Education

TRACING THE LINES: Spiritual Exercise and the Gesture of Christian Scholarship by Robert Sweetman. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2016. 177 pages. Paperback; $24.00. ISBN: 9781498296816.

I was recently in conversation with a faculty member at a conservative Christian school, and the topic drifted briefly to medieval Christianity. Somewhat out of the blue, my conversation partner interjected a question apparently designed to check whether I agreed that Aquinas was wrong about the relationship between faith and reason, although we had been discussing neither that theologian nor that topic. It seemed symptomatic of the tendency in some Christian circles to turn metadiscussions about the nature of knowledge into theological or ideological touchstones designed to help keep the boundaries clear and well patrolled and the barbarians at bay.

Robert Sweetman's new book on the nature of Christian scholarship takes a contrasting tack. Sweetman argues that various models of faith and learning—what he refers to as complementarist, integrationist, and holistic accounts—should all be seen as seeking to account for the "intrinsic Christian unity or integrality of scholarship across the disciplines" (p. 7). Each model emerges from a specific time with specific historical constraints and resources. Sweetman suggests that it may be helpful to view them less as candidates in a quest for the one true grail, and more as folk recipes, variant ways of cooking broadly the same dish but with different cooks and kitchens, some ingredients varying with the season and the local landscape. Christian scholarship becomes less like building border walls and more like making salsa.

Stated so briefly and starkly, this might sound to some like a lazy invitation to live and let live, or a dangerous dereliction of duty where truth is at stake. Such an impression would seriously underestimate the book, however, as at least three features of the argument suggest.

First, it is clear throughout that accepting historically located variation does not mean giving up on critique or on the concrete contribution of Christian commitment to careful scholarly delineation. Sweetman helpfully probes some key strengths and weaknesses of each model, including the holistic model that he himself confesses as his intellectual kitchen. Each approach, he suggests, is worthy of serious engagement as an attempt at fidelity, and each answers the needs of a particular time and place. Yet each also carries risks and shortcomings that resist the notion that it is a final solution. There is still good and bad salsa, even if more than one variety might be deemed a success.

Second, an important thread running through the argument is Sweetman's allegation that current accounts of the relationship of faith to learning tend to share, regardless of their preferred model, underlying Aristotelian assumptions regarding the nature of difference. Scholarship is assumed to be a genus of human activity with *Christian* scholarship one of its specific kinds, which must then be identified in terms of its specific and stable differences over against other kinds. This assumption creates the twin embarrassments of struggling both to constrain and affirm the degree of meaning shared with others in claims made about the world, and to identify actual differences in how Christian scholarship works. Sweetman suggests that a more helpful approach would focus on the ways the practice of scholarship is "attuned" to a Christian "heart" and contributes to tending that heart (pp. 155–56). What is offered is a kind of philosophical spirituality of scholarship in place of a mere difference calculus. This approach explicitly pushes back against the impulse to make the world of scholarship safe for faith by creating definitive ramparts to inscribe securely the boundaries of difference. There must still be conceptual determination, the ability to articulate carefully the traces connecting the Christian heart and scholarly judgment, but this determination will not be for the purposes of final demarcation. There is an inherent uncertainty as to exactly where the process will lead that is congruent with humility, openness to learning from others and from creation, and wisdom seeking.

Third, while the book advocates for a more irenic scholarship of the Christian heart, it does so, not through an anecdotal easing of the task of scholarly exactitude, but through careful and precise philosophical and historical argument. Indeed, this is true to a degree that might make this book less appealing to some faculty as an introduction to thinking about faith and scholarship, as compared to some of the volumes commonly used in faculty development. I suspect the book will be more accessible to liberal arts faculty than to those in scientific, technical, and professional disciplines, given the nature of its tools and narrative. The reader will need patience while working carefully through episodes in the history of Christian philosophy (unsurprisingly, since that is the disciplinary expertise that Sweetman brings to the conversation). The book leads the reader through thoughtful analyses of Justin Martyr, Augustine, Bonaventure, Gilson, John Paul II, Plantinga, Marsden, Dooyeweerd, and Runner. These are then located in the secularization of the medieval academy, the rise of ideology in the nineteenth century, and in twentieth-century efforts to critique secular society, allowing us to see some of the needs feeding theoretical choices.

This book is not a light or casual read. It is, however, a very helpful read. It is not long, and its careful and persuasive argument is both important and encouraging, especially to anyone for whom the idea of "creative

fidelity" holds any appeal. I hope that it is widely and thoughtfully engaged, and I recommend it warmly to any reader wishing to think carefully about the relationship between faith and learning.

