

terms. It is another matter altogether when such an attenuated understanding of global is perpetuated. Gaining critical distance in order to see the negative, as well as positive, impact on the world beyond Western capitalist interests is made all the harder. For a very different perspective that could be usefully read in conjunction with Himes' U.S.- and Western-centric text I would recommend Miguel A. De La Torre (ed.), *Ethics: A Liberative Approach* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2013).

This is not to take away from the considerable value of Himes' substantial book but to set it in a wider context – especially when it purports to be 'theology in global perspective'.

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**Myk Habets, *Theology in Transposition: A Constructive Appraisal of T. F. Torrance* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013), pp. 228, ISBN 978-0800699949. £25.99**

2013 marked the one hundredth anniversary of Thomas Forsyth Torrance's birth. It is perhaps fitting, then, that the year also marked the publication of this volume, which constitutes the best introduction to Torrance's thought to date. Theological introductions can be rather hit-and-miss, as scholars who attempt to summarize every point and subpoint of a given theological system run the risk of confusing or overwhelming the reader, rather than assisting them. Habets instead provides an exploration of six central and crucial themes in Torrance's overall theological vision, thus laying the necessary groundwork for readers to go off and study Torrance's theology on their own. Furthermore, Habets provides some critical and constructive interactions with Torrance that will make this volume of interest to experienced scholars. This volume thus not only gives budding Torrance scholarship the tools it needs to investigate his thought, but also a directive to build upon it. For Torrance, dogmatics was never an entirely finished or settled work, and this volume continues in that

reflective and reconstructive spirit.

Interest in Torrance's theology seems to be ever growing, as his passion for the gospel and his penetrating, profound, and wide-ranging theological insights enthral academics, ministers and laypeople alike. However, finding an easy entry point into his thought has remained a daunting affair. Torrance's theology is intricately interconnected, and thus to properly understand one facet of it requires the reader to have a panoptic view of Torrance's entire theological vision. Furthermore, Torrance's corpus consists of over five hundred published articles and books, on topics as diverse as natural theology, theological science, Christology, sacramentology and historical theology (to name a few). Where, then, is one to begin? This volume may be the answer, as it gives the holistic, thematic picture of Torrance's overall theology that is needed for the reader to easily approach Torrance's writings, regardless of the particular subtopic that interests them.

The book is organized into two main sections. This organization works quite well, and each chapter flows easily into the next. Unlike some introductory works which require one to flip forward and backward through the book to make sense of all the connections being drawn, this volume can easily be read straight through without missing a beat. In addition, Habets does not presuppose too much about the reader's prior knowledge of Torrance, and takes the time to explain his thought and the related theological terms clearly. This combination of a fluid structure and careful exposition results in a book that is highly accessible to readers from a variety of backgrounds.

The first section surveys Torrance's theological method, featuring three essays on his scientific, natural and realist theology, respectively. This section is important because readers who attempt to understand Torrance exclusively according to their own methodology will often end up distorting his thought. Habets provides an example of such a distortion from Carl F. H. Henry, who read Torrance through the lens of his own proposition-based epistemology and therefore incorrectly thought that Torrance's personal-relational epistemology resulted in pure subjectivism and denied the objectivity of truth (p. 64).

The second section features three more essays on Torrance's theological content, viz. his mystical, integrative and Christocentric theology. These essays attempt to elucidate what is distinctive

about Torrance's theology, and are 'intended to move novices into deeper engagement with Torrance's Christian dogmatics' and to offer 'seasoned scholars [...] perspectives on doing theology in a Torrancean key' (p. 2). Habets is not interested in merely reporting on what Torrance thought, but also desires to build on his theology in new ways – a project of which Torrance would have no doubt approved, given his aversion to mere historicism and his devotion to theology in reconstruction.

The essays may therefore be summed up as descriptive, comparative and constructive. Descriptively, they outline crucial themes in Torrance's thought. Some of these themes are quite complex, yet Habets has a good sense of their central structure and is able to clearly draw this out for the reader. In some cases this requires arguing for a certain reading of Torrance's thought over others, as in the chapter on Torrance's natural theology (pp. 67–93), in which Habets details three alternate ways in which Torrance has been understood on this topic and then suggests his own fourth possibility.

Comparatively, Habets puts Torrance's theology in conversation with other thinkers. Some of these thinkers were major influences on Torrance. For example, the chapter on his scientific theology discusses his relation to the epistemology of Michael Polanyi. The chapter on natural theology discusses some ways in which Torrance enlarged upon and diverged from the theology of his mentor, Karl Barth. Yet, Habets also puts Torrance in dialogue with theological opposites, particularly Carl F. H. Henry in the chapter on Torrance's realist theology. These comparisons help to place Torrance's thought in its broader theological context and to draw out the nuances and commitments that make his theology unique. In each case the comparisons are fair and charitable. Indeed, while Habets largely sides with Torrance rather than Henry, he also indicates value in Henry's critique of Torrance, particularly on the question of whether Scripture *is* revelation or whether it only *becomes* revelation within the context of 'personal communion with Christ by the Spirit' (p. 121). In other words, this volume provides an appreciative appraisal of Torrance's thought, but not a flat hagiographical defence.

Lastly, Habets suggests new constructive ways to flesh out Torrance's thought. Some of Torrance's richest theological insights are

hampered by incomplete articulations of such foci as pneumatology, mystery (and mystical theology) and ‘the functional relation between the Word, or divine nature, and the humanity of Jesus’ (p. 194). There is work to be done in these areas for Torrance scholars, Habets argues. These chapters provide Torrance scholarship with the proper charge not to simply rest on its oars but to continue expanding and refining the valuable contributions of Torrance’s theology.

One minor issue: the volume’s index contains numerous entries which do not refer to the correct page references. The index is accordingly nearly unusable. The volume is an otherwise fine work that will be of interest to all students of Torrance’s thought.

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**Alan P. F. Sell, *The Theological Education of the Ministry: Soundings in the British Reformed and Dissenting Traditions* (Eugene, Or.: Pickwick Publications, 2013), pp. 313, ISBN 978-1620325933. £24.00**

This book is a collection of essays and articles produced for other contexts and brought together in one volume under the broad heading of theological education for the ministry. Despite its title, however, it would be of more interest to historians, or theologians, than theological educators. The author views the education of the ministry from the late-seventeenth century onwards through the lens of biographical sketches of ‘some of the principals, professors and lecturers who devoted themselves to that task’ (p. ix). On the one hand this is a resounding success; a tour de force of scholarship considering the contribution of some of the outstanding theological educators of the last 300 years. Sell writes well and concisely, packing a vast quantity of information into each of his chapters and bringing his subjects to life through careful use of biographical material. However, there is also an extent to which the book is a disappointment. The title is somewhat misleading and would more accurately be ‘Theological Educators in