

Zizioulas, Nicolas Afanasiev, Pavel Evdokimov, Christos Yannaras. Nous suggérons prudemment que cette deuxième tendance, plus réfléchie, va prendre le dessus dans la théologie et la politique de l'Église orthodoxe.

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A Sociology of Religious Emotion

Ole Riis and Linda Woodhead

Oxford: University Press, 2010, vi + 270 pp., \$55, hb.

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SUMMARY

Ole Riis and Linda Woodhead's *A Sociology of Religious Emotion* is founded on the simple premises that while religious emotion (defined as any emotion that occurs in a 'religious context') is more visible than ever in contemporary society, it nonetheless remains an under-studied and under-theorised phenomena. Riis and Woodhead attempt to fill this gap with an explicitly mixed-methods approach that draws not only upon sociology, but also upon anthropology, social and biopsychology, linguistics, phenomenology, hermeneutics, existentialist philosophy and theology.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Ole Riis' und Linda Woodheads Buch gründet sich auf die einfache Prämisse, dass religiöse Emotion (definiert als jedwede Emotion, die in einem 'religiösen Kontext' vorkommt), während sie mehr als je zuvor in unserer gegenwärtigen Gesellschaft in Erscheinung tritt, dennoch ein zu wenig erforschtes und theoretisch behandeltes Phänomen bleibt. Riis und Woodhead sind darum bemüht, diese Lücke zu schließen mit einem Ansatz, der auf einer Mischung von Methoden beruht und sich nicht nur auf Soziologie bezieht, sondern auch auf Anthropologie, soziale und Biopsychologie, Linguistik, Phänomenologie, Hermeneutik, existentialistische Philosophie sowie Theologie.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage est né du constat que, bien que l'émotion religieuse (définie comme toute émotion qui s'exprime dans un « contexte religieux ») soit devenue plus visible que jamais dans la société contemporaine, elle demeure un sujet d'étude peu abordé et faisant l'objet de peu d'études théoriques. Riis et Woodhead tentent de combler cette lacune à l'aide d'une méthodologie mêlant explicitement des approches tirant parti non seulement de la sociologie, mais aussi de l'anthropologie, de la psychologie sociale, de la biopsychologie, de la linguistique générale, de la phénoménologie, de l'herméneutique, de la philosophie existentialiste et de la théologie.

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porary society, it nonetheless remains an under-studied and under-theorised phenomena. Riis and Woodhead attempt to fill this gap with an explicitly mixed-methods approach that draws not only upon sociology, but also upon anthropology, social and biopsychology, linguistics, phenomenology, hermeneutics, existentialist philosophy and theology. Given this breadth, the book clearly cannot be said to have one main theoretical stance and instead seeks to produce a blend of methodologies that at times feels innovative and insightful and at others feels like a thinly spread hodge podge of incongruous ideas.

While the conceptual 'meat' of *A Sociology of Religious Emotion* does at times feel somewhat overwhelmed by its own eclecticism, the actual structure of the book is clear and straightforward. The introduction attempts to account for the neglect of the study of religious emotion (hereafter 'RE') up to now and then describes the authors' stated aim – that of 'proposing a new conceptual framework that can integrate social, cultural and humanistic approaches' (5) through the notion of an 'emotional regime'. Chapter one seeks to develop a 'relational view' of emotion not as a 'thing' or an 'interior state' but as socially contingent exchanges of passion, feeling, sentiment and affect. Chapter two builds on this definition of emotion by moving to a closer consideration of what RE actually is. Chapters three and four examine emotional connectedness and disconnectedness to further develop a theory of the multifaceted nature of RE 'regimes'. Chapter five examines the relationship between RE and power in social relationships and chapter six ends the main part of the analysis by turning to an assessment of RE in 'late modern' societies. The book concludes with a return to its central problematic, that of accounting for the neglect of the social scientific study of RE. The book also contains a lengthy appendix detailing various methodological approaches to the study of RE.

As suggested already, the eclecticism of the authors' theoretical and methodological approach is both a strength and a weakness. A considerable amount of the analysis is devoted to three distinct areas of investigation, that of self, society and symbol. While this focus is most clearly seen in chapters three and four, it also plays a major role in other parts of the analysis. This tripartite approach offered considerable insight into the outworking of RE in not only the ('inner') lives of individuals (where research into emotion so often begins and ends) but also in social structures and through symbolic forms. From an anthropological perspective, the attention paid to the role of religious symbolism was particularly welcome because it enabled the authors to take seriously the efficacy of material objects as *things* without relegating their role to a mere 'vehicle'. The range of examples used (including icons, statues, incense, photos of Elvis and tarot cards as well as religious art, Bibles and religious buildings) helpfully showed the role objects have in the religious lives of those across many cultures. By developing this threefold focus on structure, agency and the symbolic, readers will be left with a well rounded sense

of who (and what) is active in the formulation of RE.

