

bodily silence of stripping naked as a form of protest. In these way silence can be a very positive and powerful form of protest rather than mere absence or negativity.

The argumentation is tight and complex throughout, with many meanings of civic society, humour and silence being considered. Obadare is well aware that Africa is larger than Nigeria. So the book provides a triangular framework: Nigeria, Africa, the West. Statements in the book are supported by extensive references to recent literature and these publications are collected together in the bibliography 'Works Cited,' which lists some four hundred books and articles. The majority are by western authors but Nigerians and other Africans form a decent minority. This imbalance is largely explained by the longstanding concept of civil society in the West — especially through John Locke, Adam Ferguson, Alexis de Tocqueville and Antonio Gramsci (p. 40) — contrasting with its recent arrival in Africa and resistance there to accepting it in a western form. As Peter Ekeh has warned, there is the danger of 'misapplying Western political constructs to African circumstances, especially when their analyses concern such history-soaked concepts as civil society' (p. 45).

The book is mainly about men, but feminine humour and forms of silence are given some space. More sympathy might have been shown towards the difficulties of high political life in Africa — the presidents and other top politicians mentioned appear in largely negative light — as well as more attention to the political weaknesses of the West. Altogether the work is attractively presented, carefully argued — so careful at times that the argumentation may appear over-analytic, almost convoluted — and very informative. Readers will come to appreciate the splendid qualities and resilience of Nigerians, and of Africans more generally, as well as their difficulties.

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Francesca Aran Murphy, ed. and Troy A. Stefano, Assistant ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Christology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. Pages: xvii + 670. ISBN: 978-0-19-964190-1

Francesca Murphy, in the opening paragraph of her Introduction, makes the bold claim, "This is indeed a classic, comprehensive textbook on Christology whose value will be evident for many decades to come." Is this claiming too much? The rest of the Introduction (pp. 1-5) is the best place to start your evaluation. Here

the quality and originality of the Handbook's thirty-nine chapters, and how they fit together, is outlined well.

The book is divided into seven Parts with the following titles: The Bible; Patristic Christology; Mediaeval Christology; Reformation and Christology; Modern and Postmodern Christology; Imagining the Son of God in Modernity; and, The Grammar of Christology: Christological Norms. The arrangement, therefore, is mainly historical but more systematic or topical in the later Parts. The writers form a distinguished team of contributors. Their religious affiliations are not mentioned directly in the List of Contributors (pp. xi-xvii) but a balance of the Christian churches — mainly Catholic and Reformed — is indicated by titles, teaching posts and other evidence regarding many of them, while other faiths and outlooks have some representation.

Paul Mankowski sets the scene in Part I with his chapter "Language, Truth and *Logos*." The voice of God in the Old Testament is replaced by the person of Jesus Christ in the New Testament. What are the implications of this change? We are not given Jesus's own words but rather translations of them into the language of the New Testament, Greek. Translations of this Greek text into modern languages doubles the distance. Moreover we are not given descriptions or pictures of Jesus's physique. Mankowski expands on these cautions and other issues adroitly and with wide knowledge of languages and cultures. The other five chapters of Part I focus on various Biblical themes, linking well with Mankowski's chapter and with each other: "Christology from the Old Testament to the New" by Olivier-Thomas Venard; "Jewish Suffering and Christology in Pauline and Recent Papal Thought" by Gregory Glazov; "The Gospels as Testimony to Jesus Christ: A Contemporary View of their Historical Value," by Richard Bauckham, "The Work of Christ in the New Testament" by Michael Gorman; and "The Gospels on the Presence of Jesus" by Markus Bockmuehl.

Part 2 has four chapters on Patristic Christology. Brian Daley's contribution "Antioch and Alexandria: Christology as Reflection on God's Presence in History" summarises brilliantly and sympathetically the human and divine features of Christ as propounded by the two schools with their differing emphases: principally Athanasius and Cyril at Alexandria, Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius for the Antiochene school. The crucial importance of the controversy for Christian living as well as for

doctrine is brought out well. The council of Chalcedon in 451 produced the resolution of the controversy that is accepted by most Christian churches today. Andrew Louth focuses on this council and subsequent developments in the East until John Damascene. Khaled Anatolios writes on the earlier period, Christology in the fourth century; Norman Russell on "The Work of Christ in Patristic Theology."

