

ficiently Christian. Not all Christian values are distinctively so; and very few are absolutely distinctive. On the whole, Barbour makes the case that his 'common' values are also Christian; and where distinctive (Judaean-)Christian beliefs do make a significant ethical difference, he points it out (e.g. the doctrine of the goodness of material creation underlying the value of bodily health; and compassion for the poor qualifying social justice as equality).

No, the complaint here is rather that his ethic is insufficiently coherent; or, at least, that its coherence is insufficiently revealed. So, although he (correctly) bases his ethic on a set of given values or goods, he goes on to assert that he will employ a form of moral reasoning that involves both 'a broad evaluation of consequences' and 'a defense of rights and duties that avoids absolutism' (p. 36), without explaining how the consequentialist and deontological elements are to be integrated.

The vagueness that attends the nature and structure of Barbour's ethic, together with the vastness of the territory he attempts to cover and his shyness of specific moral rules (which he mistakenly supposes to be necessarily 'static and not readily adaptable to changing circumstances or problems' [p. 43]), combine to render many of his moral judgements frustratingly bland. One of the worst examples of this is his treatment of the ethical issues raised by nuclear weapons (pp. 205–7). Of the nine paragraphs he devotes to this, eight are spent presenting, with barely a critical comment, the views of a variety of individuals and schools of thought, one of which ('the process view') he weakly endorses. The only normative judgement he derives from this is that we should exercise responsibility in averting the possibility of human self-destruction.

Ethics in an Age of Technology is a valuable piece of work—but more for its breadth than its depth.

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Gelovend Denken: Inleiding tot een christelijke filosofie (Verantwoording, No. 7)

R. van Woudenberg

Amsterdam : Buijten & Schipperheijn/
Kampen: Kok, 1992, pp. 232, f.40

RÉSUMÉ

La 'philosophie réformée' est une école de philosophie chrétienne qui s'est développée au sein du mouvement hollandais néo-calviniste inauguré par A. Kuiper. Son représentant le plus connu est Herman

Dooyeweerd. Cette école a produit un impact considérable aux Pays-Bas. Il a favorisé la réflexion chrétienne dans plusieurs disciplines et dans divers pays. Van Woudenberg nous aide à mieux comprendre et mieux situer cette école de pensée. Son style est clair et sa perspective large. Il embrasse toute la question de la philosophie en général, de la philosophie et de la foi chrétiennes, de la 'critique transcendantale de la pensée théorique' de Dooyeweerd et des thèmes philosophiques principaux qui s'y rapportent. L'exploration philosophique de la réalité créée se fonde sur une théologie biblique et sur la conviction calvinienne que la création est le théâtre de la gloire de Dieu. C'est la meilleure introduction à la 'philosophie réformée' qui ait paru à ce jour. Ce n'est, il est vrai, qu'une introduction et certains lecteurs se trouveront frustrés du fait que la recherche thématique y est limitée. Mais l'auteur nous promet un second volume. Nous espérons que le présent volume sera traduit.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Reformierte Philosophie war eine eigenständige Bewegung christlich-philosophischen Denkens, die sich aus dem holländischen Neo-Calvinismus Abraham Kuipers entwickelte. Ihr bekanntester Vertreter ist Herman Dooyeweerd. Sie hat in den Niederlanden bedeutende Wirkung ausgeübt und hat in verschiedenen Disziplinen und Ländern außerhalb der Niederlande Beiträge zur christlichen Forschung hervorgebracht. Van Woudenbergs Arbeit sollte uns helfen, diese Bewegung besser zu verstehen und zu bewerten. Sie ist in klarem Stil und mit umfassender Perspektive verfaßt. Sie betrachtet die gesamte Frage der Philosophie, der christlichen Philosophie und des Glaubens, Dooyeweerds 'transzendente Kritik des theoretischen Denkens' und die wesentlichen philosophischen Hauptthemen. Die philosophische Erforschung der geschaffenen Wirklichkeit ist in einer biblischen Theologie und kalvinischen Überzeugung von der Schöpfung als dem 'Schauplatz des Ruhmes Gottes' verwurzelt. Dies ist die beste Einführung in die reformierte Philosophie, die bisher veröffentlicht wurde. Sie ist in der Tat eine Einführung, und daher werden manche Leser von den Begrenzungen der thematischen Untersuchungen enttäuscht sein. Es ist allerdings ein zweiter Band geplant, und es ist zu hoffen, daß der vorliegende Band übersetzt wird.

