

academics leave the class room and come face to face with realities which cannot be neatly divided into a modern curriculum.

The work contains some specific weaknesses, such as Biggar's analysis of intention and double effect. Here the influence of New Natural Law theory leads Biggar to argue that intending to take life is always wrong (directly acting against one of the basic goods), and thus those who are on the side of justice and kill in war cannot be intending to do so. Since most killings in war are not accidental Biggar has to find a way to explain how non-accidental killings are not intentional. This entails performing gymnastics with the notion of intention, to argue that a soldier who deliberately kills an enemy does not intend to do so if the soldier does not want to kill the enemy (e.g. if another means of removing the enemy from the battle were possible). A more general question the book raises is in regard to its underlying theological commitments. We have noted that Biggar engages an Augustinian Realist perspective, but what form of Augustinian does he support? His Protestantism (p. 241) makes him suspicious of claims to the establishment (past, present or future) of international human consensus and harmony. Yet the just war theory which he seeks to defend is itself the product of international consensus, and it is difficult to see how it could have gained much ground without the promotion of international organisations (both ecclesial and secular). Yet despite these question marks, Biggar has written a very good defence of just war, and shown other theologians how to engage with difficult moral questions in concrete cases.

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RELATING GOD AND THE SELF: DYNAMIC INTERPLAY by Jan-Olav Henriksen, *Ashgate*, Farnham Surrey and Burlington VT, 2013, pp. 205, £54.00, hbk

Shortly after the first draft of Jan-Olav Henriksen's book was completed, Anders Behring Breivik bombed government buildings in Oslo killing eight people, and went on to murder a further sixty-nine, mainly youngsters, at a Labour Party Youth camp outside the city. Breivik 'appeared to lack any kind of empathy for his victims . . . [seeing] himself on a crusade against what he called the "Islamization" of Norway, convinced that he was on a mission from God' (p. 1). In texts distributed on the tragic day, Breivik also rails against Marxism, multi-culturalism, and feminism. Reflecting on this event, Henriksen, Professor of Systematic Theology and Philosophy of Religion in the Norwegian School of Theology (Oslo), subsequently asks, 'What can cause a man to use religious imagery in this way, when he engages in atrocities so contrary to Christian practice and doctrine? . . . (W)hat kind of *self* is it that . . . separate(s) other humans from its own in the world in such a way that a man can slaughter his own countrymen without empathy? How can religious imagery and religion . . . provide people with the means . . . to split the world into two in such a way that all evil is placed with "the others"' (p. 1).

Important though these precise questions are, as its title suggests *Relating God and the Self* is not solely a book about religious violence, its links with fundamentalism, or the misuse of religious rhetoric to justify patently evil deeds. It has clear and obvious application in these areas, for sure, but its philosophical scope is broader. Its wider aims are to investigate the 'dynamic interplay' of self and God images, 'to explore how notions or symbols of God make a difference with regards to the experience of self' (p. 7), and how such experiences interact with

religion. This leads Henriksen to ask how different psychological conceptions of the self permit us to understand different facets of the God symbol, which all of us have, whether atheist or believer. Drawing carefully if abstractly from psychology, philosophy and theology, and primarily a contribution to the philosophy of religion, he expounds the core idea that ‘in order to experience God, this experience has to be mediated by means of a symbol that also orders our perception of ourselves. . . . [and] if there is a working symbol of God, there must also be an internal relationship between God and the self’ (p. 7).

The book treats these questions in a business-like way across four chapters. After an introduction setting out the stall, Chapter 1 takes a selective, if recognisably Lutheran route, through historical accounts from soul to self, from Plato through Aristotle, Augustine, Descartes, Hegel, and Kierkegaard. While from a strictly Catholic perspective a brief discussion of (at least) Aquinas’s theological anthropology and, perhaps, the non-Kantian route through late modernity might have further illuminated his account, to tell any sort of coherent story concisely across these literatures is an achievement in itself. Chapters 2 and 3 then present the core of the argument. Chapter 2 introduces a range of psychological and quasi-psychological approaches to the self, beginning with but going beyond the psychodynamic, including Kirkpatrick’s important work on attachment and God concepts, and culminating in a Ricoeurian account of the narrative self. At one stage I thought that Henriksen was settling for a standard postmodern, plural, linguistically based, experiential self, but it is clear that he recognises that embodiment, biology, and our *real* relations in the world ground the self, and save it from endless dispersal, though the full challenge of linking univocal (biocognitive) and equivocal (social constructivist) approaches was sidestepped. He is also aware that experienced and represented selves, although related, can be distinguished. Likewise, the clear coverage of Ricoeur might have been usefully connected with work on the autobiographical self in memory research. But the psychological literature on the self is vast before anyone begins to attempt to relate it with wider approaches in philosophy. Moreover, the take home message emerges clearly enough, namely that ‘religion is self-hermeneutics’ (p. 109), and provides the tools for situating and developing self, while the self that emerges subsequently engages with religious narratives in particular, sometimes peculiar, and occasionally pathological ways.

