding "Election and the Bondage of the Will," both Luther and Calvin are heirs of Augustine and anti-Pelagian. In terms of the differences, "The Reformed do differ from the Lutherans in maintaining the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints through an emphasis on the inseparability of the elements of the order of salvation as grounded in the decree of divine election and as consummated in glory" (115). This implies that "once an individual is united to Christ through faith by the Holy Spirit, that person cannot fall away from salvation" (107).

On the central Reformation doctrine of "Justification," both traditions are basically in agreement: "It comes by grace alone through faith alone by the imputed righteousness of Christ" (145). Where Lutheran and Reformed Christians differ is in the doctrine of "Sanctification." For Luther, "The gospel does not only speak of the forgiveness of sins. It also provides the power and strength to live as the children of God" (127). In the Reformed tradition, sanctification is understood as a process and is closely related to the third use of the law (already alluded to in the summary of the second chapter), "which makes the Decalogue a guide to the kind of behavior that is to characterize the sanctification of the Christian" (143).

On "Baptism," there are a few points of agreement: outward practice (infant baptism), the acceptance of baptism in other churches (provided they are done with water and in the name of the Trinity), and the belief that God is the agent in baptism. Their difference, however, lies in the meaning of baptism. Trueman refers to Calvin as "standing between Luther and Zwingli." (164) While Luther places a marked emphasis on God's action, and Zwingli stresses the faith and the response of the believer, Calvin balances the two, uniting "the action of God with the confession of believers" (164).

"The Lord's Supper" is the most obvious point of division (204), and this is because of the diverging Christologies, expressed in the meaning of the Lord's Supper—more precisely, in the issue of Christ's presence. While Luther believed in the literal/physical presence of Christ in the emblems, the Reformed believed in his spiritual presence. In essence, the Reformed view the Lord's Supper as a sign and seal.

Luther's Reformation brought about major changes in "Worship" and liturgical practices. Foundational to Luther's understanding of worship is the centrality of God's word (209). Important aspects for Luther were: freedom for local churches to make adaptations (213–214), the visual aspect (214–216), and music (217–218). For the Reformed, "Scripture had a sweeping regulative function that marked it off from the Lutheran tradition" so that "whatever was not prescribed or positively sanctioned in Scripture was therefore forbidden" (222).

This book is an excellent example of how differing Christian traditions can dialogue maturely and constructively. Three distinct aspects are worth celebrating: tone, content, and format. Sincerity and Christian grace are two characteristics that delineate the correct tone of this book. Clarity, accuracy, and objectivity are hallmarks of this work's excellent content. The way the dialogue is put together in each chapter proves to be an exemplary format.

Many things can be lauded in this book, but for the sake of being concise, I will focus on the three points just mentioned: format, tone, and content. Having a qualified representative from each of the traditions and pairing their essays together as independent compositions rather than point-by-point dialogues seems to best accomplish the author's goal of creating "the starting point for future dialogue—in the classroom, in the local church context, perhaps even at the denominational level" (xi). Hence, the format seems to be a most appropriate conduit for mature Christian dialogue.

Of equal value is the Christian manner in which the dialogue takes place. As the authors state in their introduction: "We wanted to produce a book reflecting our commitment to the catholic faith of the Christian church and our respect and affection for each other as Christian brothers who serve the same Lord and Savior" (x). This right tone for dialogue is indeed reflected throughout the book. The healthy balance between transparency, frankness, respect, and charity is a model for those seeking to converse with Christians from other traditions. One can clearly see the points of congruency as well as points of divergence, yet never in a provocative or defensive manner.

Last but not least, the content of this book is worthy of praise as well. Though not exhaustive, both authors provide clear, accurate, and instructive material that well represents their respective traditions on the selected subjects. Their contributions provide a good and balanced picture of where Lutheran and Reformed Christians stand on the eight theological areas selected.

Were another edition to be published, perhaps two minor suggestions could be made: First, other topics could be explored, such as the relationship between church and state, the church and politics, church and doctrinal authority, or even current issues such as homosexuality, etc. Second, a section with specific questions at the end of each chapter would probably prove helpful both in academic and ecclesial contexts. These questions could be used both to solidify the main points of each chapter, as well as to generate theological reflection and discussion, seeking application for today's contexts.

Overall, this is an excellent resource for Christians in all spheres of the church—from general practitioners to those immersed in academia—to understand both the major similitudes as well as differences between the Lutheran and Reformed traditions regarding eight major theological topics. Its tone, format, and content serves as a model of how dialogue between varying Christian denominations can take place.

Berrien Springs, Michigan   Gerardo Oudri

Loader, William. *Jesus in John's Gospel: Structure and Issues in Johannine Christology.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017. x + 532 pp. Softcover. USD 45.00.

William Loader is professor emeritus of New Testament at Murdoch University in Perth, Australia. He has written numerous books in the fields of New Testament and ancient Jewish and Christian sexuality. This volume is the update and expansion of an earlier book, *The Christology of the Fourth Gospel: Structure and Issues*, rev ed., BBET 23 (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1992). The book is very well structured and organized, walking the reader through the Christological material in the fourth Gospel with an interesting and fruitful inductive approach.

After an introduction (1–37), the book is divided into two main parts, with three chapters in each part. The first part is on the structure of Johannine Christology (41–144), the second part (145–471) is on issues in Johannine Christology, followed by a conclusion (472–484), a bibliography (485–513), and indices (514–532).

In the first section of the book, Loader builds on the textual observations of Rudolf Bultmann, while seeking to avoid Bultmann's more speculative interpretations; such as demythologization and the dependence of the fourth Gospel on a "Gnostic-Redeemer myth" (3–4, 9–10). Loader agrees with Bultmann that the central feature of John's Christology is the Father sending the Son into the world as a revealer; to tell what he had seen and heard. But the Son never reveals heavenly words or events; He instead comes to reveal the Father (2–3). I believe that these foundational observations are solid.

In seeking the central structure of John's Christology, Loader avoids the "key text" approach of many of his predecessors. Instead, he adopts a more comprehensive method (45), noting recurring motifs and images in the Gospel, patterns of motifs and images, summary statements that contain those motifs and images, and discourses of Jesus about himself. This method leads Loader to identify three Christological summary passages: John 3:31–36; 8:12–19; and 12:44–50. The basic Christological framework that emerges from these "summary statements" confirms Bultmann's key observations. The central Christological structure (which Loader titles the redeemer-envoy pattern) can be summarized: The Father sends and authorizes the Son to come and make the Father known, after which the Son returns to the Father (based on 56–57). This structure is then confirmed in a section by section study of the Gospel (72–120).

Other parts of the Gospel, however, show a strong interest in the death of Jesus and his subsequent return to the Father (79, 83). The return of Jesus continues the revelation of the Father through the sending of the Spirit and the empowerment of the disciples (99, 106). Therefore, the full Christological structure of the gospel is the Father sending the Son to make the Father known, but also to return to the Father, commissioning the Spirit and the disciples to continue the revelation of the Father and build up the community of faith (121–144).

