



Islam and the Kirk?

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Introduction

Daniel Migliore, in his Gunning Lecture of 6 March 2007 at the University of Edinburgh, rightly argues that the new encounter between Christianity and Islam is ‘the greatest religious issue of the twenty-first century’.¹ While these two world faiths have co-existed in tension for almost 1400 years, there is added urgency today to their encounter with one another. It is an encounter that is taking place worldwide.² It is no longer the case that Christians and Muslims live in separate countries thousands of miles apart:

Today the Muslim world population is estimated to have reached almost one billion, one-fifth of humanity. Islam occupies the centre of the world. It stretches like a broad belt across the globe from the Atlantic to the Pacific, encircling both the ‘haves’ of the consumer North and the ‘have-nots’ of the disadvantaged South. It sits at the crossroads of America, Western Europe and Russia on one side and black Africa, India and East Asia on the other. Historically, Islam is also at the crossroads, destined to play a world role in politics and to become the most prominent world religion in the next century.³

Migliore correctly highlights that, even beyond demographics, current events have catapulted Christianity and Islam into a new, complex, and highly-charged encounter:

The terrorist attacks on the New York Trade Center and the Pentagon on 9/11, the subsequent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan [...]; the suicide bombings in London on 7/7, Madrid, and other cities; the continuing Palestinian-Israeli conflict – these

and other events virtually guarantee that Christian-Muslim relationships will be burdened by unrelieved suspicion and most likely deep hostility for many years to come.⁴

It is in this context that Mona Siddiqui, Professor of Islamic Studies and Director of the Centre for the Study of Islam at the University of Glasgow, addressed the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on 26 May 2010. As a representative of what is arguably the third largest faith community in Scotland after the Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church, Siddiqui, a well-known academic and public figure, is the first Muslim woman to address the General Assembly. Her presence there begs a number of questions which this paper will attempt to address: Can the Kirk learn anything from Islam about being the Kirk in contemporary Scotland? Further, can the theology of Karl Barth help the Kirk see the need to encounter Islam with a view to learning how Islam can teach the Kirk something about being the Kirk?



Karl Barth's theology

To many Barth might seem an unlikely interlocutor in attempting to help the Kirk in this way. It is a fact that he has often been overlooked with respect to any type of inter-religious encounter. Barth himself never really deals with the issue. Robin Boyd contends that this is perhaps partly why Barth has also been blamed for the 'virtual moratorium on interfaith encounter between the publication of Hendrick Kraemer's *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World* (1938) and the beginning of Vatican II in 1962'.⁵ In tandem with this perception of Barth, pluralist theologians, such as John Hick and Paul Knitter, argue that fruitful inter-faith encounter necessitates a revision of traditional Christology, and in particular a departure from Christian claims that salvation comes through Christ alone.⁶

It is also a well known fact that Karl's Barth's theology does not give particular attention to the religions of the world. There are only a few passages in his *Church Dogmatics* and other writings where he is explicitly concerned with other religions. Most impressive in

this regard is his dialogue with Buddhism.⁷ Otherwise, however, the religions only appear in a rather general way. When Barth does speak of them, he usually does so in the context of his examination of the understanding of ‘religion’, a term which really does not have the religions of the world primarily and concretely in view. Indeed, §17 reserves the term ‘revelation’ solely for revelation in Christ. It denotes God’s own self-disclosure as this is understood in Christian faith. In contrast to this, religion, and along with it the religions, represent only human ‘reality and possibility’.⁸

It is this fundamental distinction between revelation in Christ and religion which determines most of what Barth has to say about the religions. They cannot become the ‘true religion’, whereas this may be claimed of Christianity, within which human religious capacity is determined by God’s revelation.⁹ Therefore the other religions stand *a priori* under the verdict of being false.

