

To give an account of each of the motifs which Hunsinger identifies here would take up too much space, so we may resort to listing them and pausing to consider just two at more length. The six are designated by Hunsinger as follows: actualism, particularism, objectivism, personalism, realism and rationalism. The last two are singled out as the 'foundational motifs' of Barth's theology. (225) By realism Hunsinger means Barth's understanding of the way in which, by the grace of God's self-revealing activity, theological language is given the capacity to transcend its creaturely limitations and to refer appropriately to the reality of God himself, albeit in a strictly analogical, rather than any supposed univocal, manner. 'Rationalism,' on the other hand, refers to Barth's insistence that theological language has a cognitive or rational element and is thereby capable of careful conceptual elaboration. Such elaboration of the *ratio* of faith is a significant part of the theologian's task. But the *ratio* referred to here is, of course, the *ratio* or inner logic of the object revealed to faith by grace, and has nothing whatever to do with rationalism in the sense of the application of *a priori* and general principles of plausibility. These two motifs in Barth's theology, therefore, 'govern truth as correspondence and truth as coherence' respectively, and together provide the basis for the critical realist theology which he develops.

Part I of the book is spent in elaborating and illustrating the six motifs at length. In Part II they are applied to the theology of the *Church Dogmatics* by way of a critical treatment of the notion of truth to be found therein. The book concludes by drawing us back to the vital distinction between form and content. The real centre of Barth's theology, Hunsinger affirms, and the reality towards which these formal factors all orient us, is the event of Jesus Christ. 'They are of no interest in and of themselves, but only as they point to him.' (229)

I found this book to be an extremely valuable guide to the complexities of Barth's theology, and would suspect that it comes closer to its stated goal of furnishing an overall map of the *Church Dogmatics* than any of its predecessors. Whether it would prove so immediately helpful to the reader approaching Barth for the first time is another matter. It is not an easy book to read, and demands patient attention and perseverance. The author is sympathetic to Barth's project, and this basic attitude makes for a faithful and positive account. Those who for one reason or another find themselves less congenially disposed towards the content of Barth's theology should, nonetheless, take the time and the trouble to benefit from the sheer erudition and the impressive familiarity with the text of the *Church Dogmatics* which lies behind this book, and which makes it one of the most helpful contributions to Barth scholarship for some considerable time. Those

with a serious interest in Barth's theology who have not yet obtained and read it should certainly do so, and its recent release in paperback (1993) will make this all the easier to accomplish.

Trevor Hart
Aberdeen, Scotland

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Calvin's Concept of the Law

I. John Hesselink

Allison Park, PA: Pickwick Publications, 1992, pp., xii + 311, £27.90, ISBN 1-55635-007-4

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage comble une lacune dans les études sur Calvin et corrige l'idée trop répandue selon laquelle Calvin aurait été un légaliste rigoureux. Les notes, la bibliographie et l'index montrent qu'il s'agit d'une étude sérieuse. Elle peut être recommandée tant pour son style que pour son contenu. Signalons parmi les points forts de l'ouvrage la relation de Calvin avec ses prédécesseurs du Moyen-Age, sa conception de la loi naturelle, sa présentation des rapports entre la loi et l'Esprit. Calvin apparaît ici comme un théologien pratique, et non comme un faiseur de distinctions logiques.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Diese Arbeit schließt eine Lücke in der Calvin-Forschung und korrigiert Fehleindrücke von Calvin als eines strengen Legalisten. Anmerkungen, Bibliographie und Index lassen die Gründlichkeit dieser Studie erkennen. Sie kann einschränungslos wegen ihres Stils und ihren Inhalts empfohlen werden. Zu den Stärken des Buchs gehören die Erörterung von Calvins Verhältnis zu seinen mittelalterlichen Vorläufern, seine Ansichten über das Naturgesetz, die Art seines Verständnisses der Beziehung zwischen Gesetz und Geist und seine Darstellung Calvins als des praktischen Theologen und weniger als des Schöpfers logischer Unterscheidungen.

The most competent doctoral theses may not succeed as books. Here is one which does! Yielding finally to scholarly pressure, Dr. Hesselink has revised and updated his dissertation of 1961 and, by so doing, he has placed Reformed and other theologians greatly in his debt. A born teacher, his exposition is so clear and balanced that a readership much wider than the specialist will benefit greatly from his book. Any

authors who persist in presenting the hard-nosed, law-bound Calvin of caricature are now entirely 'without excuse', and we shall wait with interest to see if some may even feel moved publicly to repent.