The second section of the book (145–471) addresses three scholarly issues of Johannine Christology on the basis of the structure which Loader identified in the first section. Loader addresses the role of Jesus's death in the structure of John's Christology (ch. 4, 145–281), John's soteriology in light of his Christology (ch. 5, 282–392), and the impact of John's Christology on the understanding of the book as a whole (ch. 6, 393–471).

The fourth chapter (145–281) explores the role of Jesus's death within the framework of the "redeemer/envoy motif." For Loader, the primary function of the cross in John is to make the Father known, not a basis for vicarious atonement (194–202). The cross, along with Jesus's life and "works," is the consummate revelation of God's love and character (202–213). But it is also the beginning of Jesus's glorification and exaltation, which are complete only upon his return to the heavenly realm (216–217). According to the fourth Gospel, the cross, the pathway of suffering, is the pathway to glory and exaltation (248). It is the first stage of Jesus's return to the Father, which results in the giving of the Spirit (20:22) and commissioning the disciples to complete the task of revelation (263, 266, 278–281).

Christology as revelation is a relational metaphor that fits well with John's doctrine of salvation (282–392). But it is not a revelation of the detailed secrets of the heavenly world; the words and actions of Jesus are a revelation of the Father (283–291). The fourth Gospel ultimately is not about Jesus, but about God (289). For the author of the fourth Gospel, salvation comes in response to this revelation. Accepting Jesus as the redeemer/envoy of the Father results in relationship with him and through him with the Father (295–302). The redeemer/envoy role of Jesus requires his pre-existence, full deity, and full humanity (293–392).

In the last chapter (393–471), Loader explores the relation of the fourth Gospel to history. Did the author believe he was writing an accurate report of the actual events of Jesus's ministry? Loader finds five different answers to that question in the literature (393–401). He believes, on the basis of the Gospel's own testimony, that its author is concerned about history, but it is history guided by the Holy Spirit, who has worked through the developing understanding of the church. It is history seen through the lens of time passed; selective, simplified, and centered on the author's Christological agenda. Thus, history in the fourth Gospel is creative, but a creativity guided by the Spirit and shaped by the community's tradition (402–421). The ultimate purpose of John's Gospel was to show the community that the life that Jesus brought with him as the redeemer/envoy was just as present after Jesus's ascension as it was in Jesus's direct ministry on earth. The ministry of the Spirit and the testimony of the disciples bring revelation and life to the community (421–460).

The main insights in the book are convincing, but a few things were missing in Loader's account. I fully agree that the central message of the fourth Gospel's Christology is Jesus as the revelation of the Father. But I am a little surprised that a reader unfamiliar with the Gospel might come away from the book without a full exposure to John 14:9—"If you have seen me you have seen the Father." Nowhere else in the Gospel is the redeemer/envoy model so

directly stated. But while Loader offers hundreds of passages laid out in Greek and English, this part of John 14 is only referenced in passing five times and the specific words only quoted once (345). Even there, the statement is not emphasized. Puzzling.

Loader rightly declares that the purpose of the Gospel was to show the Johannine community that the life that Jesus brought as the redeemer/envoy was even more present after Jesus's ascension through the ministry of the Spirit and the disciples. However, I think his case would have been even stronger had he taken note of the work of Paul Minear on the Johannine community as a second generation ("The Audience of the Fourth Evangelist," in *Interpreting the Gospels*, ed. James Luther Mays [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981], 247–264; reference also my commentary, *John: Jesus Gives Life to a New Generation*, The Abundant Life Bible Amplifier [Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1995]). The fourth Gospel is the only one that clearly distinguishes the first generation (Jesus's disciples and those who knew them) from the second (those who have no living witness to the earthly Christ) in the Gospel's audience. The analogy of the vine (John 15:1–7) and the prayer of chapter 17 (especially v. 20) are examples of this.

He also seems not to have noticed that the miracles of Jesus in the Gospel are all done at a distance. Jesus never touches the water that became wine (2:1–11). The royal official's son is healed at a distance of sixteen miles from Jesus (4:46–54). The blind man at the Pool of Siloam is healed at a distance of more than a kilometer. Jesus does not touch either the paralytic or the corpse of Lazarus (5:1–15; 11:40–45). The miracles of Jesus in John are performed by word rather than by touch. The message to the second generation was that Jesus's word is as good as his presence. Jesus is replaced on earth by the Spirit and by Jesus's disciples. The fourth Gospel itself continues the ministry of both to a new generation (John 20:30–31).

While any work of this length will leave itself open to criticism, my primary reaction is one of gratitude and appreciation. Having written a commentary on the fourth Gospel myself, I believe the more one knows about the Greek text of John, the more one will appreciate Loader's book. Even where one might disagree with his conclusions, there is much value in his textual argumentation. Anyone interested in a deep understanding of the New Testament in general and the Fourth Gospel in particular will find this book indispensable.

Loma Linda University   Jon Paulien
Loma Linda, California

Maston, Jason, and Benjamin E. Reynolds, eds. *Anthropology and New Testament Theology*. LNTS 529. London: Bloomsbury, 2018. xi + 317 pp. Hardcover. USD 114.00.

Jason Maston teaches New Testament and Theology at Houston Baptist University, Houston, TX. He has co-edited several books on reading the NT in the context of second-temple Judaism, and is currently researching Paul's

anthropology. He contributes a chapter on said anthropology in this work. Benjamin E. Reynolds is chair of the Department of Biblical Studies and Theology at Tyndale University in Toronto, ON. His research includes Johannine literature and he contributes a chapter on anthropology in the gospel of John.

Many of the earliest writings ever produced questioned the nature of humanity, attempting to either answer the question, or explore its further implications. To the religious and irreligious alike, mankind, and his constituent parts, material or immaterial, continues to fascinate and mystify scholars and lay-people. In the past decade, biblical scholars and philosophers working in the field of theological (or biblical) anthropology have addressed the nature of humanity from a variety of perspectives. Thomas Crisp, Steven Porter, and Gregg Ten Elshof take an interdisciplinary approach in *Neuroscience and the Soul: The Human Person in Philosophy, Science, and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016); Stewart Goetz and Charles Taliaferro trace a history of theological anthropology in *A Brief History of the Soul* (Maiden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011); and Joel Green compares biblical studies with advances in the natural sciences in *Body, Soul, and Human Life: The Nature of Humanity in the Bible,* STI (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008). In their latest work, *Anthropology and New Testament Theology*, editors Jason Maston and Benjamin Reynolds seek to fill what they see as a gap in NT resources on anthropology. This book attempts to summarize the anthropology of the New Testament by collecting a series of fourteen essays into one volume.