Such destructive self-pathologies are skilfully treated in Chapter 3. Henriksen’s discussion of an omnipresent judging and punitive God of shame reminded me vividly of a former colleague who fervently hated religion for this very reason. Urging us to let go of this ‘super-ego God’, Henriksen also covers the potentially harmful effects of a certain view of sin, of abuse, and of patriarchy. He includes, as well, important treatments of narcissism, religious idealisation, and the potential for religious violence (back to Breivik). Here, I think, it could be useful for other scholars to compare what Henriksen has to offer with the strictly secular approach of so called ‘*Terror Management Theory*’ which attempts to account for similar phenomena but from a radically different starting point.

In the final chapter, Henriksen recapitulates his main arguments, but also clarifies his theological position that God can have a psychological effect though always through the *mediation* of experienced self-concepts and images. Personally, I think this is a potentially more useful and academically productive starting point than that adopted by many standard theological discussions of ‘religious experience’ that imply that God somehow directly ‘causes’ experience. Moreover, in drawing attention to the *double* hermeneutic of God-self and self-religion he offers an accommodating framework for future work.

The book is well presented, scholarly, and likely to be valuable to researchers and teachers in various disciplines, yet, surprisingly, it was not a ‘page turner’ for me. Perhaps I was just slowed by its pedagogic feel. Yet the latter careful

approach is arguably no harm in interdisciplinary areas such as this where readers are likely to be unfamiliar with all the background. A good book then overall, certainly worth ordering for one's university library, if not necessarily for one's personal bookshelves.

PETER HAMPSON

WAYS OF MEETING AND THE THEOLOGY OF RELIGIONS by David Cheetham, *Ashgate*, Farnham, 2013, pp. 224, pbk

Theological reflection on other religions and the practice of inter-religious dialogue remain highly contested and often fraught areas of enquiry and engagement. While it has been natural for theologians to see the task in hand as being primarily one of finding the right theological paradigm, one that can account for the reality of religious pluralism, such paradigms have seldom proved to be without considerable difficulties and controversy. Likewise, while it has been natural for those involved in the concrete encounter of dialogue with other religions to want to engage with the religious experience and practices, the spirituality, of other traditions and to seek here either for convergence or mutual enrichment between traditions, such endeavours have very often made other members of those traditions uncomfortable. In such a situation it has proved highly desirable to find other ways in which members of religions can creatively encounter and respond to each other combining commitment to their traditions with openness to the other. David Cheetham provides us with just such an approach, in his refreshing, creative and vigorously argued study.

Cheetham is concerned to explore non-religious ways in which members of different religions can meet, ways that creatively explore and engage with the 'imagination and attitudes of thinking, finding new spaces for meeting, and sustaining commitments to faith traditions' (p.197). Thus, in considering what kind of person a comparative philosopher needs to be (chapter 1) Cheetham notes the shift in contemporary philosophical and theological reflection on the encounter with other cultures and their religions to an insistence on the tradition specific or conditioned nature of all such encounter and the rejection of the idea that there can be neutral perspectives or engagements, such as advanced in pluralist theologies of the sort advocated by John Hick. He cites here the British Catholic theologian, Gavin D'Costa, as a leading advocate of the tradition specific approach. Cheetham is concerned that such tradition specific approaches can end up becoming inward looking, since the emphasis is on the internal criteria and perspectives of that tradition. As a corrective, he suggests that the comparative philosopher should be the kind of person who is willing to use his or her imagination creatively and construct models in which the religions meet each other in different ways, models that are then subject to more rigorous philosophical analysis. Here, for instance, we could take the pluralist account of Hick as one such theoretical model and think about what it is like and what it might teach us. This provides 'a temporary amnesty or forgetfulness concerning the restraints of incommensurability, difference, global complexity or politics of thought' (p.28). Such models are recognised as thought experiments and as fictional in nature and hence do not contradict the tradition specific character of any actual encounter with other religions.

Cheetham argues further that we might develop an 'aesthetic attitude' (chapter 5). More generally, this characterises an approach to another religion, whereby someone engages with that religion within the categories of aesthetic appreciation,