However there does exist, in principle for Barth, the possibility of witness to the revelation of the Word of God occurring outside the confines of the Church. In §69.2 he asks if there are ‘true words’ distinct from the one Word of God, Jesus Christ? In an attempt to answer this question he introduces the concept of ‘parables of the kingdom’. Although the kingdom of God is Jesus Christ, human words can, by God’s grace, disclose the kingdom. One set of parables is found in Scripture and the Church’s proclamation. The word of witness as Scripture is described as the ‘direct witness’ whereas the word of witness in the Church is labelled the ‘indirect witness’, reflecting the relative proximity of each to the Word of Christ.¹⁰

If Scripture and Church proclamation constitute an ‘inner sphere’ of a circle with Christ as the centre, then the secular world constitutes an ‘outer sphere’: true words can be found in both.¹¹ One can expect such words in the secular sphere, Barth asserts, on the basis of the universality of Christ’s lordship and the objective and universal reconciliation effected in and through him. One need not, then, have recourse to a natural theology to claim that true words can be found outside of church walls. Secular parables can be grounded exclusively in revelation in Christ. They have their basis in Christ’s lordship and atoning work, and not in some general revelation. They are ‘true’ insofar as they stand ‘in the closest material and substantial

conformity and agreement with the one Word of God'.¹² In fact, a true secular word 'will not lead its hearers away from Scripture, but more deeply into it.'¹³ It will 'materially say what [Scripture] says, although from a different source and in another tongue.'¹⁴ Secular words should also be compatible with the dogmas and confessions of the Church. While secular parables should in general harmonize with these dogmas and confessions, in this sphere some newness is permissible. Secular parables can extend and fill in existing Church dogmas, and might even provoke dogmatic revision.¹⁵ But as useful as secular parables may be for the Church, they cannot become norms, unlike the Bible, for 'they lack the unity and compactness and therefore the constancy and universality of His self-revelation as it takes place and is to be sought in Holy Scripture.'¹⁶ For Barth, their use will always be provisional and done on an *ad hoc* basis.

Paul Louis Metzger is correct when he says that:

It appears safe to assume that implicit in Barth's statements [...] is the idea that witnesses may [...] emerge from within the context of the non-Christian religions. Here then 'secular word' is taken to refer to the whole domain, which stands outside the parameters of the Bible and the church.¹⁷

Metzger's position is validated by Geoffrey Thompson, who in his unpublished PhD thesis, recounts a conversation he had with Hans Küng in 1992. During this conversation Küng stated that Barth had confided to him 'that although he [Barth] had not explicitly referred to them, he did have the other religions in mind when he was writing the account of extra-ecclesial truth'.¹⁸ Barth's concept of secular parables of the kingdom, therefore, provides theological justification for a way of conceiving how the words (and actions) of non-Christian religions might be affirmed as 'signs' or 'parables' of the one Word of God, Jesus Christ.

It is therefore conceivable that an encounter with Islam would serve the purpose of giving the Kirk a deeper understanding of Scripture; it could also function as a critique of Church of Scotland dogma and practice. This understanding provides potential for preconceptions concerning the content of Scripture to be opened and challenged,

thus bringing about new, fresh interpretations that are consistent with the Word of God and Reformed tradition, while also allowing for the possibility of discerning God's presence in Islam. It also provides an equally strong commitment from the Kirk to acknowledge openly that Islam has its own integrity, distinctive practices and theological traditions. It is wholly possible then that the work of Islamic scholars can come to the Kirk today as parables of the kingdom of God. Two areas where this might be possible will now be investigated.



The authority of Scripture

Tariq Ramadan points out that though there is one Islam, there are 'diverse ways' of living it and, while all Muslims adhere to its fundamental principles, there is 'an important margin allowed for evolution, transformation, and adaptation to various social and cultural environments.'¹⁹ From this perspective, Western Muslims, 'because they are undergoing the experience of becoming established in new societies,' have no choice but to go back to the original sources to distinguish what is unchangeable (*thabit*) and what can be subject to change (*mutaghayyir*) in Islam.²⁰ Ramadan begins this journey by providing a spiritual definition of Islam based on *tawhid* (the absolute oneness of God) upon which he builds everything else: 'to understand Islam is to grasp the meaning and significance of the multiple dimensions of *tawhid*.'²¹ He writes: '[t]he first and most important element [...] is *faith*, which is the intimate sign that one believes in the Creator without associating anything with Him. This is the meaning of the central concept of *tawhid*, faith in the oneness of God'.²² What is central then to the spirit of Islam is the human need for God, resulting in humility: '[t]o call on God is not to console oneself – it is to rediscover the condition originally wanted for us – the spark of humility, the awareness of fragility.'²³