Although not formally divided into sections, the fourteen essays in this book fall into one of two categories: theological or historical studies, and textual studies. The theological and historical studies include "'What is Man?' A Wisdom Anthropology," "On the Anthropology of Early Judaism: Some Observations," "Greco-Roman Perspectives on Anthropology: A Survey of Perspectives from 800 BCE to 200 CE," "Son of God at the Centre: Anthropology in Biblical-theological Perspective," and "The Mystery of Christian Anthropology." The textual studies include "The Familial Anthropology of Matthew's Gospel," "The Redemption of Fallen Humanity: Theological Anthropology and Mark's Narrative World," "Turning Anthropology Right Side Up: Seeing Human Life and Existence Lukewise," "The Anthropology of John and the Johannine Epistles: A Relational Anthropology," "Enlivened Slaves: Paul's Christological Anthropology," "The Eschatological Son: Christological Anthropology in Hebrews," "Life as Image Bearers in the New Creation: The Anthropology of James," "'Remember These Things': The Role of Memory in the Theological Anthropology of Peter and Jude," and "Revelation's Human Characters and It's Anthropology." The editors consider the textual essays, which cover every NT book, to be the core of this volume. This review will focus on the essays on Matthew and Luke.

Amy Richter, in her chapter, "The Familial Anthropology of Matthew's Gospel," rightly locates Matthew's primary purpose in soteriology. She argues that Matthew portrays humans as being in relationship (a view of humanity

comparable to Terence Nichols's description of the soul as subject-in-relation); the most important relationship being that of family. Salvation, the height of what it means to be human, means being part of Jesus's family. This relational orientation to salvation reimagines the concept of family. Richter digs deeply into Matthew's use of ἄνθρωπος to describe mankind's function in this gospel, but she does not address the constitution of man and how the body, mind, spirit, soul, etc. relate to one another and function within Matthew. Further study on the inner man's relationship to the soteriological family described in this chapter would prove fruitful.

In his chapter, "Turning Anthropology Right Side Up: Seeing Human Life and Existence Lukewise," Steve Walton describes Luke's anthropology through his use of the device of reversal. These reversals present Luke's view of men and women in Christian community in contrast with society and culture. The speeches of Luke-Acts present Jesus as exemplary humanity. God's purposes for humanity are transformative. Whereas Jesus is the perfect human, the followers of Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit and the combined strength of the new community, become perfect according to the model of Jesus. Luke rejects the physiognomic assumptions of first-century culture and presents the new community as whole because of Jesus's salvific work rather than wholeness of nationality, physicality, gender, or piety. Walton avoids questions on the nature of man in relation to death raised by several pericopes in Luke-Acts, include Luke 16:19–31; 23:42–43; Acts 2:27. Walton also notes a significant OT influence in Luke, but does not address to what degree Luke's perspective could be described as Jewish or Greek; an important distinction in his anthropology.

The book, as a whole, does not engage many matters of debate within theological anthropology, including the relationship between soul, spirit, mind, and body, and the nature of human consciousness. This deficiency results from the NT-author-specific approach of this volume, which presents many of the strengths discussed above, yet also results in several weaknesses. For example, this approach means that there is little treatment of anthropological themes across the NT as a whole. On the other hand, there is a broad range of anthropological topics addressed as they arise *in situ*. This author-focused approach mitigates the temptation to draw NT authors into discussions on matters they do not directly address. This book is valuable as an introduction to NT anthropology for interested lay-people, students, and scholars. Readers will find it accessible and informative.

Lacombe, Alberta, Canada   Stephen Reasor

Mathewson, David, and Elodie B. Emig. *Intermediate Greek Grammar: Syntax for Students of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016. xxiii + 336 pp. Hardcover. USD 32.99.

David L. Mathewson and Elodie B. Emig demonstrate that they are skilled writers. Emig has been teaching Greek for three decades at Denver Seminary. Mathewson also teaches at Denver Seminary and has published before on

verbal aspect and on the Greek of Revelation. *Intermediate Greek Grammar* is not without predecessors. It would seem that the book is a continuation of Baker's comprehensive beginning Greek book (Rodney J. Decker, *Reading Koine Greek: An Introduction and Integrated Workbook* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014]). However, the format of the book is different since Mathewson and Emig do not integrate a workbook in their publication. According to the introductory remarks (xv) this book is reminiscent of Stanley E. Porter's *Idioms of the Greek New Testament* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1992), since it promotes similar approaches in a new format.

Another Intermediate textbook was published in 2016, (Andreas J. Köstenberger, Benjamin L. Merkle, and Robert L. Plummer, *Going Deeper with New Testament Greek: An Intermediate Study of the Grammar and Syntax of the New Testament* [Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2016]). Although these publications do not agree in every detail, both feature the recent developments in the language and its contentions; especially the discussions on verbal aspect in biblical Greek that resurfaced among scholars. Recently the Koine Greek verb system has been revisited causing an upsurge in publications of the kind (e.g. Steven E. Runge, et al., *The Greek Verb Revisited: A Fresh Approach for Biblical Exegesis* [Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2016]). It is an unstoppable wave which I am certain will not cease with this publication. Mathewson and Emig play their part, vehemently sharing their Minimalist approach—avoids describing every exegetical usage as a separate syntactical category—and adding one more voice in the matter, which by now seems like a crowded choir.

Matthewson and Emig make sure to separate themselves from the common Maximalist approach, which in their words, "gives unwarranted attention to individual grammatical units and their meanings" (xvii) and causes a "multiplication of categories, labels, and rules for their usage" (xvii). In a way, they polarize the camps. They assume that the Maximalist view is "an unnatural and artificial way" (xix) to understand the Greek language. Consequently, they argue, a Minimalist approach is realistic and will "relieve the student from the burden of learning an unwieldly list of case or tense labels" (xix). This is a bold claim and each reader must determine whether the book has succeeded in this attempt. I am one of those who view this contention as unnecessary and would prefer instead a combined approach in order to advance to a new synthesis in New Testament Greek studies.

The contents of the textbook follow the basic flow of explaining first the case system, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, articles, and prepositions; then on to the Greek verb system, mood, infinitives, and participles; ending with two chapters on clauses and the role of conjunctions, and one chapter on discourse considerations. This line up provides an easy-to-read feel. As usual of an Intermediate Greek textbook, it does not expound on Morphology. One of the authors' strongest points concerns clarity when explaining verbal aspect and the *status quaestionis* of the topic. Overall, the authors intend to provide fewer labels by looking at grammatical constructions in their broader spectrum. The book is faithful to the Minimalist views by not relying on

conceptual labels of the English grammar. Though not without its share of shortcomings. The argument overall is consistent and cohesive. They did excellent work in assembling precise information by bringing together leading scholars in the field in order to discuss the topic and presenting flaws of opposing views. The biblical examples given to each topic is excellent and has received praise for their selection of texts. The book is undoubtedly well-informed and a mandatory reading for advanced students.

