

author correctly acknowledges that Schillebeeckx's subsequent works *Jesus* and *Christ* stand in continuity with this insight and are misunderstood if they are not read within this context.

Were the ambit of the book's discussions to be extended, it could also engage Dominic De Petter's publications on metaphysics and his lectures on philosophical anthropology, as well as the philosophies of Husserl, Heidegger, and especially of Merleau-Ponty. These thinkers collectively gave Schillebeeckx much of his intellectual equipment in his thought on philosophical anthropology.

In the eyes of some, Schillebeeckx is a theologian of controversy. It is well known that he was called to Rome more than once to explain his ideas on ministry, hermeneutics, historical Jesus research, and Christology to the satisfaction of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. As a result he was never, and has never been, canonically censured. Jennifer Cooper succeeds in showing that Schillebeeckx, while engaging with his contemporary addressees, remains a theologian deeply rooted in a rich Catholic theological tradition.

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GOD IN POSTLIBERAL PERSPECTIVE: BETWEEN REALISM AND NON-REALISM by Robert Andrew Cathey (*Ashgate*, Farnham and Burlington, VT, 2009) Pp. 233 + xii, £55.00 hbk

This book adds to the growing number of works assessing a movement which has had a major impact on theology in the West since the mid 1980s. In contrast to the 'Chicago School' which, under the influence of David Tracy and others, was at that time more classically liberal, 'postliberalism' is sometimes known as the 'Yale School' of theology owing to its origins there under the formative, though certainly not exclusive, influence of Hans Frei and George Lindbeck. Different though these two figures were – in the influences that shaped them, their denominational allegiances, and their theological outlooks and areas of scholarship – the movement of which they were the originators might be briefly characterized as the collaboration of Lindbeck's Wittgenstein with Frei's Barth. Post-liberal theologians share many or all of the following concerns: to move away from theological liberalism and its accommodation with culture; to reconfigure the question of the church's identity in relationship to its cultural setting; to retrieve an ecclesial reading of Scripture; to return to the traditional tasks, themes and resources of dogmatic theology; and to understand afresh the distinctive intellectual vocation of the theologian in relation to the challenges of the secular university.

With hindsight, it can be seen that postliberalism was far more protean and amorphous than it was sometimes thought to be when its influence was at its height – that is, before the turn of the century. However, as Cathey shows in his interesting survey, though it embraced a range of opinions, it shared a rejection of the view that the only kind of theology that can legitimately be practised is one that has passed muster before the Kantian tribunal of neutral reason. In this court, the only argument that counts is that which is "rational" in the distinctly modern, anti-humanist sense of the word, and the only evidencemissible that which is "evident" to the most purblind offspring of the Dawkins school of village atheism.

Thus, insofar as this book is concerned with *God in Postliberal Perspective*, we should not be surprised that much of the discussion is not so much about doctrines of God as about the way in which postliberal theologians have responded to the philosophical challenges to that doctrine, as indeed the reference to realism and non-realism in the subtitle makes clear. The principal figures whose doctrines of God are surveyed are David Burrell (discussion of whose work is most

welcome, though I confess I hadn't thought of him as a member of the postliberal movement), William Placher, and Bruce Marshall. The figure who unites these theologians is Thomas Aquinas but I was disappointed that the interplay of their interpretations of him was not brought more into the foreground of the discussion. I also felt the author was perhaps a bit too dependent on secondary works of interpretation (for example, Charles Wood on Marshall and David Ford on Hans Frei's *Types of Christian Theology*), but the author's tone throughout the book is moderate and cautious, and this makes him all the more compelling an advocate for the position he upholds.

One of the advantages of the survey format is that it enables students to be introduced in a clear way to the distinctive outlooks and arguments of a range of thinkers, but it can also make it more difficult for an author to present a sustained argument for his own perspective, to adhere to a precise technical vocabulary, and to make clearly evident the sometimes submerged themes which unite the thinkers discussed. At the risk of making this review sound like it's intended to say, 'If I'd have written this book, I'd have done it this way', I felt a more thematic treatment of its topics would have suited it better. For example, Don Cupitt, whose ideas are perhaps the central focus of the book's themes, is only introduced in the penultimate chapter. Up until then, I was not clear as to why the author thinks that the realism/non-realism debate is of more than academic interest to contemporary theology – which he clearly does since he is keen to move his readers in the direction of his own 'left-wing postliberal' (p. 194), pluralist, non-dogmatic understanding of Christianity. Further, had the approach been more thematic, the author might have been able to weave into his argument what is in fact curiously absent: Bruce Marshall's important and challenging work on realism and truth in relation to the doctrine of God which forms the climax to his book *Trinity and Truth*.

As it is, the reader is treated to a survey of a range of imprecisely outlined positions on realism but without their coordination with the doctrines of God discussed being worked through in the kind of detail that the author's own stance warrants. Gordon Kaufman is introduced in chapter one but Nelson Goodman's philosophically cognate thought – a welcome introduction to which we are given in chapter three – is not brought into dialogue with him. Likewise, it would have been worthwhile bringing Goodman's constructivism, elements of which Cathey seems to favour, into the hypothetical debate staged between Cupitt and Garrett Green on the topic of the constructive role of the imagination in theology. But these are just one reader's response: the book provides a provocative survey of some of the debates initiated by post-liberalism and we can look forward to the author's fuller presentation of his own position on another occasion.

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FAITH IN A HARD GROUND: ESSAYS ON RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS BY G.E.M. ANSCOMBE edited by Mary Geach and Luke Gormally (*St Andrews Studies in Philosophy and Public Affairs, Imprint Academic, Exeter, 2008*) Pp. 273, £17.95

The appearance of *Faith in a Hard Ground* ("FHG"), the second in a projected series of volumes collecting together papers by the late Catholic analytic philosopher, Elizabeth Anscombe, following upon *Human Life, Action, and Ethics* ("HLAE", 2005), invites a doubt about the editorial principles underlying the series. Anscombe's collected papers were published in 1981 in three volumes; she was active as a philosopher until her death in 2001. One might think, then,