Ramadan's work illustrates that Islam has a long and continuing tradition of Qur'anic exegesis: 'it is essentially the ways of reading the Qur'an that distinguish the various trends of thought among Muslims, [...] we find a diversity of readings [...] that can be attributed principally to the greater or lesser role the human intellect is allowed to play and, consequently, to the scope for interpretation that is

permitted as an integral part of the Islamic field of reference.²⁴ He identifies at least ‘six major tendencies’ as hermeneutical frameworks: scholastic traditionalism, salafi literalism, salafi reformism, political literalist salafism, liberal or rationalist reformism and Sufism.²⁵ The point Ramadan makes in doing this is that contemporary Islam’s situation is far more complex and the boundaries far more subtle than ‘the dualistic simplistic readings of the situation that set the liberals over and against all the rest – the radicals and the fundamentalists.’²⁶ Yet he is keen to point out that even with this diversity, ‘*Islam is one* and presents a body of opinion whose essential axes are identifiable and accepted by the various trends or schools of thought, in spite of their great diversity.’²⁷

This is a reminder to the Kirk that the Church also has a long and complex history of scriptural exegesis and faithful interpretation from people of widely varying perspectives and contexts but who all claim the sole Lordship of Christ. Ramadan’s call to the Muslim world for humility is an echo of the call to all the factions of the Kirk for humility as it deals today with many hermeneutical issues, in particular a call for humility, in the face of schism, to the different factions involved in the current debate over human sexuality and the ordination and marriage of homosexuals.

At the Church of Scotland’s General Assembly of 2007 a report on human sexuality was presented entitled “A Challenge to Unity”. At a subsequent fringe meeting hosted by *OneKirk* on 21 May 2007, at which the author was present, the report was discussed. Present on the panel was Barbara Wheeler, the president of Auburn Theological Seminary, New York. She was the Presbyterian Church (USA) representative to the General Assembly that year. During one of her contributions she mentioned the ‘Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity and Purity of the Church’, a group created by the 213th General Assembly (2001) of the PC(USA), to discover ways that the Church could live more faithfully in the face of deep disagreements.

The final report of this task force, as approved by the 217th General Assembly (2005), identified one major area of disagreement to be that of ‘Sexuality and Ordination’.²⁸ Wheeler shared that members of the working group, while holding in some cases opposing views on human sexuality and its consequent implications for ordination and

marriage, were able to learn from each other about the consequences of their attitudes and actions. As a whole the task force came to see that the state of disagreement felt within the denomination was as a consequence of their 'mutual stereotyping and misuse of power' which in turn failed 'to offer a suffering world a sign of the peace, unity, and purity that is God's gift to us in Jesus Christ.'²⁹ The report continues:

As we observed the disciplines of listening and reflection that became foundational in the task force process, we heard more than the echoes of our sins of omission and commission. We also heard the gospel anew and felt the spirit of Christ in the words and deeds of our fellow task force members. Repeatedly, we found ourselves moved and impressed by the depth and truth of statements made by our colleagues, including those whose backgrounds and experiences are very different from our own. Most surprisingly, our faith was enriched and strengthened by the contributions of those whose views on contested issues we do not share.³⁰

However, not all differences were overcome in the group. Most members still held the views and perspectives that they had brought to the task force, but *all* had been 'greatly enriched and changed' by their work together.³¹

In a study paper prepared for the task group, William Stacy Johnson examined seven viewpoints on same-gender relationships, considering each of them in relationship to the doctrines of creation, reconciliation, and redemption. The study also considered some of the biblical arguments used to support each of the seven positions. The seven viewpoints were divided into the non-affirming ones of prohibition, toleration and accommodation, legitimation as a critique of the non-affirming viewpoints, and the welcoming and affirming viewpoints of celebration, liberation and consecration.³²

In the conclusion of Johnson's study he writes:

[...] for thirty years this issue has roiled the church. It has left many people wounded. Somehow we must find a way to move forward together without further wounding. What should be

clear from this study is that the issues at stake are not simple; they are quite complex. My hope is that in working through these seven positions, the church will discover that, though we disagree, we are still speaking the same language, still worshipping the same Lord.³³

The experience of this theological task force is an example from which all in the Church global – and the Kirk in particular – can learn: it exemplifies a spirit of humility amongst its members who recognize the unity of God’s people even within their diversity. This is certainly a sentiment members of the Kirk can share with their Muslim neighbours as they also strive to reconcile internally their differences over a wide range of issues inherent to Islam.