A personal critique follows in light of the book's own proposal. Two items to be considered: (a) It contains more than what it promised; (b) It contains less that what it promised. First, The authors claim that the book's approach is Minimalistic, but the initial chapters on cases and pronouns contain comparable count of labels with other textbooks. For example, the authors pride themselves in the unique feature of the book as containing less labels than the "upward of thirty distinct uses" found in Wallace for the genitive case. But their own count is not far behind, with twenty-one labels listed for possible genitive function. Following Porter, the authors affirm that the Genitive case is used to restrict and only context will "indicate exactly how it does so." They add that the task is to consider interpretative option without necessarily finding the "correct label" (12). They list two major types of restrictions with Genitive: one on substantives and the other on adjectives and verbs. Inside those two categories the authors get into sorting similar occurrences into labels. For example, they relate possessive, source, relationship, and origin into one category. But that category is labeled "Possessive and source (relationship, origin)" (13). Two questions come to mind: Will students understand this agglomeration? How is this different from the Maximalist labeling system? Some of the choice of labeling needs improvement and redefinition. In practice, this particular Minimalist approach becomes less appealing if a professor needs a Maximalist textbook in order to explain to the students the subsections of the use of the Genitive and the difference between them. I believe more can be done to minimize and clarify the list even further.

Another incongruous point of the book regarding the minimalist approach is that the introduction to each topic suggests for the reader to analyze only the broad categories and that not every instance "will fit neatly into a given subcategory" (12). However, the book contains categories mixed with selective subcategories creating confusion between semantics and pragmatics (xxi); a pledged distinction from the introduction of the book. Some of other shortcomings include a new set of labels from current scholarship. For example, to discuss the Greek verb system the new labels are presented in the form of sentences. Instead of "futuristic present" the label reads "present used of action in the future" (127). Although this is perhaps the correct concept, the impracticality of the new elongated label makes me wonder if calling it futuristic would in fact go against the Minimalist view.

On the second point, the authors had more difficulties achieving its goals. It should be an Intermediate Greek textbook. However, it lacks common features other Intermediate grammars possess. It does provide a great amount of helpful information, but no vocabulary for study, few charts

elucidating the concepts, no exercises or integrated workbook, not enough basic information in order to engage what was learned in the Beginning level to what is seen in Intermediate Greek. Some concepts are not unpacked and become unconvincing. For example, the idea that first class conditional sentences "could be considered the default condition" (235) since it appears "about 300 times," but the third class condition is said to have "around 277 instances" (239). Are these numbers enough for such a claim? The addition of more charts and diagrams would have helped illustrate some of the intricate explanation. The few charts available lack either purpose or creativity.

Furthermore, it claims to be the most up to date in regards to the advances in the Greek language. This book contains relevant information, but it is certainly not the final word on the matter. With the two main books quoted (Porter and Wallace) being published in the 90's, I am not convinced of the claim of "most recent linguistic insights" (xvi). For a textbook, it is too argumentative to the point of antagonizing opposing views. It becomes evident that the book uses Porter too often as a source since he is a devout Minimalist. The name Porter is always used in a positive light, for example: "It is helpful to distinguish, as Porter does" (2); "We agree with Porter" (11); "we agree with Porter's conclusion" (62); "have more than adequately demonstrated" (73); "correctly captures the sense" (101); "one of the most important advocates" (112); and "a better explanation" (127). The opposing side is exemplified in the work of Wallace, the antagonistic Maximalist. His name is often presented in neutral form, but sprinkled throughout the book are negative innuendos associated with his name. Some examples include: "Wallace has included the category […] which seems only to compound the problem" (15); "although Wallace […], we will not" (64); "Wallace says […], but" (156); "*contra*" (198); and "even Wallace […] recognizes" (239).

In conclusion, the book contains a Minimalist approach to Intermediate Greek. It is argumentative from cover to cover and is enjoyable to read. It is a must-read for scholars and enthusiasts in the field. I don't believe the target audience is lay ministers or pastors. It is intended to bring up to date previous Intermediate grammar books. The book has great potential as a textbook since it engages in relevant current discussion and provides helpful examples. Unfortunately it is not a solo textbook in a classroom setting, since it does not replace previous grammars, for it relies on labels and discussions from preceding textbooks. For me, it will become a valuable point of view as a companion to another textbook and an array of supplemental materials.

Berrien Springs, Michigan   LINCOLN NOGUEIRA

Moo, Douglas J., and Jonathan A. Moo. *Creation Care: A Biblical Theology of the Natural World*. Biblical Theology for Life. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018. 249 pp. Softcover. USD 24.99.

A father and son duo, Douglas J. Moo (PhD, University of St. Andrews, and presently T. Wessner Professor of New Testament at Wheaton College, IL), and his son Jonathan A. Moo (PhD, University of Cambridge, and

presently Associate Professor of New Testament and Environmental Studies at Whitworth University in Spokane, WA), have together authored an excellent and timely book.

There are increasingly more books and articles being published to draw attention to the urgent need for informed and determined sensitivity to the vast web of life that is dependent on this planet. Moo and Moo draw attention to how the Bible itself undergirds this, declaring that the divine Creator's concern embraces all that He has made—and how God Himself instructs that all of His creation is included in His salvific mission. This is not merely an occasional acknowledgment in Scripture, but can be found from Genesis to Revelation. In fact, there is a six-page Scriptural index in the back of the book indicating how thoroughly the Bible has been studied on this topic! Moreover, Moo & Moo point out that Christians honor and even worship their Creator when their lifestyles are sensitive to this—seeking to bring healing to all "citizens" of this planet, human and non-human.

The fourteen chapters include: "What Do Christians Have to Do with Creation?," "Members, Rulers, and Keepers of Creation," "A Creation Subjected to Frustration," "Jesus and Creation," "The Gospel and Creation Care," "Caring for Creation and Worshiping the Creator." A four-page detailed Table of Contents is also provided which makes for easy referencing of the many subtitles in each chapter.

Both father and son are biblical scholars, with Jonathan also working as an environmental scientist. This adds a richness to the text and also increases scientific understanding of the critical aspects of earth care. In fact, it seems strange that Christians, who believe the biblical account of creation, have not been at the vanguard of those seeking to be protective of the earth. Helpful discussion by both son and father includes the importance and value of all non-human lives—and how predators and parasites fit in. Moreover, even the land, the soil, is included in the Creator's "prescriptions" for creation care. And wonderfully, the great Creator Jesus (Col 1:15–17), when he was on earth, was instructive.

Father and son also comment on current scientific headlines and media rhetoric about an environmental crisis and climate change, analyzing scientific data about the condition of this planet. They also present practical suggestions for a faithful Christian response to scriptural teaching about creation.

There is one strange omission, however. There is no mention of how various scientists are presently urging that one of the most important ways to "save the planet" would be for humans to return to a "plant-based, violent free diet"—the type given at creation to both humans and animals (Gen 1:29–30). The treatment of animals raised for consumption is horrifying and frightful (including cows, chickens, geese, turkeys, pigs and even fish), affecting the quality, not only of the meat and human health, but also the air, soil, and water. Moreover, God's original diet plan is now argued by many scientists to be the best for the human body and its health. Future restoration of the planet is included in the promised redemption when God Himself declares, climaxing the closing of the biblical canon, that "there shall be no more death,

nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away" (Rev 21:4).