One unhelpful (and unnecessary) by-product of this threefold approach is the plethora of technical terms that the authors insisted on developing across most of the chapters. While technical language is not unhelpful per se, in this case (and only at certain points) these terms added little to the clarity to the overall argument. There are concluding sections in the book that reference all of the main key concepts: not only do we have community, agent and symbol, but we are also asked to juggle objectification/subjectification, internalisation/externalisation, consecration/insignation, ultra-externalisation/ultra-internalisation, ultra-objectification/ultra-subjectification, ultra-consecration/ultra-insignation and fetish/kitsch. While some of these seventeen technical concepts are already established within the canon of sociological terminology, others are not – it is more than possible that this heavy use of discipline specific language will alienate many readers, especially those coming from a humanities background (theologians interested in sociological perspectives on religion, for example) with their own very different lexicon.

Anthropologists might wish to see more ethnographic evidence. Both authors made repeated reference to their own participant observation among churches in England and while the evidence, when presented, was very insightful, it would have been helpful to have the fieldwork context filled in more fully. Also, with this fieldwork being the main source of *primary* data, the book did feel as if it was distinctly slanted towards the Christian perspective. While this is unlikely to be a problem to readers coming from a theological background, it is unlikely to sit well with those researching 'non-Christian' religions. The (limited) direct engagement with the theological tradition was interesting when it occurred, in particular with reference to the authors' explication of emotional regimes through some interesting engagement with the Puritan tradition. Equally, the methodological appendix was interesting insofar as it gave some welcome groundedness to an otherwise fairly theoretical text.

The main strength of this book is also its main weakness: its eclecticism. At times it felt rich and varied; at others it felt confused and confusing. Readers may well be left wondering if more original insight could have been gained had the authors spent less time developing a multi-disciplinary overview and instead devoted themselves more fully to their own *sociological* perspective. That being said, a book that claims to be nothing more than a first step toward a more general appreciation of the importance of the scientific study of RE may well have succeeded in achieving exactly what it set out to do, that is, to provide a broad overview of the theoretical and methodological possibilities held within this badly neglected but rapidly developing field.

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The Cambridge Companion to Christian Philosophical Theology

Charles Taliaferro and Chad Meister

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SUMMARY

The aim of *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Philosophical Theology* is to provide an up-to-date and accessible introduction to the entire field of Christian Philosophical Theology. As a collection of essays it seeks to offer critical and philosophical reflection on the Christian tradition. The work is divided into two parts: God and God in relation to creation. In the first part the divine nature and attributes are considered in overview. Approaches to these vary quite widely from full-blooded classical theism to a more revisionist understanding, particularly with regards to God's eternity and foreknowledge. The second part is similarly mixed, with some essays offering strong defences of major Christian doctrines and others effectively watering these down.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Das Werk *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Philosophical Theology* [Der Cambridge Begleiter zur Christlichen Philosophischen Theologie] will eine moderne und zugängliche Einführung in das gesamte Gebiet der christlichen philosophischen Theologie geben. Die Aufsatzsammlung beabsichtigt, eine kritische und philosophische Reflexion über die christliche Tradition zu bieten. Das Buch ist zweigeteilt: Gott und Gott in Beziehung zur Schöpfung. Der erste Teil betrachtet die göttliche Natur und ihre Attribute im Überblick. Die Ansätze variieren dabei erheblich von einem vollblütigen klassischen Theismus bis hin zu einem eher revisionistischen Verständnis, insbesondere was Gottes Ewigkeit und Vorherwissen angeht. Der zweite Teil ist ähnlich bunt gemischt: einige Ausätzen, die zentrale christliche Lehren stark verteidigen, und andere, welche dieselben wirkungsvoll verwässern.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage a été conçu pour servir d'introduction accessible à la théologie philosophique chrétienne en tenant compte de ses récents développements. Cette collection d'essais vise à apporter une réflexion philosophique et critique sur la tradition chrétienne. L'ouvrage comporte deux parties : la première traite de Dieu, la seconde de Dieu en relation avec la création. La première traite dans les grandes lignes de la nature divine et des attributs de Dieu. Les points de vue y varient grandement, entre un pur théisme classique et une position plus révisionniste, notamment pour ce qui concerne l'éternité et la prescience de Dieu. La seconde partie est pareillement mélangée, certains essais élaborant une solide défense des principales doctrines chrétiennes tandis que d'autres les émaillent sensiblement.