

and the essay, 'Thy Kingdom Come!' Rasmussen has fully kept up the tradition of excellent editorial work in overseeing the English translation. He and the translators, Isabel Best, David Higgins, and Douglas Stott, are deserving of thanks for bringing this work to English-speaking audiences. One can only hope that the profound and highly relevant insights of Bonhoeffer during this short but immensely productive period will reach a whole new audience today.

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**The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology**, William Lane Craig and J.P. Moreland (eds.), Wiley-Blackwell, 2009 (ISBN 978-1-4051-7657-6), 662 pp., hb \$200 and **Oxford Readings in Philosophical Theology. Volumes I and II**, Michael Rea (ed.), Oxford University Press, 2009 (ISBN 978-0-19-923748-7), 364 pp., pb £40

J.P. Moreland and William Lane Craig begin their introduction to 'The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology' by arguing that the decline of positivism in the twentieth century has made room for studies in metaphysics and philosophy of religion. Indeed, they quote Quentin Smith from the secular journal *Philo* as lamenting the fact that philosophy departments are increasingly including theistic perspectives. Michael Rea, in the introduction to the first volume of his books, echoes these claims in saying 'over the past sixty years, within the so-called analytic tradition of philosophy, there has been a significant revival of interest in the philosophy of religion'. Together, these books give a good representation of the kind of work being done in this field. As edited volumes, they include many of the important thinkers and their distinctive styles, as well as pointing readers to further works for more research.

It makes sense to review these books together because they form a picture of philosophical support for theism, and then more specifically philosophical issue surrounding central doctrines of Christianity like the Trinity, Incarnation, Atonement, and Scripture. The book on natural theology includes contributions by, among others, William Lane Craig, J.P. Moreland, Lydia McGrew and Timothy McGrew, Alexander Pruss, and Charles Taliaferro. All of the chapters in this book are about proofs for the existence of God. The philosophical theology volumes include chapters by, among others, Peter van Inwagen, Daniel Howard-Snyder, Marilyn McCord Adams, Eleonore Stump, Alvin Plantinga, Dean

Zimmerman, and Richard Swinburne. The chapters in this book are widely ranged in terms of how they approach Christian doctrine. For instance, they explore competing views of the Trinity, atonement, and the inspiration of scripture.

Charles Taliaferro sets the agenda for the natural theology book in the first chapter when he discusses the aim of natural theology. 'Natural theology is the practice of philosophically reflecting on the existence and nature of God independent of real or apparent divine revelation or scripture'. Although he recognizes non-theistic forms of natural theology, the main focus of this book is against naturalism and the claim that only the physical world exists. This includes the claim that the mind is not identical to the brain, and also that God exists. He urges the importance of humility in philosophy, which means treating the other person's philosophical viewpoint the same way one wants to be treated. This requires both respect and working to give the best and strongest interpretation to the other perspective. He calls this the philosophical golden rule.

He also speaks about the merits of the cumulative case argument. This means that while each chapter considers one kind of argument for God's existence, the whole of these is itself a stronger case. By this he does not mean that simply lumping argument together makes the conclusion somehow more sure, but rather that the increased number of arguments contributes to the *bona fide* cogency of their shared conclusion. He uses an example of different arguments that support pantheism, and talks of the increasing popularity of pantheism as a sign that non-theistic natural theology is alive and well. Together, theism and pantheism take aim at naturalism to argue together that non-naturalist accounts of the cosmos provide a more coherent account of reality. The chapters that follow are part of this case.

Somewhat by way of contrast, Michael Rea has brought together authors who present competing viewpoints about each of the subjects in his two volumes. For instance, there are chapters about the satisfaction theory of atonement, the merit theory of atonement, and the exemplary theory of atonement. There are chapters about social trinitarianism and latin trinitarianism. There are chapters giving a materialist account of the resurrection and others giving dualist accounts.

What these chapters especially provide is a look into the belief systems of analytic philosophers of religion, and how they understand these Christian doctrines. What each chapter becomes is an attempt to make sense of a given Christian doctrine in relation both to criticisms but also within the author's other belief commitments. In one way this is the most interesting part of the book, although such presuppositions are not always stated and must be inferred from the text. These presuppositions give shape and direction to the arguments, and would need to be addressed if hope of agreement about these topics can be maintained.

If these books needed any additions it may have been in explaining to the reader why these subjects are so important. For most of us that take the time to pick up such books this conviction is already in place. However, the sheer fact that the philosophy of religion has become more popular is not an argument for why it should be studied. And this fits neatly with one more addition I would have suggested, which is a discussion about whether these studies can lead to anything more than the expression of opinion. Can humans, through the use of reason, come to know God? Is this subject important precisely because it is the pursuit of knowledge that gives meaning to the rest of one's life? Can the disagreements about Christian doctrine be resolved or will they remain until the end?

I can recommend these books as helpful resources for those studying natural and philosophical theology (although the prices are prohibitive). They give a good look into the condition of the field, and bring to the forefront presuppositions shaping contemporary inquiry.

Owen Anderson



**The Oxford Handbook of Philosophical Theology**, Thomas P. Flint and Michael C. Rea (eds.), Oxford University Press, 2009 (ISBN 978-0-19-928920-2), 609 pp., hb \$150

This volume belongs to the reference shelves of libraries and is definitively recommended to students and scholars in the field of theological theology. The handbook offers in-depth and authoritative survey of current research on 'the theoretical understanding of the nature and attributes of God, and of God's relationship to the world and things in the world'. (p. 1) Even though this book shares a thematic affinity with *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Religion*, it covers and expands on topics specifically relevant to philosophical theology (see Part Two and Three). To Origen's questions 'what Athens has to do with Jerusalem?' this handbook provides a satisfactory answer.

This collection of twenty-six articles from the leading names in the field engages readers with a critical examination of the past and present debates. The contributors offer summaries and compelling new perspectives on a range of topics. The first part 'Theological Prolegomena' deals with questions regarding the authority of scriptures and tradition, the relation between science and religion, the nature and mechanism of divine revelation and inspiration. William J. Wainwright writes