The book would have been more complete and up-to-date had some kind of mention of this crucial aspect of creation care been included. But even without it, the book is a valuable resource and rich treasure for anyone seeking to be a faithful and responsible steward of this world while looking forward to that Day when all creation will be able to cease its groaning (Rom 8:21–22).

Andrews University   Jo Ann Davidson

Nissinen, Martti. *Ancient Prophecy: Near Eastern, Biblical, and Greek Perspectives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. xix + 448 pp. Hardcover. USD 125.00.

Nissinen's treatment of ancient prophecy is the first of its kind to discuss individual features of, and examine potential relationships among, the three major extant textual caches attesting the prophetical phenomenon in antiquity altogether—namely, Greek, Ancient Near Eastern, and Biblical. Nissinen's book is to be seen among works that have (a) dealt extensively with the relationship between Biblical and Near Eastern prophecies (e.g., Erhard Blum, "Israels Prophetie im altorientalischen Kontext: Anmerkungen zu neueren religionsgeschichtlichen Thesen," in *From Ebla to Stellenbosch: Syro-Palestinian Religions and the Hebrew Bible*, ed. I. Cornelius and L. Jonker, ADPV 37 [Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2008], 81–116), (b) offered some comparison between Greek and Near Eastern prophecies (e.g., Jean-Georges Heintz, ed., *Oracles et prophéties dans l'Antiquité: Actes du Colloque de Strasbourg 15–17 Juin 1995*, Travaux du Centre de Recherche sur le Proche-Orient et la Grèce antiques 15 [Paris: de Boccard, 1997]), and (c) grasped connections between Greek and Biblical prophecies (e.g., Armin Lange, "Literary Prophecy and Oracle Collection: A Comparison between Judah and Greece in Persian Times," in *Prophets, Prophecy, and Prophetic Texts in Second Temple Judaism*, ed. Michael H. Floyd and Robert D. Haak [New York: T&T Clark, 2006], 248–275). Unlike such authors, however, Nissinen seeks to acknowledge all three sources as conceptual "keyholes" giving access, individually, to parts of a conceptually unified "landscape" of the prophetical phenomenon in antiquity (5–6).

The book's first part deals with issues pertaining to the nature, constitution, and definitions of ancient prophecy. Nissinen rightly observes that prophecy stands in modern analyses as a "scholarly concept" (4). As such, it is susceptible to the scholars' attempt to conceptually define it, which either narrows or expands the horizon to be appraised. Thus, academic studies on ancient prophecy tend to adopt technical decisions that may not be akin to the way the phenomenon existed in history. I find such an observation appropriate for a book that attempts to analyze three corpora of textual material spanning throughout millennia. It rightly supports the author's withdrawal from claiming any movements in regard to causality and directionality. A comparison, nevertheless, among the three corpora allows

Nissinen to regard the phenomenon of prophecy as an intuitive type of divination at large. Although not strict, the division between technical and intuitive divinations is only possible in connection to a social/communal realm that nurtured the need for supernatural communication and human intermediation. This way, for Nissinen, in order "to cope with contingency, uncertainty, and insecurity" (19), humans in antiquity sought in divination a channel for the elaboration of their symbolic universe. Thus, prophets, regardless of their cultural background, were direct messengers of the divine speech who operated within an intuitive, non-technical, psychological, and conceptual realm.

The second part of the book analyzes each of the three textual corpora. Firstly, it deals with the evidence drawn from ANE sources, analyzing material from six distinct textual genres. An interesting aspect of this chapter is Nissinen's treatment of texts attesting the reuse of prophecy in ANE sources. Examples like the three Mari letters describing and interpreting the same prophecy by using a common catchphrase sample the apparent scribal practice of standardization of older oracles. Nissinen clearly shows that, in Assyria, the practice of listing older prophecies served different historical momenta than the ones originally intended. However, the idea that such prophecies hint toward a more complex process of source combination is not compelling to me, since no document bears signs of a scribal merging of sources into a unified text. Thus, Nissinen's suggestion that these lists are the beginnings of more elaborated scribal processes, which are allegedly represented by the Hebrew Bible (348–353), remains at this point simply an unsubstantiated hypothesis.

The chapter dealing with Greek documentation evaluates epigraphic and literary sources. I find the literary sources as bearing the most interesting phenomena, specifically, the technical work of the χρησμόλογος —people "specialized in writing, collecting, performing, and interpreting oracles" (139). Their activity stands as a striking evidence of oracle collection and reinterpretation in antiquity. The chapter dealing with the Hebrew Bible defines the biblical evidence as a literary or secondary source, meaning that, as it stands, the text does not allow for the words of the prophets to be differentiated from the scribes'. Differently from his treatment of ANE and Greek sources, Nissinen uses this chapter more to elaborate on his theory of composition of the prophetic books than to directly present the textual features of the prophetical material in the Hebrew Bible as they stand. I agree with Nissinen that the idea of non-prophetical transmission of the prophets' words underlies the actual form of the biblical text, since the existence of antagonistic messages against the court hints toward a 'post-prophet' possibly secret process of purposeful preservation, as attested by the narratives embedded in the Hebrew Bible's prophetical material. It is hard not to observe, however, that such theorized secrecy also did not necessarily foster a more complex scribal activity.

I also agree with Nissinen that many of the Hebrew Bible's oracles were performative in nature and apparently not intended to be written, which

suggests the use of scribes, as Jeremiah 36 shows (157–158). However, the idea that scribal activity presupposes lack of integrity in a prophecy is not directly attested in ancient texts. Both in Assyrian and Greek sources, prophecies are compiled, not combined; and even when reapplication is clear, the interpretation is kept separated from the textual collection. It seems that even for professional oracular collectors, like the χρησμόλογος (139), textual integrity lay at the foundation of their reinterpretation. Therefore, a stable collection is a prerequisite for reinterpretation, but is not necessarily an evidence of conflation. Thus, if anything, the very mention of a scribe in Jeremiah 36 suggests a possible pacific coexistence and potential efficient collaboration of a prophet and a scribe, which at that point of this prophet's ministry possibly accounted for the writing down of more than half of Jeremiah's book. In other words, if the scribes wanted to highlight and stress Jeremiah's identity and integrity as the author of the oracular collection holding his name, why would they leave a narrative with a scribe in the text? Why not exclusively attribute authorial legitimacy to the targeted author?