Six chapters are given to the Middle Ages in Part III. Gabriel Said Reynolds goes beyond the Christian framework with "The Islamic Christ." Aidan Nichols focuses on artistic and other visible images of Christ in the age of the second council of Nicea (787), the council summoned by Empress Irene which proved decisive for the Church's approval of them. Two chapters treat individual theologians: David Hogg's on Anselm; Joseph Wawrykow's on Thomas Aquinas. More general presentations are given by Alison Milbank "Seeing Double: The Crucified Christ in Western Medieval Art" and Rik van Nieuwenhove "Late Medieval Atonement Theologies."

"Reformation and Christology," the title of Part IV, covers many reformations, including Catholic reform / Counter-Reformation, down to the first half of the twentieth century. Chapters by Brian Lugioyo and Randall Zachman focus on Martin Luther and John Calvin; those by Mark Elliott and Kevin Hector follow with "Christology in the Seventeenth Century" and "Christology after Kant." Philip Ziegler finishes this Part with "The Historical Jesus and Christology from David Friedrich Strauss to Käsemann," which covers prominent theologians of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Chronologically Part V "Modern and Postmodern Christology" partly overlaps with Part IV but broadens out geographically and subject-wise. Two chapters by Troy Stefano assess "Christology from Lessing to Schleiermacher" and, in the second chapter, three later theologians: Wolfhart Pannenberg, Sergius Bulgakov and Hans Urs Von Balthasar. Raymond Gawronski focuses on "Christology and Spirituality," Bruce McCormack on "Kenoticism in Modern Christology" and Michele Schumacher on "Feminist Christologies." Two chapters look beyond the western world: "Chinese Christologies" by K.K. Yeo; "Jesus Christ, Living Water in Africa Today" by Diane Stinton.

Modernity is the time-span of Part VI but the arrangement is mainly thematic. Calvin Stapert's "Images of Christ in Post-

Enlightenment Oratorios," is followed by essays on Christ in cinema, literature and art written, respectively, by Robert Barron, Rowan Williams and Lawrence Cunningham. The final Part VII "The Grammar of Christology" has seven chapters: Robert Wozniak "Christology as Methodological Prism"; Simon Gathercole on Christ in the canonical and apocryphal gospels; Thomas Weinandy "The Doctrinal Significance of the Councils of Nicaea, Ephesus and Chalcedon"; Kenneth Oakes "Normative Protestant Christology"; Gilbert Narcisse "What Makes a Christology Catholic"; Gavin Costa "Christology and World Religions"; and John Webster "The Place of Christology in Systematic Theology."

The overall tone is positive and constructive, indeed enthusiastic, as shown in Francesca Murphy's concluding "Afterword: The Breadth of Christology: The Beautiful Work of Christ" (pp. 628-648). The essays form an outstanding collection in terms of depth of thought and wide learning. They are best read one at a time, choosing the chapters that most take your fancy. Covering a wide range of topics, they should appeal to a broad spectrum of readers, including students who need to write an essay.

The large majority of writers are from north America or Britain, regarding origin or where they now live. Is the overall flavour too Anglo-Saxon? Yes and no. Origins and environment are bound to influence, but collectively the writers show remarkable breadth of outlook and some non-Western regions are covered (India, China and Africa as well as the chapter on Islam). Regarding gender, women are represented by the editor and four other contributors and, as mentioned, Part V contains the chapter on feminist Christologies.

The book is not an apologia seeking to prove the truth of Christianity, yet the evident commitment to Christianity of many of the writers as well as the force and depth of their arguments make the book very persuasive. But persuasive of which Christ? Quite a wide range of views exist among Christians and their Churches — including writers in this book — regarding the nature and divinity of Christ.

Allowing for this diversity, the book should appeal to those who want to deepen their Christian faith as well as those who seek information.

Each chapter ends with a Bibliography. Indexes of both Subjects and Persons conclude this excellent Handbook.

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