

a fascinating sampling of Historical-Critical readings. One of the major consensuses of this approach was the secondary nature of the epilogue and the need to *read the book as if the Epilogue were not there*. This marks a major shift from pre-critical readings with the consequence that the text that scholars interpret is *not* Ecclesiastes but a hypothetical reconstruction of some earlier text. Bartholomew argues that the method is deeply rooted in Modernity and Christians need to be suspicious of it. He is open to a *Christian* version of source and form criticism but it is not at all clear to me what such a method would actually look like. I would very much like to see if and how this idea could be developed. One could argue that Christian beliefs *already do* infuse some evangelical attempts at source criticism. Bartholomew's chief objection seems to be source criticism's attempt to get 'behind' the text to some earlier versions of it but surely *any* source criticism will do that Christian or not! Perhaps what Bartholomew is actually wishing to say is that source criticism is a method of secondary importance and can only *follow from* an analysis of the text as a unity. With that I agree.

Chapter Four follows on from this concern to show how Canonical Criticism, New Criticism and Structuralism privilege the final form of the text. This is a welcome move despite various limitations to those methods and the study of Ecclesiastes has been advanced by their use. Chapter Five examines Narrative reading strategies with special focus on the important issues of genre and Fox's fascinating interpretation of Ecclesiastes. I found this discussion to be discerning and balanced. Chapter Six surveys the impact of post modernity on biblical studies with Clines, Brueggemann and Perdue as case studies. Bartholomew welcomes the way in which post modernity alerts us to the role which the reader's pre-understanding plays but he resists its call to shift the locus of meaning from text to reader.

Chapter Eight is, to my mind, the best part of the book. Bartholomew argues that as theism begins with a personal creator personhood must be in the foundations of our hermeneutic. Consequently he endorses a communication model for academic OT interpretation in which a text embodies a message sent from a sender to a receiver. The *text* as we have it is the focus of interpretation. There is an ethics of interpretation so we must not perform a post modern 'rape' of texts (my term not his) but aim to read them, as far as we can, in the role of the implied reader. This is not to say

that a more critical reading against the grain of the text cannot *follow*. After this follows one of the most interesting proposals for the reading of Ecclesiastes that I have ever read. It is compatible with, though underdetermined by, the hermeneutic just outlined. One of the perennial puzzles of Ecclesiastes is its constant switching between gloomy and positive passages. Bartholomew suggests that in the book of Ecclesiastes two radically incompatible routes to knowledge (the fear of God and an empiricist route that leads to futility) are deliberately juxtaposed. A gap is opened up for the reader that demands to be filled and it is the Epilogue which points the way forward and leads to a resolution of the tension.

This book is very wide ranging but does not wander off from the track marked out for it. It is well researched and points Christian scholars towards a more self-consciously Christian approach to their academic work. It is highly controversial and although many will not agree with its central claims none can fail to be provoked by its arguments.

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Just Trading: On the Ethics and Economics of International Trade **D. Finn**

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RÉSUMÉ

Finn, qui est à la fois un économiste, un théologien et un chrétien, traite de la moralité dans le commerce international. Il présente la théorie économique s'y rapportant et expose les valeurs bibliques, théologiques et éthiques qui orientent son approche. Il analyse les relations entre le commerce international et l'agriculture, l'environnement et l'emploi, et tire des conclusions nuancées dans une perspective éthique chrétienne. Il fait des propositions pour l'élaboration future de 'règles du commerce'.

Il utilise les données de façon pertinente et applique ses valeurs éthiques de manière conséquente, en évitant les slogans simplistes. Cependant, l'auteur présuppose un modèle herméneutique sans le définir réellement. Ceci appelle un travail supplémentaire dans le champ de l'éthique chrétienne, tout comme la

question des orientations personnelles fondamentales qui déterminent toute réflexion, dans un monde post-moderne de plus en plus incertain quant à la possibilité de la neutralité.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Finn, der als Wirtschaftswissenschaftler, Theologe und Christ schreibt, diskutiert die Ethik des internationalen Handels. Er präsentiert die einschlägige ökonomische Theorie und umreißt die biblischen, theologischen und ethischen Werte, die seiner Diskussion zugrunde liegen. Er analysiert die Beziehungen zwischen dem internationalen Handel und der Landwirtschaft sowie der Umwelt und dem Arbeitsmarkt, wobei er nuancierte, von einer christlichen ethischen Perspektive bestimmte, Schlußfolgerungen zieht. Darüber hinaus macht er konkrete Vorschläge zur zukünftigen Entwicklung von "Handelsbestimmungen".

Das Buch macht guten Gebrauch von Statistiken, wendet ethische Werte auf eine konsistente Weise an und vermeidet simplifizierende Slogans. Allerdings setzt der Autor ein bestimmtes hermeneutisches Modell voraus, ohne dieses genauer zu definieren. Die vorliegende Studie entwickelt ein zukünftiges Programm für christliche Ethiker, wobei in diesem Zusammenhang, d.h. in einer post-modernen Welt, die mehr und mehr an der Möglichkeit zur Neutralität zweifelt, auch die Frage der unterschwelligen Ambitionen eine Rolle spielen wird.

In this interesting book Finn, an economist, theologian and Christian, enters the debate about the merits of international trade. He probes issues of contention, weighs empirical evidence and applies biblical and theological principles in drawing his conclusions and engages with Cobb and Daly's book 'For the Common Good'.

The book begins with definitions and methodology. International trade theories including 'dynamic benefit' analysis are explained; relevant biblical and theological themes with Christian ethical values are outlined; background commitments and their impact on the debate are considered. The text moves on to consider how trade impacts agriculture, the environment and employment, and presents a Christian contribution to this contentious debate. In this Finn uses substantial empirical evidence and theological resources in drawing his conclusions. In ch 9 he considers the 'rules of trade' applying his Christian values in a comprehensive way.

The book is well constructed and reveals a nuanced grasp of a technical subject, avoiding the simplistic sloganising which typifies much of the debate. It is here, particularly, that the investigation of background commitments proves so useful. Finn lists and develops considerations of how prior commitments can affect one's conclusions about the efficacy of trade. For example, one's disposition to the 'market' will influence one's stance on the extension, or otherwise, of market principles across national borders. Finn deals with ten such issues and tellingly exposes how these assumptions can subtly affect objectivity.

The use of data is a second major strength of this book. Finn skilfully utilises a wide range of evidence to show how some popular assumptions about the effects of trade are not proven. An example will suffice. Economic growth and consequent trade will lead to an increase in environmental damage. However, evidence suggests that as an economy develops citizens expect similar improvements in their environmental standard of living. This forces governments into either taxing polluters or making them internalise previously communal pollution costs. In addition, the evidence suggests that closed economies experiencing rapid economic growth suffer pollution rates in excess of open economies experiencing similar growth. This is primarily because economies open to trade have access to new and cleaner technology. Although CFC emissions remain a significant problem in industrialised nations.

This book creates an agenda for the future. Finn outlines biblical and theological themes that inform his analysis, but his hermeneutical model, in arriving at these themes, is assumed rather than defined. There is still more work to be done in engaging biblical texts with the complexity of modern economies. Finn's analysis of the importance of 'background commitments' is very helpful. In the postmodern world this might give the Christian moralist the chance to engage on equal terms with others as supposed neutrality is increasingly questioned.

This is a stimulating consideration of a complex issue that has a positive view of trade, a commitment to an applied Christian morality and an exercise of scholarship that enables the author to avoid naive assumptions or conclusions, to make practical suggestions and to go beyond 'prophecy alone' (p. 264).

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