In consonance with older studies on the presence of cognitive dissonance structures in post-exilic prophecy (Robert P. Carroll, *When Prophecy Failed: Cognitive Dissonance in the Prophetic Traditions of the Old Testament* [New York: Seabury, 1979]) and with the conclusions coming from more recent trauma studies (David M. Carr, *Holy Resilience: The Bible's Traumatic Origins* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014]), Nissinen sees prophecy as one of the strategies for reconstructing the shattered Israelite symbolic universe in the post-exilic period (152). I do concur with this idea, for the books of Haggai and Zechariah, for example, are clear about such a role. However, it is difficult to understand such strategy as the only possible motivation for literary prophecy to arise. At this point, it seems that Greek and Assyrian sources could well be understood as "keyholes" for understanding that such has not always been the case, since the rise of oracular collection, as attested by these documents, does not seem to be connected to any psychological crisis.

I cannot keep from noticing that Nissinen's approach facilitates circular argumentation in certain points of his elaboration on the post-exilic scribal creative activity. An example is the assumption that the post-exilic shift in the national spoken language from Hebrew to Aramaic narrowed the community of literati in Jerusalem even more, which allegedly fostered further restriction in the monopoly for handling the sacred texts (153). The circularity of this argumentation lies in the observation that it is precisely because Nissinen subscribes to a theory describing a post-exilic creative scribal activity responsible for the majority of the Hebrew Bible's prophetical corpus that the language shift becomes a problem—a problem that supports the very scribal theory that creates it. Taken as it is, such a shift does not indicate intensive editing, but possibly purposeful preservation by the hands of pious individuals, just as the books of Ezra and Nehemiah directly claim. Additionally, it is difficult to think of the shift to Aramaic, a language very

close to Hebrew in several aspects, as a significant impairment factor for Hebrew speakers/readers.

In the last part, Nissinen elaborates on the information drawn from the three analyzed sources and merges them into a conceptualization of the ancient prophetical landscape. Nissinen explores the prophets' ecstatic behavior, their relationship to ancient temples, with kingship, and their distribution in terms of gender. Such chapters are rich in details and Nissinen's integration of the information coming from Greece, the Near East, and the Hebrew Bible is responsible. It leaves clear boundaries among the distinct cultures and allows the reader to evaluate the argumentation. These boundaries are not left, however, as necessarily indicating either generic or genetic dissociation. Thus, for Nissinen, the three sources support the appraisal of ancient prophecy as a human phenomenon, in spite of how the Greek προφήτης, the biblical נָבִיא, and the Akkadian *muhhûm* were appreciated in their distinct societies and how one's activity influenced another's throughout history.

"Ancient Prophecy" is a dense and well-articulated book. It draws from a massive amount of primary data and elaborates responsibly on the necessity of methodological rigor for the development of comparative studies. It also represents an impressive elaboration on the most recent bibliography in the field of comparative studies on ancient prophecy. As such, the book is both a competent introduction to the modern study on ancient prophecy for the non-specialist reader and a piece of high-standard academic work, proper to the current ongoing discussions of its type within professional circles.

Berrien Springs, Michigan   Felipe Masotti

Siecienski, A. Edward. *The Papacy and the Orthodox: Sources and History of a Debate.* OSHT. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017. xiv + 510 pp. Hardcover. USD 78.00.

The question of authority in the church and the unique ministry of the Bishop of Rome within Christianity has been a matter of intense discussion for centuries. In *The Papacy and the Orthodox: Sources and History of a Debate*, Edward Siecienski, associate professor of religion, and Clement and Helen Papas Professor of Byzantine Civilization and Religion at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, set out "to trace the history of the Orthodox understanding of the papacy and the place it has played in East-West relations since the beginning of the 'estrangement' that eventually split them apart" (xi). Like his other book, *The Filioque: History of a Doctrinal Controversy,* OSHT (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), "this book intends to trace the history of a controversy—that is, the primacy of the Bishop of Rome as it has been received (or rejected) by Orthodox Christianity" (xii). His "intent is not to convince, but rather to lay out the history in as clear, objective, and interesting a manner as is possible" (xiii). And in this endeavor, I believe Siecienski succeeds admirably.

The polemics surrounding the primacy of the Bishop of Rome have centered extensively on very different readings of the biblical and patristic materials concerning Peter and the Church of Rome. In the first four chapters, Siecienski lays out the history of the apostle Peter and his role in the early Church of Rome. The historical Peter is the subject of chapter one, which surveys what modern scholarship has said about the historicity of the apostle and his presence in Rome. Here the author attempts to distinguish between the "Simon of history" and the "Peter of faith." Chapter two looks at the "Peter of faith" in Scripture and discusses the various portrayals of the apostle in the gospels and epistles. Modern scholarship now readily admits that the biblical material presents multiple views of Peter. The third chapter moves into the discussion of how early church fathers read and commented on the biblical material about Peter and the post-biblical memory of the apostle's ministry in Rome. The early church fathers employed the person of Peter for "a variety of homiletical and pastoral purposes without necessarily thinking that they were somehow commenting on the power and privileges of the Bishop of Rome" (6). Later commentators and church leaders in both East and West would grab these statements and use them to buttress their views of the primacy. Chapter four deals with the early church's developing view of the Bishop of Rome and how individual authors and councils understood both the basis and limits of emerging papal authority in their dealings with it. Siecienski argues that "historically the Orthodox have claimed that the weight of the patristic evidence points to a conciliarly granted 'honorary primacy' that never granted to the pope any authority beyond that enjoyed by the other patriarchs" (7). Of course, differences continue to exist over this interpretation.

The next few chapters survey historical developments and statements throughout the Middle Ages. Chapter five reviews the seventh through the tenth centuries, a period of church history that was critical in the development of the papacy and the Eastern response to it. Various controversies (such as the monothelite and iconoclastic controversies) greatly enhanced the role of the papacy in the East as various theologians turned to the Pope for support for their positions. During the Photian Schism (863–867), however, Pope Nicholas I pressed a view of the papacy that required universal acceptance of his role and obedience to his will, something that the East refused to grant. The papacy's self-understanding continued to evolve during the pontificates of succeeding popes, moving well beyond what Orthodox Christianity could allow.

"The Age of the Great Schism and the Gregorian Reform" is the subject of chapter six and relates how the relationship between East and West was drastically transformed by the excommunications of 1054, the reforms of Gregory VII (1073–1085), and the Crusades. The estrangement between the Latin- and Greek-speaking churches increased substantially when Western theologians, during the second half of the eleventh century, stressed the universal nature of papal supremacy over ecclesiastical and secular authorities, best seen in the document *Dictatus Papae* (1075) (240, 258). For the East, these claims were a departure from their understanding of tradition.

However, it is the Fourth Crusade (ch. 7) and the sacking of Constantinople that "marks the true start of the schism between the Latin and Greek Churches" (282), thus revealing to Eastern Orthodoxy the ultimate aim of papal primacy and ecclesiology toward the East, which required nothing less than obedience to its claims. As the Eastern Empire weakened in political strength and independence over the next two centuries, the Byzantine Emperor sought an alliance with Rome; even a willingness to submit to papal authority. Yet, at the same time, Latin theologians tempered the authority of the pope in adopting *Haec Sancta* during the fifth session of the Council of Constance (1415), and thus limited the authority of the pope to end the Western Schism, a decision welcomed by Eastern theologians.