God’s sovereignty

The General Assembly of 2010 unanimously agreed to the proposed deliverance of the Special Commission Anent the Third Article Declaratory of the Constitution of the Church of Scotland in Matters Spiritual which ‘reaffirms the principles enshrined in the third Article Declaratory and declares anew its commitment to be a national church with a distinctive evangelical and pastoral concern for the people and nation of Scotland’.³⁴

The third Article Declaratory reads:

This Church is in historical continuity with the Church of Scotland which was reformed in 1560, whose liberties were ratified in 1592, and for whose security provision was made in the Treaty of Union of 1707. The continuity and identity of the Church of Scotland are not prejudiced by the adoption of these Articles. As a national Church representative of the Christian Faith of the Scottish people it acknowledges its distinctive call and duty to bring the ordinances of religion to the people in every parish of Scotland through a territorial ministry.

The position of the 2010 General Assembly on the third Article Declaratory begs a number of questions: What undergirds this Article

Declaratory? The Church of Scotland Act of 1921 recognises the position of the Kirk in terms of its Articles Declaratory, but the third Article Declaratory will be forever associated with the heightened sectarian tension of the 1920s which chiefly focused on Irish Roman Catholic migrants working in Scotland.³⁵ Could the third Article Declaratory be contrived, even sublimely, as a manifestation of a twentieth-century Scottish interpretation of manifest destiny, which carries with it the unwanted but interrelated concerns of nationalism, xenophobia and triumphalism? Is it reasonable in contemporary Scotland for Mona Siddiqui, as an example, to have, albeit nominally, a Church of Scotland parish minister who is not of her choice? Is it therefore acceptable for any citizen, be they Christian or other, to have a Church of Scotland parish minister not of their choice?

In her address to the General Assembly Siddiqui contends that:

[...] a central question for all religious communities today is to what extent can we use scripture and the post-scriptural intellectual and social traditions to work out the basis of contemporary normative ethics. With [...] the demise of institutionalised religion, how does one face the challenge of being innovative whilst at the same time staying engaged with the legacy of tradition?³⁶

Does Siddiqui's 'central question' go some way to challenge the very notion of the Christendom-inspired model of territorial ministry in the Church of Scotland as it currently stands? Is it now time for the Church of Scotland to amend the third Article Declaratory by the same spirit it broadly interprets the Westminster Confession of Faith? What can the Kirk learn from Islam in this instance?

In his Gunning lecture, Migliore insightfully points out that Islam calls for rigorous adherence to the first commandment of the Decalogue: 'you shall have no other gods before me' (Exod 20:3).³⁷ Indeed Migliore also points out that the faith of Islam in the sole lordship of God echoes the central Jewish confession or Shema: 'Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone' (Deut 6:4). It also calls to mind the first of the two love commandments of Jesus: 'you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and

with all your mind, and with all your strength' (Mark 12:30).³⁸

Migliore continues: '[i]n the midst of the Confessing Church's struggle in Nazi Germany, Barth called the first commandment the axiom' (or foundational principal) of Christian theology.³⁹ Barth writes:

Essentially, [the first commandment] is not only something God says about himself, perhaps about God's uniqueness or that there are no other gods before God. It is not only a revelation of divine truth. It is essentially a *command* of God to the Israelite who is personally addressed. God not only *designates* himself as lord but *acts* as such by demanding, commanding and forbidding: "You shall have no other gods before me!"⁴⁰

For Barth this commandment 'not only tells a person that there is a lord, but that [he/she] has a lord; he/she has a lord whether he/she obeys or not'.⁴¹ There can be no room for serving two masters: there is only one Lord. In Barth's context of pre-war Europe he was afraid that the Church was not bold enough to be the Church in the face of Nazi totalitarianism and ecclesial authoritarianism.⁴² He asserts:

I think and speak with theological responsibility when I know myself to be responsible to that commandment in what I think and speak as a theologian; when I perceive that responsibility as a responsibility to an authority above which there is no appeal, because it is itself the last and highest, the absolutely decisive authority. "You shall have no other gods before me!"⁴³

Migliore, in reaction to American civil religion, contends that 'Christians might just be able to hear' in Islam's affirmation of humility before 'the sole lordship of God a call for repentance' today in a similar way to Barth's call for repentance in the 1930s, in response to the failure to practice an uncompromising rejection of idolatry.⁴⁴ For Migliore, the American Church has to query continually 'interpretations of Christian faith that use it for nationalistic, racist, or class purposes'.⁴⁵ Migliore questions: '[Might] the church have

something to learn from the warning of Islam not to associate any creature or any power with the one and only Lord?⁴⁶ Is there sometimes ‘confusion between Christian faith and uncritical allegiance to the state [read nation]’?⁴⁷

Are the following words of H. Richard Niebuhr as relevant to the contemporary Scottish context as they are to an American context?