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History of Science

SCIENCE AND RELIGION: A Historical Introduction, 2nd ed. by Gary B. Ferngren, ed. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017. 484 pages. Paperback; $32.95. ISBN: 9781421421728.

What can one truthfully say about the second edition of a book? To say that the number of chapters remain the same (30) would be a triviality. Or to say that the price has increased by $13 would be an obvious no-brainer. But, to say that the quality of the second edition has improved rather dramatically is worth exploring. Gary Ferngren, Professor of History at Oregon State University and a professor of the history of medicine at First Moscow State Medical University, has been compiling history of science and religion, medicine and religion readers for a number of years. The first edition of *Science and Religion: A Historical Introduction* (2002) was given a short review in *PSCF* 56, no. 1 (2004): 62–63. A snippet of Fraser Fleming's laudatory review is on the flyleaf of this newer edition.

Of the many introductory books on the topic of science and religion, Ferngren's *Science and Religion* set a standard. The first edition was a shortened version (selected entries) of the much longer *The History of Science and Religion in the Western Tradition: An Encyclopedia* (New York: Garland, 2000). Contributions by leading scholars, such as John H. Brooke, Ronald Numbers, David Lindberg, James Moore, Nicholaas A. Rupke, David Livingstone, among others, gave the book an authoritative voice and thus it served as an extremely attractive choice for instructors teaching undergraduate courses on science and religion. This new edition will certainly play a similar role.

This second edition is more expansive and more in tune with contemporary discussions. The book has a short introduction by Ferngren, stating that the purpose of the volume is "to provide a comprehensive survey of the historical relationship of the Western religious traditions with science from Aristotle to the early twenty-first century" (p. xii). Ferngren also widens the field of discussion to include various other non-Christian traditions, which have gained influence in the West, by adding chapters on Judaism, Asian traditions, and even atheism. This edition also has a revised and updated chapter on premodern Islam. In short, there are a number of chapters retained from the first edition that have been updated in content and given a new bibliography. There are eleven new chapters to whet one's appetite, a number of them in the social sciences. Consequently, some chapters in the first edition were excised or retired. For example, chapters by Colin Russell on the conflict of science and religion and David Wilson on the historiography of science and religion have been dropped. Margaret Osler's chapter on mechanical philosophy and Ronald Numbers's on scientific creationism have also been excised. Interestingly, the chapter by William Dembski on intelligent design has also disappeared.

The book has six parts: Part I (one chapter): Science and Religion: Conflict or Complexity; Part II (four chapters): The Premodern Period; Part III (five chapters): The Scientific Revolution; Part IV (five chapters): Transformations in Geology, Biology, and Cosmology, 1650–1900; Part V (seven chapters): The Response of Religious Traditions; and Part VI (eight chapters): The Theological Implications of Modern Science. Part VI contains many of the new chapters, written by some new and younger contributors: "Causation" by Mariusz Tabaczek and John Henry, "The Modern Synthesis in Evolution" by Joshua M. Moritz, "Anthropology" by Timothy Larsen, "American Psychology" by Matthew S. Hedstrom, and "Neuroscience and the Human Person" by Alan C. Weissenbacher. Earlier parts of the book have chapters authored by newer voices as well, for example, "Isaac Newton" by Stephen D. Snobelen. Part III includes a revised chapter, "Early Modern Protestantism," written by Edward B. Davis.

It would take too much space to review each chapter. A brief word about the first chapter will suffice. The introductory essay in Part I by Shephen P. Weldon provides a good synthesis of the current state of discussion of science/religion issues, common among historians of science. In particular, he argues that discussions or debates surrounding the conflict, harmony, and separateness of science and religion rely too heavily on essentialist definitions of science and religion. Weldon maintains that we need a more nuanced appreciation of the complexity of this relationship. Any historical account that retains a form of essentialism, in which the quality and character of science and religion do not change over time and context, needs to be abandoned.

For Weldon this history is by and large "a modern western story" (p. 5). I found it disconcerting to read that Weldon considers it "problematic to call Buddhism or Confucianism a religion" (p. 5). Is religion only a western phenomenon? Could this position come from our penchant to equate religion with certain practices, rituals, institutions, social networks, or even with theological propositions and statements? That religion as practiced takes on nuances due to social and intellectual factors is historically viable. But religion, in my opinion, bores much deeper. Religion is our total response to a call outside ourselves. Being open to God's revela-