

of the Theological Seminary and the Free University. While Kuyper undoubtedly had his faults, Gleason's account seems one-sided at times.

Gleason concentrates on Bavinck the ecclesiastical politician and gives few glimpses of his interior life. Little is said about him as a husband and father, or his personal walk with God. Readers of *Reformed Dogmatics* might have liked to know how the theologian went about writing his *magnum opus*. More discussion of Bavinck's special contribution to Reformed theology and an account of his key theological ideas would not have gone amiss. A good biography will give readers the feeling that they have come as near as possible to getting to know the subject personally. A compelling psychological portrait will bring the subject to life as the pages turn. Gleason gets close, but he doesn't quite get under Bavinck's skin.

In places the work suffers from an inelegant style and poor editing. Gleason's attempts at humour are sometimes ill-judged, such as the 'joke' about the discovery of gin bottles belonging to Bavinck's alcoholic predecessor as pastor at Franeker. The occasional Americanism may grate, such as 'slam dunk' (92) and 'However, this was a *huge* however...' (246). Gleason intimates that he will say something about the death of Herman's brother, Johan Gerrit, in chapter 7 (152) but an account of Johan's passing is held off until chapter 8 (203). The exact words used by Gleason to describe Bavinck's mindset on page 172 are repeated in the context of Kuyper's advice to Bavinck on the following page. The writer sometimes lapses into cliché: 'Both sides had thrown down the gauntlet; a line had been drawn in the sand' (253). Such blemishes detract from the reader's enjoyment of the book.

Gleason's effort is currently the only one on offer when it comes to a full-length Bavinck biography in English. His carefully researched work provides a wealth of detailed biographical information. That said, one could perhaps have wished for a slightly more insightful and better written account of the life of the great Dutch Reformed dogmatist.

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Creator Spirit: The Holy Spirit and the Art of Becoming Human

Steven R. Guthrie

Grand Rapids: Baker Academic Press, 2011,
v + 222 pp., £14.99, pb, ISBN 978-0-8010-2921-9

SUMMARY

Creator Spirit offers a popular discussion of the relationship of art and spirituality to Christian theology. Drawing from Athanasius's pneumatology, the author uses a cross-disciplinary approach to rethink the relationship between the Holy Spirit and artistic practice. The volume employs

a biblical theology of the Spirit to confirm, question and contest various views of how art and the artistic process are inherently spiritual. The result is a constructive work that explores the Spirit's power to restore humanity, inspire creativity and transform the world. The volume is commended for its relevant, clear and compelling account of the Spirit's activity in art and culture.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage traite de la relation de l'art et de la spiritualité avec la théologie. Partant de la pneumatologie d'Athanasius, l'auteur adopte une approche pluridisciplinaire pour repenser la relation entre le Saint-Esprit et la pratique artistique. Il se fonde sur une théologie biblique de l'Esprit pour évaluer divers points de vue sur la manière dont l'art et l'œuvre artistique peuvent être considérés comme spirituels. Il en résulte un travail intéressant qui considère la puissance de l'Esprit pour restaurer l'humanité, susciter la créativité et transformer le monde. On peut recommander cet ouvrage pour son traitement clair, pertinent et convaincant de l'activité de l'Esprit dans les domaines de l'art et de la culture.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Das Buch bietet der christlichen Theologie einen populärwissenschaftlichen Diskussionsbeitrag zur Beziehung von Kunst und Spiritualität mit der Theologie. Der Autor bezieht sich auf die Pneumatologie von Athanasius und benutzt einen interdisziplinären Ansatz, um neu über die Beziehung zwischen Heiligem Geist und künstlerischer Praxis nachzudenken. Das Werk wendet eine biblische Theologie des Heiligen Geistes an, um unterschiedliche Ansichten darüber, dass Kunst und der künstlerische Prozess genuin geistlicher Natur sind, zu bestätigen, in Frage zu stellen und zu bestreiten. Das Ergebnis ist eine konstruktive Arbeit, welche die Macht des Heiligen Geistes erforscht, wenn es darum geht, Menschen wiederherzustellen, Kreativität zu inspirieren und die Welt zu verändern. Das Buch verdient Lob wegen seiner relevanten, klaren und überzeugenden Berichterstattung über das Wirken des Heiligen Geistes in Kunst und Kultur.

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The perennial association of aesthetics with spirituality is given a pneumatological treatment in this masterfully clear cross-disciplinary exploration of the relationship between art and Christian theology. Taking Athanasius as his chief source, Steven Guthrie demonstrates the close relationship between Christian pneumatology and many of the questions surrounding the current discussion on the relationship between art and theology. The result is one of the most relevant, readable and compelling treatments of theology and art in recent literature.

Guthrie introduces the subject in the first chapter by examining the relationship between the idea of art as ineffable and the mysterious work of the Spirit. Surveying Schleiermacher's *Gefühl*, Calvin Seerveld's art as allusivity and Robert Wunthrow's description of artists as those who 'say the unsayable', Guthrie explores the

mysterious work of the Spirit as the untameable wind of God. By offering an initial overview of the Spirit's nature and work, the first chapter provides the framework for the entire book.