Christians were tempted in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, perhaps more than in previous times, to consider themselves first of all as members of national and cultural societies rather than of the church and to turn Christian faith into an auxiliary of civilization. But the temptation and the tendency to anthropocentrism are universal [...]. For faith in the God of Jesus Christ is a rare thing and faith in idols tends forever to disguise itself as Christian trust.⁴⁸



Conclusion

Barth’s work is not a comprehensive ‘theology of religions’ or even a ‘theology of religious traditions’.⁴⁹ It is a ‘*theological* resource’ for a particular type of inter-religious encounter.⁵⁰ It is ‘an explicitly *Christian* theological resource’ which ‘inevitably constructs occurrences of extra-ecclesial truth on its own terms’.⁵¹ As Thompson correctly observes:

[...] in general terms it is impossible not to work within the terms of a particular tradition, and some violation of [the other’s] self-understanding is inevitable. Moreover [...] attempts to adopt any tradition-free position are largely illusory.⁵²

Hence it is possible to appropriate Barth’s work to see if, in John Cobb’s words, ‘one *can* integrate the wisdom of alien traditions into one’s Christian vision’.⁵³ Cobb is right when he suggests that ‘[t]his is not easy and there is no simple recipe’.⁵⁴ But this type of endeavour ‘is faithful to Christ and preceded in our history’.⁵⁵ Cobb is correct to consider ‘whether there are any norms that transcend this diversity, norms that are appropriately applied to all’.⁵⁶ He is also correct to

surmise that ‘one such norm [...] is the ability of a tradition in faithfulness to its past to be enriched and transformed in its interaction with the other traditions.’⁵⁷

This paper has demonstrated how Islam, by emerging as a ‘secular’ word of the Kingdom of God, might speak to the Kirk about its own life and purpose at this time in its history, hence potentially enriching and transforming the Kirk. The decisive conclusion then is that the Kirk, in Barth’s view, has the potential to ‘be open to transformation by what it learns’ from truth claims made by Muslims, such as Siddiqui and Ramadan, who are outside the Church.⁵⁸ But in response, the Kirk has to decide if it is ready to listen to God’s grace as it comes through the voice of these strangers or indeed through the voice of any other outsider.

Notes

- 1 Daniel L. Migliore, “The Different Power of God: The Witness of Christianity and Islam”, Gunning Lecture delivered in the Martin Hall, New College, University of Edinburgh, 6 March 2007. See also Daniel L. Migliore, *The Power of God and the Gods of Power* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2008), 115.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Gerhard Böwering, “Christianity – Challenged by Islam”, in *Islam: A Challenge for Christianity* (ed. Hans Küng and Jürgen Moltmann; London: SCM; Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1994), 114. Specifically, Peter Mandaville contends that Islam has, over the past two decades, become exceedingly prevalent in Europe. Estimates of Muslims living in Europe range generally ‘between 9 and 15 million’, thus constituting the largest religious minority group on the continent. See Peter G. Mandaville, “Towards a Critical Islam: European Muslims and the Changing Boundaries of Transnational Religious Discourse”, in *Muslim Networks and Transnational Communities In and Across Europe* (ed. S. Allievi and J. Nielsen; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 127, 129.
- 4 Migliore, *The Power of God and the Gods of Power*, 115.

