

some fascinating areas of recent research. The underlying debt to Scotus for much of this theological trajectory is also well mined. So this is a rich, multi-layered, stimulating (if sometimes dense) discussion, which certainly repays careful attention.

Nonetheless, there are issues to pursue. The claim that this is a major reorientation of theology depends, in part, on distinguishing transformation theology from liberation theology (which clearly shares many of its overall concerns). Davies duly makes some distinctions – but the debt is still considerable, it seems to me. More important, the decision to pivot so much on the doctrine of the exalted Christ-in-the world is presented somewhat arbitrarily. I was persuaded by the end of the book that it is genuinely fruitful. But so are other starting points. So is fruitfulness enough justification? Perhaps its congruence with the new science is the real driver – but then that would imply a kind of priority to the current scientific agenda which I do not sense more generally in the book's theological method.

Finally, is there a lacuna which opens up in the very passion of Davies' commitment to an engaged theology? To make the positive case for Christ in this world as the integrated acting *humanum*, Davies is bound to reject dualisms of almost every kind. But that in turn leads him also to be very wary of all talk of transcendence. This is surely unnecessary: radical transcendence (as distinct from merely contrastive transcendence) should include the transcendence of dualism itself. It is also worrying: without a robust concept of transcendence, it is hard to resist the reductionism which Davies himself wants to refute.

None of this detracts from the proper challenge of this reorientation, nor the overall integrity of the endeavour. It deserves our engagement with it, as surely as it demands our engagement with the world.

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Ferdinand Christian Baur, *History of Christian Dogma*, ed. Peter C. Hodgson, trans. Peter C. Hodgson and Robert F. Brown (Oxford: OUP, 2014), pp. 416. £75.00.

In Vincent of Lérins' famous formula, dogma is that which has been believed 'everywhere, always, by all'. As such, it could obviously not have a history. Is the history of dogma then inevitably inimical to the object of its study? Both conservatives and liberals have claimed that, albeit with

different implications. Ferdinand Christian Baur, however, would beg to differ from both of them. According to him, dogma is necessarily historical; in fact, it is its own history. We cannot understand Christian ideas unless we contextualise them within their historical flow and development, as emerging from controversies and from the internal tensions inherent in major theological systems. History of dogma cannot therefore be the mere enumeration of the opinions of fathers and heretics, but the insight gathered from individual sources must be organised in such a way that they shed light on the story as a whole. Baur's *Lehrbuch der christlichen Dogmengeschichte*, first published in 1847 and here translated into English for the first time, is the classical expression of this fundamental assumption. 170 years after its first publication it therefore still merits not just historical but theological interest, even though the underlying scholarship is inevitably outdated. The work must impress in the first instance as the compressed synthesis of an incredibly extensive as well as innovative scholarly oeuvre spanning practically all periods of Christian history beginning with the New Testament. Apart from the breath-taking command of the widest possible range of theological works, the English reader is most likely to be struck by Baur's unashamed adoption of the philosophical tools of German idealism, and especially the philosophy of G. W. F. Hegel, in the service of historical theology. Yet Baur's historical understanding of dogma required a philosophical foundation, and he believed that Hegel's thought offered the most attractive one available, even though he did not accept it without considerable qualifications.

Peter Hodgson and Robert Brown have rendered scholarship a huge service by translating Baur's often convoluted and difficult German faithfully but elegantly. The resulting text is therefore as accurate as it is accessible. Hodgson has prefaced the translated text with a masterful introduction providing much-needed context and background for Baur's understanding of theology, history and philosophy. In particular, it is unlikely that any reader will easily find a more competent sketch of Baur's complex relationship with Hegel's philosophy than the one provided here.

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Gordon Graham, *Wittgenstein and Natural Religion* (Oxford: OUP, 2014), pp. 240. £35.00.

Hume's *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion* (1779) focus on beliefs about God, Gordon Graham begins by reminding us. *The Natural History of Religion* (1757)