Guthrie's first section (chapters 2-4) focuses on the Spirit's creative power to restore humanity. In chapter 2, Guthrie uses John Coltrane's *Love Supreme* and Tolstoy's literature to explore the intersection of art as the expression of our deepest humanity and the Spirit as the re-creator of our humanity. The third chapter contrasts Kandinsky's and Schoenberg's views of art as taking us beyond our senses with the biblical vision of the Spirit's investment in the materiality of this world. Guthrie uses the last chapter in this section to explore the power of art (and especially music) to enact the shared life of a community in worship.

The second major section of the book (chapters 5-7) explores the relationship between artistic creation and the Spirit's work. Chapter 5 introduces the idea found in Plato's *Ion* dialogue that the artist is a channel or muse of a higher power. The role of the human subject and the Spirit in artistic production is continued in chapter 6. In contrast to a Platonic possession from above and a postmodern deconstruction of the agent from below, the Spirit gives gifts that enable authentic artistic creation. Chapter 7 continues distinguishing between the postmodern loss of the self and the Spirit's work of liberating and empowering humanity. Just as the Spirit inspired biblical prophets, he can also empower artists in a similar vocation of re-imagining. This section culminates with Guthrie's theological framework for artistic inspiration: 'As the artist attends carefully to the gifts of the natural world and the social world, and as he actively responds, returning his own gifts to others, he becomes a participant in the grace-filled cosmos' (150).

With the third and final section (chapters 8-10), Guthrie turns his attention to the relationship of the artist to the Spirit's work in the world. Chapter 8 introduces the role of the artist as discernor of the Spirit's involvement in this world. By living in the biblical narrative, the Spirit restores the artist's human vocation of renaming the world, thereby avoiding the twin extremes of pure mimesis on the one hand and unbridled expressionism on the other. Chapters 9 and 10 survey the Spirit's eschatological work of perfecting and beautifying. Here Guthrie offers a carefully qualified defence of beauty, challenging contemporary critics that suspect beauty of smuggling in deceptions of appearance, universality and transcendence. He ends his volume by recapitulating Aquinas' view of beauty as the proper aim of the Spirit.

There are many commendable features to this volume. First, it serves as an outstanding introduction to theology and art, acquainting readers with a host of fundamental problems, critical theorists and relevant theologies. Guthrie demonstrates not only an awareness of central issues in art theory, but also an ability to present these issues in a way that even those with

no previous interest would find appealing. And while not offering a comprehensive pneumatology, the work serves as a helpful primer on the Spirit's relationship to the Trinity, creation, the body, the *imago Dei*, *incurvatus in se*, the Incarnation, Christ's kenosis, ecclesiology and eschatology. Possibly the most appealing aspect of the volume, however, is its demonstration of Christian theology's relevance to our contemporary world. Guthrie's theology gains traction in discussions on everything from Kitsch and post-structuralism to the creative process of film director Ang Lee. In the end, this inter-disciplinary approach proves to be a powerful apologetic that demonstrates how the Christian faith offers a more compelling synthesis of art and the world, with far more winsome explanatory power than the sound bites and half-cooked ideas circulating about art in the broader culture. Among the expanding number of academic books on art and theology, Guthrie's volume stands out as a uniquely relevant, theologically insightful and biblically sound account of the Spirit's activity in art and culture.

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Aktiv dabei: Ältere Menschen in der Kirche Gerrit Heetderks (Hg.)

Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011; €16,95;
144 Seiten, PB, ISBN 978-3-525-63024-2

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Gerrit Heetderks geht der Frage nach, wie ältere Menschen aktiv in das Gemeindeleben einbezogen werden können. Er ermutigt den Leser, auch im Bereich der Seniorenarbeit auf Gottes Fürsorge zu vertrauen und stellt die Chancen und Herausforderungen vor, die die Arbeit mit älteren Menschen mit sich bringt. Das Buch gibt exemplarisch Einblick in verschiedene Projekte, die bereits von Kirchengemeinden im Bereich der Seniorenarbeit durchgeführt wurden. Es macht sehr gut auf die Bedürfnisse älterer Menschen aufmerksam und motiviert zum eigenen Aktivwerden, auch wenn oftmals leider offen bleibt, inwiefern die vorgestellten Projekte nicht nur der Beschäftigung dienen, sondern Menschen mit dem Evangelium in Kontakt bringen.

RÉSUMÉ

Gerrit Heetderks s'interroge sur la manière dont l'Église peut aider les personnes âgées à prendre part à la vie de l'Église. À partir du récit relatant comment Jésus a nourri cinq mille hommes (Lc 9.11-17), il encourage les Églises à compter sur l'action divine dans tout ce qu'elles entreprennent pour atteindre les seniors. Il attire l'attention sur les opportunités et les objectifs stimulants qu'offre l'élaboration d'un programme à l'intention des seniors et présente différents projets qui ont été mis en œuvre par des Églises. Il décrit très bien la situation des seniors, et notamment des