The following "Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438–1439) was exactly what the East had been requesting for centuries—a genuinely ecumenical council where the issues separating the churches could be debated and discussed" (327), but as Siecienski describes in chapter eight, the developments from Ferrara-Florence to Vatican I (1870) did not result in what many in the East had hoped for. The centuries after Florence were difficult for both East and West, as Rome had to deal with the Protestant Reformers, and Constantinople had to learn to survive under the Sultan. Dialogue was difficult and the following centuries exhibit little progress toward a possible reunion of churches. But it was Vatican I that placed an insurmountable obstacle to any further hope with the *Pastor Aeternus* declaration of papal infallibility and universal jurisdiction. For the Orthodox, there was little to debate as the teachings of Vatican I "were serious errors and had to be rejected in the strongest possible terms" (367).

In chapter nine, "The Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries," Siecienski explores the more recent developments from the Second Vatican Council and Pope John Paul II's encyclical *Ut Unum Sint* (1995). The theology of *communio* (fellowship) holds perhaps the most hope of a possible reunion. Yet, Siecienski is clear in his epilogue that "the Orthodox are firmly convinced that the dogmas of Vatican I remain incompatible with both the witness of the first millennium and their understanding of the Church. As long as the pope's universal jurisdiction and infallibility are taught as Catholic doctrines many Orthodox believe union is an impossibility" (417–418). It may be that any solution to disunity may not come any time soon.

Overall, Siecienski has written a very valuable and credible assessment of the development of the debate between East and West over the role of the Bishop of Rome in the Christian Church. His knowledge of the issues, already explored partly in his study of the *filioque*, is commendable. His familiarity with the various documents and authors that contributed to the Orthodox response to the papal claims is impressive. And his extensive bibliography (eighty pages) is a great complement to a remarkable study, making it an invaluable resource for this debate. Indubitably, this volume is a welcome addition to the Oxford Studies in Historical Theology series.

Andrews University   Denis Fortin

Taylor, Marion Ann, and Heather E. Weir, eds. *Women in the Story of Jesus: The Gospels through the Eyes of Nineteenth-Century Female Biblical Interpreters*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016. xii + 276 pp. Softcover. USD 35.00.

Marion Ann Taylor (professor of Old Testament, Wycliffe College, University of Toronto, and co-editor of *Women of War, Women of Woe: Joshua and Judges through the Eyes of Nineteenth-Century Female Biblical Interpreters* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016]), along with Heather E. Weir (pastoral theologian working in Toronto, Canada) have organized a valuable anthology of thirty-one, nineteenth-century, previously ignored women scholars who have published various commentaries and biblical studies on eight women found in the four Gospels. These include Mary (the mother of Jesus), the woman at the Samaritan well, Herodias and her daughter, Mary and Martha, Anna the prophetess, plus more. The book is arranged with selected nineteenth century female writers quoted under each of the eight women in the Gospels. Mary the mother of Jesus has the most contributors (8), with Mary Magdalene next (7).

The selected materials are helpfully prefaced with a biography, some historical context, and textual analysis for each chapter. According to the editors, the collection is not exhaustive, but only representative, since they mention that they have found hundreds of nineteenth-century women who published on subjects related to the Bible.

The various women selected from two centuries ago include female preachers, educators, biblical interpreters, suffragists, social activists, poets, and daughters of clergy who encouraged their study and may have provided their daughters with access to their personal theological libraries. Several of the women even taught themselves Hebrew and Greek! For example, Mary Anne Schimmel Penninck (1778–1856), encouraged women to take up serious study of the Bible and biblical languages, particularly Hebrew, so that they could give their daughters a thorough religious education. Elizabeth Wordsworth (1840–1932) taught herself Greek from her younger brother's schoolbooks, and published twenty-seven books on diverse topics.

As formal theological education was not readily allowed women in the nineteenth century, the female writers in the book obviously schooled themselves on the prominent theological issues that their academic male contemporaries were dealing with. For example, some women drew on harmonies of the Gospels published by male scholars, but others prepared their own. Some of the quoted material is taken from lessons for children. Other writers were quoted from sermons they had written, though there is no included notation on whether the sermons were preached in church. A few writers were quoted from their prepared Bible study lessons for study groups. Many times the different writers analyzed the gospel narratives.

Some of the quoted selections are granted two to three pages in the book, others just a couple of paragraphs. This left me wishing that more surrounding paragraphs had been included in order to provide more context and thus

more adequate appreciation. A few of the selections are more devotional than scholarly. However, at that time women were denied entrance into formal theological studies, thus this book draws attention to, and applauds the skills of, these self-taught female writers.

The footnotes are also informative and rich including a letter written by Harriet Beecher Stowe to her scholar/husband:

> If you studied Christ with half the energy that you have studied Luther—. . . If you were drawn toward him and loved him as much as you loved your study and your books then would be formed in you, the hope of glory—But you fancy that you have *other* things to do . . . you *must* write courses of lectures—. . . you must keep up with the current literature—& read new German books—all these things you *must* do then if there is any time, any odds and ends of strength & mental capability left, why they are to be given occasionally brushing up matters within, & keeping a kind of Christian character. (Letter to Calvin E. Stowe, cited in Gail Smith, "Reading the Word: Harriet Beecher Stowe and Interpretation," [PhD diss., University of Virginia, 1993], 58; [12n33, emphasis Stowe's]).

There is also a valuable eleven-page Appendix and Bibliography for anyone drawn to further study in this area.

This reviewer did wonder whether there was other substantive material that could have been included from the hundreds of nineteenth-century female writers mentioned by the editor and whether other biblical women in the gospels could have been given a chapter as well. Also, whether more direct evidence might be included of the women who had taught themselves biblical languages. But such is the nature of any anthology. One has to trust the judgment of the two experienced editors which left only a few minor lingering questions. Biblical scholars and church historians of either gender will find this collection all important in its attempt to restore nineteenth-century women to their rightful place in New Testament interpretation.

Andrews University   Jo Ann Davidson

Toom, Tarmo, ed. *Patristic Theories of Biblical Interpretation: The Latin Fathers*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016. xvi + 262 pp. Hardcover. USD 99.99.

This is a great resource for those seeking a stimulating collection of essays on ancient Christian views of biblical interpretation. It is important, however, for the reader to be attentive to the book's purpose, as indicated through its title. Although it may not be immediately obvious, this work describes how elected Latin Fathers, from the fourth to the seventh century, articulated their *theories* of biblical interpretation. Words on Tertullian's or Cyprian's actual perspectives of the Bible are to be found elsewhere, because of the nuanced objective of the book. Toom explains the goal of the book in the introduction, stating, "This volume provides an in-depth analysis of patristic hermeneutics" focusing on authors "whose writings contain substantial discussion of

hermeneutics and who were known, read, and cited in the Middle Ages and beyond" (i). Latin Fathers prior to the fourth century did not write a clear hermeneutical theory, thus, they are excluded.