This book is an introduction to 'reformational philosophy', the distinctive movement of Christian philosophical thought which emerged in the 1930s and 1940s from the Free University of Amsterdam, and whose best-known representative remains Herman Dooyeweerd. The movement has also been

referred to as 'the Amsterdam school', but its earliest self-description was '*de wijsbegeerte der wetsidee*' (the philosophy of the law-idea)—the title of the Dutch version of Dooyeweerd's major work. Some background information is necessary in order to put this book in perspective.

Reformational philosophy was one of the principal intellectual fruits of nineteenth-century Dutch neo-Calvinism which grew under the leadership of, especially, Abraham Kuyper. Theologically, the 'Kuyperian' tradition has been critically developed in this century by, for instance, G. C. Berkouwer, Herman Ridderbos and Hendrikus Berkhof. In the contemporary philosophical world, the 'Reformed epistemology' of American analytic philosophers such as Alvin Plantinga, Nicholas Wolterstorff and William Alston, also acknowledges the influence of neo-Calvinist thought, as does Cornelius Van Til; see E. R. Geehan ed., *Jerusalem and Athens: Critical Discussions on the Philosophy and Apologetics of Cornelius Van Til* (Presbyterian and Reformed, 1977), which also contains an exchange between Van Til and Dooyeweerd. These philosophers have developed markedly different theoretical positions to those associated with reformational philosophy, but the two wings now enjoy friendly, if critical, relations.

Reformational philosophy is perhaps the most creative philosophical school to have emerged in Protestantism in the twentieth century, and in its range and profundity bears comparison with neo-Thomism. It has had a significant impact in the Netherlands. The 'Association for Calvinistic Philosophy', founded in 1935, is the largest philosophical association in the country. It publishes its own journal, *Philosophia Reformata*, which includes articles in English and occasionally in German. The related 'Foundation for Reformational Philosophy' offers an impressive educational programme and also sponsors special lectureships at seven Dutch universities (availing itself of a general provision first established by Kuyper when Prime Minister from 1901–5).

The movement has generated significant contributions to Christian scholarship in almost every discipline, including psychology, economics, theology, even physics. In the English-speaking world, its best-known centre has been the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto, though it has numerous representatives across North America, and a sizeable body of supporters in South Africa and elsewhere. Yet its reception in wider evangelical circles has been and remains limited—the reformed epistemologists have fared much better—and some of the reasons for this are worth noting.

One is that the majority of the publications associated with the movement are in Dutch, though translations into English are increasingly available.

Another is that many of the early translations, of Dooyeweerd for example, (happily not the more recent), are written in a cumbersome and frequently obscure manner, and too many have been preoccupied with in-house debates—probably unavoidable for any new and distinctive school seeking to understand itself, but an obstacle to the uninitiated. Third, reformational philosophers have been critical of many central assumptions on which classical evangelical theology, including its Reformed mode, has been founded (such as its 'rationalist' apologetics, or its 'attribute theology').

Fourth, and perhaps most important, evangelical theologians have by and large confined their philosophical attention to philosophy of religion and philosophical theology, whereas reformational philosophy holds that these are but sub-disciplines which cannot be adequately practised without being grounded in a comprehensive Christian theory of reality (a systematic ontology). Employing Anselm's formula—*fides quaerens intellectum*—Van Woudenberg's preface points out that in these sub-disciplines faith is seeking a reasoned understanding of itself, of the content of Christian belief, and can thus be characterised as 'thinking believing' (*denkend geloven*), while, by contrast, the project of reformational philosophy can be characterised as faith seeking reasoned understanding of created reality in its widest sense. It can thus be characterised rather as 'believing thinking' (*gelovend denken*—the book's apt title).

Van Woudenberg's book should certainly assist in making possible a better and more informed assessment of the movement. It is marked by a refreshing clarity of style and breadth of perspective. Chapter 1 situates the movement in relation to various conceptions of philosophy and of Christian philosophy. Chapter 2 addresses the relationship between philosophy and faith, outlining first the central biblical and theological foundations on which reformational philosophy is based, the dynamic 'ground motive' of creation, fall and redemption. It then introduces the 'transcendental critique of theoretical thought', developed by Dooyeweerd (and subjected to much critical debate), which seeks to demonstrate that the activity of all theorising—including philosophy and systematic theology—necessarily proceeds on the basis of some religions ground motive or other: the biblical, the pagan, the humanist or some unstable synthesis of these.