- 5 Robin H. S. Boyd, “A Barthian Theology of Interfaith Dialogue”, *Pacifica* 3 (1990):291.
- 6 See for instance John Hick and Paul F. Knitter, eds., *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions* (London: SCM; Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1987).
- 7 Cf. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* (ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance; Edinburgh, T&T Clark, 1936–77), I/2:340–4; hereafter cited as *CD*. Responding to a letter by the philosopher-theologian Katsumi Takizawa in 1937, when the text of *CD* I/2 was almost ready for print, Barth mentions the *Yodo-Shin* school in Buddhism and asks: ‘Why didn’t you tell me anything about this before? The matter has interested me very much. Unfortunately I have been able to study this subject only the way it was possible to me from a distance, and it might well be, that my explanation on this point seems very amateurish in your eyes. [...] I would like to know, for instance, in how far there is a connection between the Yodo-teaching and the old Nestorian mission in China, from where it came to Japan. Or is any connection lacking? And were, or eventually are, you influenced yourself directly or indirectly by this remarkable form of Buddhism?’, cited by Alle Hoekema, “Barth and Asia: ‘No Boring Theology’”, *Exchange* 33 (2004):109.
- 8 *CD*, I/2:283.
- 9 Cf. Barth’s portrayal of Christian life as ‘true religion’ in *CD*, I/2:325–61.
- 10 *CD*, IV/3:96.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 97.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 111.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 126.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 115.
- 15 *Ibid.*, 127.
- 16 *Ibid.*, 131.
- 17 Paul Louis Metzger, *The Word of Christ and the World of Culture: Sacred and Secular Through the Theology of Karl Barth* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2003), 127.
- 18 G. J. Thompson, “‘... as open to the world as any theologian could be ...’?: Karl Barth’s Account of Extra-Ecclesial Truth and Its Value to Christianity’s Encounter with Other Religious Traditions”

- (PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 1995), 3.
- 19 Tariq Ramadan, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 9.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Ibid., 12.
- 22 Ibid., 79.
- 23 Ibid., viii.
- 24 Ibid., 22.
- 25 See *ibid.*, 24–30.
- 26 Ibid., 28.
- 27 Ibid., 23.
- 28 See the Theological Task Force’s final report available from <http://www.pcusa.org/peaceunitypurity/finalreport/final-report-revised-english.pdf>, especially page 18 (accessed 27 May 2007).
- 29 Ibid., 12.
- 30 Ibid., 13.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 See William Stacy Johnson, “Same-Gender Relationships in the Church: Seven Theological Viewpoints: A Study Paper Prepared for the Theological Task Force on Peace, Unity and the Purity of the Church”, available at <http://www.pcusa.org/peaceunitypurity/finalreport/seventheologicalviewpoints.pdf> (accessed 27 May 2007). See also William Stacy Johnson, *A Time to Embrace: Same-Gender Relationships in Religion, Law, and Politics* (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2006).
- 33 Johnson, “Same-Gender Relationships in the Church”, 107.
- 34 See 2.1 of the proposed deliverance of the report by the Special Commission Anent the Third Article Declaratory of the Constitution of the Church of Scotland in Matters Spiritual to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, May 2010.
- 35 See David Fergusson, *Church, State and Civil Society* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 184 f.
- 36 See Mona Siddiqui, ‘Speech to the General Assembly’ available at http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/generalassembly/downloads/gaspeech10_mona_siddiqui.pdf (accessed 26 May 2010).
- 37 See Migliore, “The Different Power of God”. See also Migliore, *The Power of God and the Gods of Power*, 124.

- 38 Ibid. See also Migliore, *The Power of God and the Gods of Power*, 124.
- 39 Migliore, *The Power of God and the Gods of Power*, 124. See also Karl Barth, “The First Commandment as an Axiom of Theology”, in *The Way of Theology in Karl Barth: Essays and Comments* (ed. H. M. Rumscheidt; Allison Park, Pa.: Pickwick, 1986), 63.
- 40 Barth, “The First Commandment as an Axiom of Theology”, 66 f.
- 41 Jennifer Diane George, “I Am the Lord your God: Karl Barth’s Doctrine of the Trinity and Jewish Monotheism” (PhD dissertation, Princeton Theological Seminary, 2003), 264.
- 42 Barth, “The First Commandment as an Axiom of Theology”, 73.
- 43 Ibid., 71.
- 44 See Migliore, *The Power of God and the Gods of Power*, 124.
- 45 Ibid., 125.
- 46 Ibid.
- 47 Ibid.
- 48 H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Meaning of Revelation* (Eugene, Or.: Wipf and Stock, 2001), 34.
- 49 Thompson, “... as open to the world as any theologian could be ...?”, 173.
- 50 Ibid.
- 51 Ibid.
- 52 Ibid.
- 53 John B. Cobb, ‘Beyond “Pluralism”’, in *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered: The Myth of a Pluralistic Theology of Religions* (ed. Gavin D’Costa; Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1990), 91.
- 54 Ibid.
- 55 Ibid.
- 56 Ibid., 92.
- 57 Ibid.
- 58 Ibid., 93.