The individuals presented in this volume are roughly in chronological order as they appear in the book: Tyconius, Jerome, Augustine of Hippo, John Cassian, Junillus Africanus, Flavius Cassiodorus, Gregory the Great, and Isidore of Seville. Isidore of Seville, who is normally not the subject of discussion when it comes to Patristic studies, is included therein in the attempt to lay out theories on biblical interpretation which influenced Medieval Christianity. The tendency of the book to connect with the Middle Ages is notable in the selection of its authors who currently work on Medieval cultures, like Rita Copeland (on Medieval Rhetoric) and Thomas O'Loughlin (Medieval Exegesis).

Unlike popular resources on Patristic biblical interpretation, like Charles Kannengiesser, *Handbook on Patristic Exegesis: Handbook on Patristic Exegesis*, The Bible in Ancient Christianity 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2004) or Frances M. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), this volume focuses on theory. As the title reads, it is important to realize that this is a collection of essays on *theories* of biblical interpretation and not *exegetical practice*. This is also aptly clarified by Toom in the introduction when he classifies patristic literature on Scripture into four categories (taking a cue from Cassiodorus): First, exegetical writings or commentaries; second, homilies; third, hermeneutical theory deduced from actual exegesis; and fourth, hermeneutical theory properly explained. As Toom discusses in the introduction, few of the Fathers clarified their theoretical framework for biblical interpretation. These categories explain the selection of ancient works and individuals in this volume. When one compares the categories with the debate on each chapter, however, it can be argued that the established framework is not actually followed. Although Toom claims that all of the ancient authors investigated in the book fall under category four, the perusal of the chapters on Jerome, Cassiodorus, and Gregory the Great suggest that they could easily fall under category three. Even the authors writing on these individual Fathers state that Jerome, Cassiodorus, and Gregory the Great did not clearly explain hermeneutical theories (49, 160, 187).

It can clearly be argued that the works from Latin interpreters such as Hillary of Poitiers and Adrian could have made it into this book under category three—a fact which Toom recognizes, explaining their exclusion (9–16). It is clear that Augustine, Tyconius, Cassian, Junillus, and Isidore describe their hermeneutical theory at some length, however it wasn't clear how much the Latin fathers had to write about hermeneutical principles in order to be classified under category four. This methodological critique is not aimed toward the exclusion of Latin fathers from the collection, rather directed towards why the book is not more comprehensive, including more individuals. There seems to be a thin line between categories three and four, and since the volume is a great collection of Patristic hermeneuts, as a student and teacher, I would love to have at least three more chapters including

other figures such as Hillary and Adrian. Since the book has 262 pages, I think it would have been feasible. Such an addition would enrich the already great collection of main Christian thinkers whom discussed hermeneutics in the late antiquity. Another advantage of this collection is that it updates English-speaking scholars on French literature which covers the topic of Christianity in late classical Antiquity Christianity—literature that is still indispensable for Patristic scholars.

Reflecting on the book from the perspective of the history of ideas, I could identify at least five prominent themes that are found in almost every chapter. First, that Scripture is obscure and needs interpretation. As Tyconius puts it in his prologue to his *Book of Rules,* God spoke of "treasures out of darkness and secret riches" (Isa 45:3, quoted on 25), which he identified as Scripture. It is the role of the Christian interpreter to understand the hidden message of God's word, thus, the necessity of hermeneutical principles.

Second, that God's word is ever-present. As Junillus Africanus explained in his *Handbook of the Basic Principles of Divine Law,* Scripture speaks "either about God, or about our own age, or about the future" (1.11, quoted on 144). This is probably the major theme in Patristic hermeneutical theory, that the Bible is, as James L. Kugel once aptly labelled it, omnisignificant (*The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and Its History* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981], 103–104). This means that the Bible is not primarily about the past, but about the personal present relationship with God and the future of this relationship. In contrast, modern biblical criticism works on the assumption that the Bible is primarily, if not only, about the past. Understanding how these ancient interpreters negotiate between a historical (past) and an allegorical/spiritual/ethical (future) reading of Scripture can be helpful in appreciating the gap between these two modes of encountering Scripture.

A third theme, which follows the ever-present reality of the text, is the notion that Scripture is primarily for human salvation and ethical transformation. As Gregory visualized it, the process of biblical interpretation has one goal, the edification of the listeners. As he wrote, "Whoever speaks about God, it is necessary that he take [sic] care to examine thoroughly whatever might provide moral (*mores*) instruction for his hearers; and should believe (*deputet*) this to be the correct method for his discourse" (*Moralia in Job,* dedic. 2, translated on 200). Cassian is a prominent figure of an ethical hermeneutics, shaped by his ascetic understanding that reading Scripture was a process of constant contemplation for the cleansing of the heart, described by Christopher Kelly in chapter five.

Fourth, most saw the Spirit guiding the process of a correct understanding of Scripture. The expectation of a personal divine guide, the illumination of the Spirit to Scripture, was not detrimental to a deep study of the text, but quite the opposite. Augustine, in his *en. Ps. 118*, reflecting on the passage of Luke 24:45, taught that humans "Cannot do what the Lord did, for the Gospel tells us, *Then he opened their minds to understand scriptures . . .* [the disciples] took in what he said only because he had opened their minds (*aperuit*) and enabled them to do so" (quoted on 90). Building on this, Gregory

saw that the enlightened reader became a channel of revelation, as he was revealing the mysteries of God to monks through his commentary on Job.

The last prominent theme I found in the theories of these Patristic Fathers is the importance of language. The whole chapter on Augustine deals with semiotics. The discussion on Jerome, Cassiodorus, and Isidore also highlights the fact that the meaning (theory) of language was where the idea of an omnisignificant and soteriological/ethical idea of the biblical text and actual exegesis met. It was linguistics, distilled through the *Etymologies* of Isidore of Seville, which shaped how Western Christianity understood Scripture. Although many ancient authors explained their view of scriptural language in a three-partite model, I think Thomas O'Loughlin is right (216–219) in his chapter on Isidore that, in practice, what we really find in these Christian theories of Scripture is a two-fold system. At stake here was how to read presently (allegorically, morally, spiritually) an ancient text (historically). The chapter on Junillus Africanus, which brings fresh reflections on the school of Nisibis and Theodore's hermeneutics, shows that this concern transcended the traditional Antioch-Alexandria or East-West description of how early Christianity viewed Scripture. For students of the Bible, the hermeneutical challenge remains: What is the relevance of this ancient text deemed holy by believers? For those seeking a satisfying answer to this perennial question, this book surely provides much to reflect on, led by the authors of antiquity who had a passion for the text and a theological acumen that few possess today.

Berrien Springs, Michigan   RODRIGO GALIZA