

God's revelation in terms of the doctrine of the Trinity, so that 'The importance of the Trinity in how one comes to understand God's revelation is at best very much in the background' (198). In Taylor's opinion, by 'refusing to make the doctrine of the Trinity operative here', Pannenberg undermines the credibility of his claim to write a thoroughly trinitarian theology.

Some may suspect that Taylor's second criticism insufficiently appreciates how Pannenberg's pneumatology impacts his presentation of the knowledge of God and faith. By appropriating to the Spirit both the activity of giving life to all creatures and the actualisation of reconciliation, Pannenberg's account is a sustained attempt to understand the Spirit's activity as something not alien but inherent to the human person. For Pannenberg, the Spirit's work of leading to the knowledge of Jesus' sonship (ST 2, 395) by unfolding and revealing the significance of his history to us (ST 2, 454; ST 3, 5-6) 'takes place in full and continuous connection with his work in the world of nature as the origin of all life, and especially in humans as the source of the spontaneity of their 'spiritual' activities' (ST 3, 17). Thus, coming to understand God's revelation is very much a work of the Spirit, an activity that comes not from *outside* us but from *within*.

Even when readers demur from his proposals, Taylor's grasp on the breadth of Pannenberg's dogmatics and the clarity of his presentation make this volume highly valuable to those hoping to explore Pannenberg's trinitarian theology.

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The Future of Christology

Roger Haight, S.J.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Das Buch von Roger Haight *The Future of Christology* [Die Zukunft der Christologie] folgt der Linie seines umstrittenen Bestsellers *Jesus Symbol of God* [*Jesus Symbol Gottes*], der von der Glaubenskongregation des Vatikan als mit „schwerwiegenden doktrinen Fehlern“ behaftet zensiert wurde. Das Nachfolgewerk *The Future of Christology* deckt ähnliche Bereiche ab, obgleich in einem leichter zugänglichen Format. Mit dem Ziel, eine Christologie zu gestalten, welche die Realität des religiösen Pluralismus und der Postmoderne berücksichtigt, greift Haight Themen auf wie die Forschung über den historischen Jesus, christologische Methodologie, Theorien zur Erlösung, Theologien des Kreuzes, religiöser Pluralismus sowie die Aufgabe der Kirche. Leser, die hoffen, in diesem Buch ein solides Bekenntnis zu Aussagen zu finden wie die absolute Einzigartigkeit der Inkarnation, die Bestätigung göttlicher Initiative beim Leiden Christi zur Erlösung, die Anerkennung der Errettung durch Glauben an Christus allein, oder die tradi-

tionelle Anschauung der Auferstehung, werden durchweg enttäuscht sein.

SUMMARY

Roger Haight's *The Future of Christology* follows his controversial and best-selling book *Jesus Symbol of God* which was denounced by the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith as containing 'grave doctrinal errors'. *The Future of Christology* covers similar ground as the previous book though in a more accessible format. Toward fashioning a Christology that attends to the realities of religious pluralism and postmodernity, Haight addresses historical Jesus research, Christological method, conceptions of salvation, theologies of the cross, religious pluralism and church mission. Readers hoping to find in *The Future of Christology* a robust confession of the incarnation's sheer uniqueness, affirmation of divine initiative in the suffering of Christ for salvation, an acknowledgement of salvation by faith in Christ alone, or a traditional view of the resurrection will be consistently disappointed.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage fait suite au livre du même auteur intitulé *Jésus, symbole de Dieu*, livre à la fois controversé et devenu un best-seller, que la congrégation du Vatican pour la doctrine de la foi a dénoncé comme contenant « de graves erreurs doctrinales ». Le présent ouvrage traite du même sujet, mais sous une forme plus accessible. Cherchant à élaborer une christologie tenant compte des réalités du pluralisme religieux et de la postmodernité, l'auteur traite de la recherche du Jésus historique, des méthodes mises en œuvre en christologie, des conceptions du salut, des théologies de la croix, du pluralisme religieux et de la mission de l'Église. Les lecteurs ne doivent pas compter y trouver une confession nette du caractère unique de l'incarnation, ni une affirmation de l'initiative divine à l'origine de la souffrance rédemptrice de Christ, ni une adhésion à la doctrine du salut par la seule foi en Christ, ni la conception traditionnelle de la résurrection.

