

Junker-Kenny, Maureen, *Self, Christ and God in Schleiermacher's Dogmatics. A Theology Reconceived for Modernity* (Berlin and Boston, de Gruyter, 2020), 278 + xviii pp.

Schleiermacher's theology is a test case for the encounter of the Enlightenment with Romanticism and of Kant's Critiques with analyses of subjectivity. Celebrated and contested in his role as "Father of cultural Protestantism", co-founder of the University of Berlin in 1810, his work has inaugurated modernity in the history of Christian thinking. 2021 is the 200th anniversary of the publication of the first edition of *The Christian Faith*, a thorough reconception of dogmatic theology after Kant's critique of the proofs for the existence of God. The study compares the two editions of 1821/22 and 1830/31 in their method, order and content and relates long-standing and recent debates in German-speaking and Anglophone scholarship to each other.

Since its first appearance in 1821/22, *The Christian Faith* has had a fractious history of reception. It implements decisive departures for theology, founding the possibility to speak about God on human freedom. It recognises the role of historical consciousness, and the need to relate to advances in the natural sciences. The study investigates the early critiques of Schleiermacher's analysis of the feeling of utter dependence, of his conception of Christ as the archetype of the God-consciousness, and of his doctrine of God in terms of absolute causality. It reconstructs the revisions carried out in the second edition of 1830/31 as a breakthrough to a transcendental argumentation. Does Schleiermacher's elaboration of the anthropological turn in theology leave it defenseless against the dissolution of faith in a saving God in Feuerbach's projection thesis? Does it offer a naturalising account of religion? And where does the interconnectedness of nature established by God leave what was prized by the Romantics, human individuality? Ongoing objections and new constellations of questions are examined in their relevance for a modern theology that spells out faith in God as a practical self-understanding.

"Maureen Junker-Kenny's book is an outstanding presentation of Schleiermacher's theology. She attends not only to the development of his method from the first to the second edition of *The Christian Faith*, but also to his concrete interpretation of Creation, Christology, Redemption, Theological Anthropology, especially human freedom, and his understanding of God. The book has an exceptional value in the way she relates Schleiermacher not only to his contemporaries, but also contemporary concerns. Schleiermacher's theology is shown in its relation to the modernity of his age, but also the ongoing modernity of today. The book has a depth and breath that make it indispensable not only for historical theology, but also contemporary constructive theology."

– **Francis Schüssler Fiorenza, Harvard Divinity School**

"In *Self, Christ and God in Schleiermacher's Dogmatics. A Theology Reconceived for Modernity*, Maureen Junker-Kenny proves herself to be not only a distinguished interpreter of Schleiermacher's work, but a creative practitioner in her own right of his dialogical method. Elegantly conceived and beautifully written, the book shows how Schleiermacher connected the different aspects of his thought—form/content, structure/doctrine, piety/critical rigor—into a coherent system. *Self, Christ and God in Schleiermacher's Dogmatics* is now the only guide to Schleiermacher's magnum opus, *Christian Faith*, anyone needs."

– **Christine Helmer, Northwestern University, Chicago**