The work opens with an expression of surprise that notwithstanding the ever-expanding Calvin industry, relatively little detailed study of the reformer's concept of the law has been undertaken. Now this important lacuna is filled; justice is done to Calvin; and any who would probe to the heart of his teaching will need to reckon with this book. The chapter titles indicate the scope of the work: Prolegomena; Creation and the Law; The Covenant and the Decalog; Law and Gospel; The End and Use of the Law; Conclusion: Calvin's Dynamic Understanding of the Law.

Though especially concerned with Calvin's 'third use of the law,' the author is thorough on the other uses too. He demonstrates his argument by ample reference not only to the *Institutes*, but also to the Geneva Catechism, the commentaries, and to Calvin's liturgical and pastoral objectives. He graciously yet firmly adjusts himself to the views of others, dissenting where necessary alike from Lutherans and Reformed, both classical and contemporary. Moreover, this being no hagiography, Dr. Hesselink adverts to the blind spots of Calvin himself.

Among the strengths of this work are (1) the way in which Calvin is related to his medieval forebears; (2) the judicious discussion of natural law; (3) the presentation of Calvin as much more the practical theologian than the logic-chopper; and (4) the way in which the relation between the law and the work of the Holy Spirit is clarified.

The following random assertions, albeit shorn of the provided supportive argumentation, will exemplify Dr. Hesselink's style and indicate his position: '[I]t is not true to say that [Duns Scotus] identified God's absolute power with the purely arbitrary (21) ... Calvin's concept of God—or the law—should not be prejudged by one's evaluation of his doctrine of predestination (25) ... It must be conceded that ... in his treatment of reprobation Calvin sometimes seems to speak of a God who operates apart from Jesus Christ (32) ... [T]he killing, terrorizing work of the law is the consequence of sin and hence 'accidental' (55) ... Separated from the Holy Spirit, the law has either a negative effect—rebellion, hardness of heart, greater guilt—or none at all ... If the law is separated from Christ and does not lead to him, it is horribly perverted (96–97) ... The law functions in different ways according to time and circumstances (112) ... [I]f Christ is the substance and soul of the law ... then Christ's 'faithful interpretation' of the law is nothing other than a self-witness (163) ... [W]hat separates the law from the gospel like fire and water is the matter of justification (196) ... [D]espite Calvin's hermeneutical principles

and presuppositions he did not choose to develop his *Institutes* in an explicitly and systematically Christological manner (224) ... When theologians of a later generation developed a systematic *ordo salutis*, they moved beyond the reformers (235) ... The law has not been rendered obsolete with the advent of Christ ... Calvin does not have two norms for the Christian life but one (280).'

This admirable work is furnished with full notes, a bibliography and an index.

Alan Sell
Aberystwyth, Wales

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Ethics in an Age of Technology: The Gifford Lectures 1989–91, Volume 2

Ian G. Barbour

London: SCM Press, 1992, pp. 312 + xix pp.,
£17.50, pb.

ISBN 0 334 00408 X

RÉSUMÉ

C'est le tome 2 des conférences Gifford de Barbour (le premier a été recensé dans EJTh III, 1 1994). Il traite des problèmes soulevés en éthique par les derniers développements de la technique et des sciences appliquées. La technologie peut être libératrice, menaçante ou oppressive. Barbour y voit un instrument humain au service de valeurs humaines et écologiques dérivées de la science, la philosophie et la religion. Après avoir énuméré ces valeurs, il se penche sur les technologies de l'agriculture, des sources d'énergie et de l'informatique en analysant les valeurs et les politiques qui y ont trait. L'ouvrage est solide au point de vue descriptif, mais le cadre éthique est trop général et l'argumentation n'est pas rigoureuse. Les jugements qui y sont portés peuvent être rapides et peu nuancés. L'ouvrage est intéressant pour l'ampleur du champ d'étude mais manque de profondeur.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dies ist der zweite Band von Barbours 'Gifford Lectures' (Band 1 wurde in ETZ III:1, 1994 besprochen). Er befaßt sich mit den Herausforderungen, die moderne Entwicklungen in Technologie und angewandten Wissenschaften an die Ethik stellen. Technologie kann ein Befreier sein, eine Bedrohung oder ein Machtinstrument; für Barbour ist sie ein Instrument menschlicher Zwecke, das benutzt werden soll, um menschliche und umweltbezogene Werte zu erkennen, die aus den Naturwissenschaften, der Philosophie und der Religion abgeleitet werden können. Nach einer Aufzählung dieser Werte erwägt