

Apostolicity: The Ecumenical Question in World Christian Perspective. By John G. Flett. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016. Pp. 390. \$40.

Catholics know perfectly well what apostolicity is. It means that their church goes back to the time of the apostles and St. Peter, the first pope. The conception is completely unhistorical, but this does not stop Catholics from believing it.

Protestants also believe that apostolicity is one of the marks of the church, which, according to tradition is one, holy, catholic and apostolic. But since their churches date back to the time of the Reformation at the earliest, they need to formulate a different conception of apostolicity. And when Protestants engage in ecumenical dialogue about it, they try to reach some sort of consensus about its meaning.

Reading through this lengthy adaptation of a probably lengthier dissertation, one would hope to discover some convergence around a single concept of apostolicity, or at least a small number of concepts, some favored by mainline churches, others favored by evangelicals, and so on. The hope, however, would be in vain.

In the book's first chapter, apostolicity is defined as "faithfulness to origins expressed in the continuity of mission" (16), but this apparent simplicity immediately devolves into a multiplicity of ambiguities. What is meant by continuity? Does it imply an organizational sameness across the centuries? And what is meant by mission? Is it to preach the Gospel or to spread the faith? Is the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sins, or is it something else? Is faith a set of doctrines, or is it something else?

Most of the book rings the changes on interpretations of apostolicity and its possible components. We encounter contributions from Rowan Williams, Stephen Neill, Jean Daniélou, George Lindbeck, Robert Jenson, Michael Ramsey, Robert Wuthnow, Bolaji Idowu, J. C. Hoekendijk, A. A. van Ruler, Andrew Walls, Peter Phan, Lamin Sanneh, John Zizioulas, and a smattering of church and interchurch documents, to mention only the most quoted. Indeed, it is a compendious review of the literature.

One of the author's underlying concerns is the importance and function of apostolicity in world Christianity, especially in forms of the faith outside the European tradition that grounds the mainline churches. To address this concern, he looks at the relationship between apostolicity and history (Ch. 2), apostolicity and culture (Ch. 3), and apostolicity and colonization (Ch. 4). The issue is always one of separating the essence of the faith from its formulation in early creeds and church practices, for example, governance by bishops and presbyters. After much discussion in these and subsequent chapters, he concludes in chapter 8 that "the treatments of apostolicity within ecumenical discourse appear ill equipped to deal with the polycentrism and pluriformity of world Christianity" (329). In plain words, the entire research exercise that led to the writing of this book has gotten nowhere.

The question that Flett does not address is whether patristic doctrines of the Trinity and medieval interpretations of redemption are central to Christianity, or whether they are cultural expressions of lived faith that made more sense in the past than they do in the present. Indeed, what he means by faith is a set of beliefs rather than trust in God, and he appears to assume that orthodoxy is more important than orthopraxis. Very early in church history, Tertullian noted that the most distinctive feature of Christians

is that they loved one another. What if apostolicity manifested itself not in certain theological ideas and organizational structures but in mutually caring relationships?

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Keeping Faith with Human Rights. Linda Hogan. Moral Traditions. Washington: Georgetown University, 2015. Pp. vii + 240. Price: \$29.95.

In this volume, theological ethicist Linda Hogan insists that many who criticize a human rights approach to moral issues misunderstand how human rights discourse exists as a dialogue among members of situated traditions that are themselves marked by contestation and difference. This book embodies a pluralistic, arts-inspired method. H. calls for a method that draws upon sources from law, anthropology, sociology, political science, and even poetry with as much grace and facility as it does Christian ethics. Masterful and never tedious in its use of multidisciplinary material, the book briskly and convincingly shows that a renewed human rights discourse is not only possible, but necessary in our globalized and conflicted world.

H. begins with two chapters briskly summarizing critiques of human rights language from politics, political science, and theology. She resolves political concerns that allege that human rights discourse has originated in Western dominance and theological worries, and therefore has become corruptingly secular. More legitimate concerns for H. are communitarian, feminist, and postcolonial critiques of a human rights view of the person as independent monad and of culturally disembodied universal values.

H. argues that a renewed human rights discourse need not be rooted in an abstract, idealized anthropology. She engages feminist complications of the body's meaning and demands for respect for the other. Sociologist Maria Mies showed that classical understandings of subjectivity presume an economic autonomy denied to many throughout the world. For H., these new insights on human nature do not derail the project of human rights, but refocus it on "the situated rather than the abstract individual" (93).

H. moves on to difficulties with discourse practice, finding a stalemate between universalist and relativist views. She urges for a universality grounded in multiple justifications. Human rights discourse itself is "a form of situated knowledge" (108) which despite its early universalist claims was "adopted and appropriated by other situated communities who then developed it in ways unanticipated by the originators" (111). To be truly global, human rights discourse should engage in deep learning of religious traditions and should reach across methods and disciplines. Concerns about the potential outcome of interreligious dialogue are premature until this deep, mutual learning takes place.

H.'s robust hope for dialogue relies on her understanding that borders around cultures and traditions are more permeable than we imagine. Cultures are internally diverse; communities are not rigidly exclusionary but characterized by hybrid belonging of members; and tradition changes even as it shapes and marks adherents. Postcolonial theorists remind us that culture is discursive and hybrid. "Multiple