

Having said this, I must highly recommend this book. It is thought-provokingly orthodox given its unorthodox panentheism and this must drive Christian thinkers to at least reconsider the legitimacy of that panentheism. It is also an exceedingly helpful overview and positive contribution towards what must be the most important question in the science–religion dialogue—the question of divine action.

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Liberating Eschatology: Essays in Honor of Letty M. Russell
Margaret A. Farley and Serene Jones (eds.)

Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999, 296 pp., \$24.95, pb., ISBN 0-664-25788-7

RÉSUMÉ

Ce livre est composé de seize articles écrits par une grande variété de spécialistes, des plus renommés aux moins connus. Les thèmes clés, qu'on retrouve au fil du texte, sont l'eschatologie et les visions libératrices qu'elle peut générer dans le domaine de la justice sociale, en particulier en faveur des femmes opprimées et de ceux qui souffrent du racisme. Les sujets des articles vont de l'exégèse biblique à une approche théologique de la stérilité en passant par Martin Luther King et la théologie latino-américaine. Dans l'ensemble, ces articles sont engagés et suscitent la réflexion ; mais pour un lecteur évangélique, leur intérêt est inégal. Certains sont relativement proches de l'orthodoxie, tandis que d'autres en sont loin. Le point fort de ce livre est son insistance sur la praxis.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieses Buch besteht aus sechzehn Artikeln aus der Feder einer breiten Palette von etablierten bis zu relativ unbekannten Gelehrten. Die Schlüsselthemen, die sich durch die Beiträge ziehen, sind Eschatologie und die befreienden Visionen, die sie im Hinblick auf soziale Gerechtigkeit, speziell für Frauen und unterdrückte ethnische Gruppen, haben kann. Die Themenbreite geht von biblischer Exegese über eine Theologie der Kinderlosigkeit und

Martin Luther King bis zu lateinamerikanischer Theologie. Die Artikel sind insgesamt leidenschaftlich und provozieren zum Nachdenken, aber aus evangelikaler Perspektive von unterschiedlichem Wert. Einige sind relativ orthodox, andere sind davon weit entfernt. Das Beste ist die starke Betonung der Praxis.

Letty Russell is an impressive figure on the landscape of feminist scholarship and this wide-ranging collection of sixteen essays is loosely held together by themes which have driven her work over the last fifty years. The basic theme, to grossly oversimplify, could be summarised as the impact of Christian eschatology on issues of race and gender inequality.

In Part One J. Shannon Clarkson provides a fascinating look back on Letty Russell's work as a Bible translator, liberation theologian and school, church and university educator whilst Rosemary Radford Ruether sets Russell's theological vision of the new creation and partnership in God's household in its socio-historical context. M. Shawn Copeland provides a very clear overview of Russell's theological method and the fundamentals of her theology. There was here, as elsewhere in the book, a simplistic identification of hierarchy with oppression and the questionable assumption that the gospel brings 'equality' for anyone who thinks themselves to be oppressed.

In Part Two Phyllis Tribble imagines various biblical men and women with their diverse experiences coming to a round table to engage in a spiralling and open-ended conversation in which centre and margin dissolve. Katherine Doob Sakenfeld's essay tries to show how the visionary core of Ruth 4 can be a model of eschatological hope when stripped of the patriarchal social structures. This was a very positive way of handling a 'problem' text. Of special interest are the very diverse reactions to Ruth 4 Sakenfeld has gathered from women around the world. Elsa Tamez argues that we, like Ezekiel, must dream of Jubilee liberation in the midst of an exile that contradicts the dream. In a very different kind of essay Katie Cannon examines how Z.N. Hurston used her tellings of the trial of a black woman (Ruby McCollum) in 1952 to name evil and thus to oppose it. James Cone writes of the parallel lives of Malcom X and M.L. King and their ambiguous experiences of 'the city'. He castigates the churches for forgetting the black poor and issues a call to remember the inner cities and to bring liber-

ation to them. Mercy Amba Oduyoye's essay is a moving account of her attempt to come to terms with her childlessness in an African culture and church which has no word from the Lord for such people. She issues a challenge to develop a theology of childlessness.

In Part Three Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza maintains that historical Jesus research is neither objective nor neutral with regard to justice and gender issues. She argues for a reconstructive methodology, which *presupposes* the historical and theological participation of women and shifts the burden of proof to those who wish to deny it. There is a danger in this essay that Schüssler Fiorenza, in her zeal to resist Christian anti-Judaism, locates Christian exclusivism in the biblical writers rather than in Jesus when there are good grounds for thinking Jesus was *himself* the source of such exclusivism. She is in danger of allowing a modern political agenda to distort the data. Kwok Pui-lan writes that the identification of women with nature is not something to be simplistically rejected or celebrated, as it is complex and ambiguous varying hugely depending on race. White feminists are accused of abstracting and generalising the notions of 'women' and 'nature'. We need instead to begin with the bodies of oppressed women and seek hope within their spiritual traditions to mend creation. This essay *was* interesting but its weakness was that it totally by-passed the issue of truth. Plurality passes over into pluralism and pragmatism. Beverly Harrison is one of the old guard and she looks back at the work of her generation of feminist thea(o)logians and considers the dangers she sees infiltrating into the work of modern feminist's riding on the back of a sense of the loss of truth.

In Part Four Sharon Ringe provides an orthodox exegetical study of the Spirit in John's farewell discourse: the Spirit is the replacement for Jesus and the eschatological presence of God with his people into the future. There is a final hermeneutical reflection, which is a contrived attempt to link to the liberation theology theme, but its loose connection to the text makes it fall rather flat which is a shame after an otherwise good essay. Jürgen Moltmann claims that two eschatologies have dominated political and ethical decision making over the past 150 years: the conservative syndrome which calls for a strong state to hold back the collapse of society, and the progressive syndrome which sees improvement everywhere and urges society forward in its present direction. Christians

need to resist both models by anticipating the *eschaton* in the present. The biblical Sabbath highlights the need for social and environmental justice but Christian ethics needs principles not rules as it faces an ever-changing future. Joan Martin writes concerning black womanist eschatology and Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz writes of her attempts to do *mujerista* liberation theology. Her essay is of interest in that she starts by helpfully emphasising the importance of the prophetic eschatology of the Bible with its social critique. She maintains that theology needs to privilege the perspective of the oppressed and so she moves on to consider how *mujerista* theologians have encouraged Latinas to tell their own stories and thus to subvert the dominant stories in society. What I felt to be disappointing here is that there was no attempt at all to link the Latinas' stories to the biblical story. There was a sense that the hermeneutical priority lay with the way people see their lives without any attempt to link this to scripture. In what sense is this theology then let alone *Christian* theology? I am not suggesting that letting people tell their stories is not important—far from it. Rather, I would like to see how this task is brought into dialogue with the biblical story.

In spite of some major reservations about the theology expressed in parts of this text I would recommend it to those with interest in the issues it raises. Evangelicals certainly have much to learn from the Liberation theologians' emphasis on liberating *action*. It was this genuine commitment to people, which was perhaps the most enduring impression left on me by this book. On top of that the painting on the front cover is absolutely superb.

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Hated Without a Cause? A Survey of Anti-Semitism

Graham Keith

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RÉSUMÉ

Graham Keith nous propose une étude très accessible des relations entre chrétiens et Juifs au fil de l'histoire. Le but de ce livre est de montrer comment et pourquoi l'Eglise a