Subsequent chapters deal with the main systematic philosophical themes constructed—principally by Dooyeweerd—upon these foundations: the theory of the universal dimensions ('modal aspects') of reality (3); the theory of individual entities ('structures of individuality') (4); the theory of time (5); and the theory of meaning (6). Perhaps understandably, most critical interest in Dooyeweerd in Christian

circles has centred on his 'transcendental critique'. (A recent reformulation and development of this is Roy Clouser's *The Myth of Religious Neutrality: An Essay on the Hidden Role of Religious Belief in Theories* (Notre Dame, 1991).)

Yet equally important are the theories described in these four chapters, which amount to a highly distinctive and, at many points, brilliantly penetrating account of the structure of the created order. Any summary of such an account is bound to distort, but a powerful underlying motivation throughout is a desire to affirm and explicate the richness, complexity and coherence of the divine creation, and, consequently, to expose all varieties of reductionism which diminish and detract from these. What we find is a sophisticated Calvinian rendition of creation as the 'theatre of God's glory', one which, while rooted in fundamental biblical convictions, is articulated in specifically philosophical categories and language, giving it the potential for critical dialogue within the philosophical community.

Van Woudenberg ably guides the reader through the various elements of these themes. Each chapter expounds the principal ideas of Dooyeweerd and other central representatives of the movement and identifies the relevant critical debates surrounding them. A wide range of literature is consulted; the notes and bibliography are a valuable resource. The author indicates the possibility of a second volume which would deal with key philosophical sub-disciplines, including epistemology, philosophical anthropology, social philosophy, cultural philosophy and ethics.

This is the best introduction to reformational philosophy yet to have appeared. Some such introductions have dealt exclusively with a single thinker, usually either Dooyeweerd or Vollenhoven, others with a selection of key themes. Others seek to survey or synthesize the thought of the movement as a whole and Van Woudenberg's falls into this third category, though it inevitably concentrates heavily on Dooyeweerd in virtue of his central position. The book is clearly an *introduction*, and readers may at times be left either tantalized or frustrated at the abrupt or open-ended conclusion of intriguing discussions. Indeed, most of the following observations derive in large part from the limitations necessarily imposed upon such introductory works. Evidently the author has written with philosophers rather than theologians primarily in mind, and some theologians might wish that points of more immediate theological interest—such as the definition of 'religion', or the link between philosophy and theology—had been explored more thoroughly. A more adequate discussion of Calvin and his influence on reformational philosophy would also have helped situate the movement more fully in the context of historical theology. The movement's later ecumeni-

cal aspirations could have emerged more clearly with a fuller comparison with Thomism, a philosophy with which it had rather more in common than it was initially prepared to acknowledge. The decision to defer a treatment of philosophical anthropology until the projected second volume has the drawback that the account of 'creation' in Chapter 2 is incomplete without a fuller discussion of the place of humanity in creation. And philosophers will perhaps be disappointed that epistemology is reserved for the second volume, especially since the 'transcendental critique' briefly introduced in chapter 2 depends heavily on controversial and indeed idiosyncratic epistemological assumptions. Finally, the chapter on the theory of meaning is misplaced. This theory arises directly out of the biblical ground motive and is arguably the most fundamental philosophical theme. Delaying its introduction until chapter 6 seems to sap the modal and entitary theories of some of their philosophical radicality.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the author has produced an extremely valuable resource for Christian philosophers and theologians. The work certainly deserves to be both translated and completed.

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**Gottes Herrschaft als Zukunft der Welt
Markus Knapp**

Bonner Dogmatische Studien 15, Würzburg;
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3. DM 80,—. Broschur.

SUMMARY

The book attempts to develop a Christian understanding of the future, using the concept of the Kingdom of God. The basic premiss is that the kingdom is already present in the world, yet is still to be fulfilled; the Church must present eschatological salvation through its life and proclamation.

The reviewer, while agreeing with the premiss, disagrees with the argument at a number of points. In part I, which is exegetical, he wants a greater stress on the person (Son of Man) and death of Christ in the announcement of salvation. In addition, he stresses the distinction in the gospels between 'Kingdom' and the world, and regrets Knapp's neglect of Protestant, evangelical—and English-language—contributions. Key NT passages, furthermore (e.g. Mk. 13), are not discussed.

In Part II, Knapp reviews the doctrine of the