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Roger Haight's *The Future of Christology* follows his controversial and best-selling book *Jesus Symbol of God* which was denounced by the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith as containing 'grave doctrinal errors'. *The Future of Christology* covers much of the same ground as the previous book though in a more accessible format. While *Jesus Symbol of God* was written as a textbook, this collection of occasional essays has a wider audience in mind and attempts to respond to particular questions raised by *Jesus Symbol of God*.

In an attempt to fashion a Christology that attends to the realities of religious pluralism and postmodernity, Haight addresses historical Jesus research, Christological method, conceptions of salvation, theologies of the cross, religious pluralism and church mission. In the final chapter, he helpfully interacts with and responds to negative reviews of *Jesus Symbol of God*. The dialogue and debate into which he enters here remains accessible for

those not having read his previous work.

Haight's driving concern for a Christology both orthodox and compelling in a postmodern and religiously plural world runs closest to the surface in his refashioning of the doctrines of the incarnation and the atonement. Related to the doctrine of the incarnation, Haight contends that because religious pluralism puts 'severe pressure on the tradition's absolutistic understanding of Jesus Christ' (51) such tradition must be modified. For Haight, Christianity's ultimate credibility before the world hinges on the degree to which it articulates a non-competitive view of salvation, one that includes rather than excludes other religions. Thus, on his account, 'one cannot consider Jesus the exclusive historical mediator of salvation. Rather, God causes salvation through a variety of historical mediations' (91). By affirming other religious mediations Christian theology does not lower its estimate of Jesus but expands 'its relevance'; it recognises that other religions and other religious symbols mediate the 'same transcendent source of salvation' (164, *emphasis added*) and that these mediations are 'potentially on the level of Jesus' (193).

One hears nothing here of the sheer uniqueness of the incarnation, the free, unrepeatable and utterly gratuitous self-giving of God in Christ. Rather, the incarnation is one instance of many potential 'divine mediations'. Haight certainly does not find grounds for this move either in the creedal tradition or in the Scriptural witness, but looks instead to the pressing situation of religious pluralism which 'mediates another broader horizon of consciousness', a horizon in which God's revelation cannot be contained by only one religious mediation such as Jesus (193).

Haight's account of the atonement is problematic if one hopes to retain a strong emphasis on divine initiative in Christ's suffering. Haight maintains that because suffering and death cannot in themselves 'be trans-

formed into a good' Jesus' suffering cannot be necessary for salvation. In fact, it would have been 'better for Jesus and for us if he were not tortured or crucified' at all but had died a natural death (87). Thus, Haight contends that the formula of salvation 'by or through the cross is gravely misleading' for it misses the reality that Jesus' death was not salvific but *revelatory* of God's salvation (92). God saves 'in spite of and in the face of the cross', not because of or through the cross. Haight dismisses theologies of the cross that maintain a robust emphasis on divine initiative or God's capacity to use suffering redemptively as 'revelational positivism and a facile assertion of various formulas', nothing more than 'searching, symbolic language' of people trying to make sense of a crucified Messiah (94). Examples such as 1 John 1:7, 1 Peter 1:18, Revelation 1:15 and Mark 10:45 which testify both to divine initiative and the redemptive purposes of Christ's suffering are discounted as simply 'questionable.'

Those who share Haight's conviction that orthodox Christology needs significant revisions in order to engage in non-competitive dialogue with other religions will need to evaluate if what is *gained* on Haight's formulation outweighs what is lost. On the other hand, readers hoping to find here a robust confession of the sheer uniqueness of the incarnation, affirmation of divine initiative in the suffering of Christ for salvation, an acknowledgement of salvation by faith in Christ alone or a traditional view of the resurrection – they will be consistently disappointed. For Haight, obligations such as these put Christian theology at odds *against* and unable to dialogue *with* a world increasingly characterised by religious pluralism and postmodern sensibilities and should thus be modified or discarded.

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