

God, Evil, and the Limits of Theology. By Karen Kilby. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2020. 160 pages. \$39.95 (paper).

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In this collection of essays, Karen Kilby takes up the questions indicated in its title, with the latter serving as the connecting thread of the volume. She frames the work as a series of distinct essays helping to think about mystery, emphasizing the difficulties for theology to answer the question it poses for itself. Kilby even argues that the essay genre helps to underscore the impossibility of this task.

The essays in the first part of the volume consider the question of God, with the doctrine of the Trinity as the central concern. Kilby takes up the issue in response to theologians, starting particularly with Jürgen Moltmann, who have advocated for a “social” model of the Trinity. She is particularly concerned to raise questions about *how* the Trinity can be relevant to political theology in a way as to avoid either being a political program or, on the other hand, totally invisible or simply “baked in” to it.

The middle portion of the volume consists of essays dealing with the question of evil and suffering. Kilby engages theodicy in dialogue with contemporary theologians who have questioned the efficacy and morality of this line of thinking. Here, discussing a wide range of thinkers with radically different viewpoints, she demonstrates her skill as a reader who makes distinctions and assesses fairly. At the same time, her conclusions are resolute and sharply drawn.

The question of the limits of theology serves as the connecting thread between the various essays. Whether it be the connection between the Trinity and action for justice or the explanation of why God would allow evil, Kilby wants to make sure that theology understands its proper place and ability to speak to these issues without overstepping the bounds of appropriateness and plausibility. The last section, in particular, picks up on this theme in dialogue with thinkers she has treated at length before, such as Karl Rahner and Hans Urs von Balthasar. She places them into conversation with thinkers ranging from Kathryn Tanner to Franz Rosenzweig and a variety of twentieth-century Jewish thinkers. Kilby’s impressive range shines through, in particular, late in the volume as she shifts from a discussion of Julian of Norwich and Balthasar in one essay to thinking deeply about mathematics and theology in the next. This essay especially shows Kilby’s ability to engage with interlocutors and topics beyond those that many theologians would consider.

As with any volume of this type, transitions between essays can be abrupt as they were not written to flow into one another. This is to Kilby’s point at the

beginning that theological knowledge is necessarily a fragment of an ever-elusive whole. It is thus a testament to the general coherence and variety of Kilby's thought that this does not represent a challenge to readability and flow.

This volume will be valuable for academics and graduate students concerned with the issues Kilby raises throughout. Many will come looking for a specific essay, but reading the work as a whole is worthwhile for engaging with one of contemporary theology's sharpest minds and fairest readers. Making Kilby's essays easily accessible in this volume is a boon to researchers in the fields she engages, particularly the Trinity and the problem of evil.

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The Cambridge History of Atheism, 2 vols. Edited by Stephen Bullivant and Michael Ruse. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021. xix + 1165 pages. \$270.00.

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One of the major strengths of this two-volume compilation is the international appeal of the scholarship, which goes well beyond the traditional narrative that traces the development of Western atheism in the modern world. In addition, the chapters that have been assembled herein will appeal to advanced students and seasoned scholars who are interested in discovering how atheism emerges as a viable intellectual worldview in different cultural contexts around the globe. One major takeaway from *The Cambridge History of Atheism* is that soft and hard expressions of atheism must be considered a universal phenomenon that emerge and flourish within and alongside Western and Eastern religious cultures. In other words, atheism does not always originate as an overreaction to ecclesiastical abuses and lopsided Christian theologies in the modern West.

There are plenty of other chapters that specifically elaborate upon the ways in which atheism is sensed within the realm of ordinary human experience. The following topics are covered with respect to atheism, experience, and popular culture: practical ethics, classical works of literature, different musical genres and songs, race and gender studies, sexual practices, liberation movements, and various facets of popular culture, including the internet, social media, and the visual arts. Although many diverse themes related to practical experience are comprehensively described and assessed in these first-rate essays, Stephen Bullivant and Michael Ruse also highlight many