With all of the above considered I still highly recommend this volume to all of those who are interested in what has become an unfortunate impasse amongst theologians. The intended audience, I would suggest, for this volume will be the scholar, theologian, and specialist; it might serve some remedial force for the non-specialist, but this book is mostly for the academic, and maybe for an advanced graduate course on the topic.

KEVIN J. BIDWELL, *THE CHURCH AS THE IMAGE OF THE TRINITY: A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF MIROSLAV VOLF'S ECCLESIAL MODEL*. EUGENE, OR.: WIPF & STOCK, 2011. (270 PP.) [ISBN: 978-1-61077-373-1]

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Bidwell's aim in this volume is to summarise, analyse, and evaluate the influential work *After Our Likeness* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) in which Volf provides a theological defence of Free Church ecclesiology through analogy with a social understanding of the Trinity. Bidwell is highly critical of Volf's proposal, and for the most part justifies his negative evaluation. Beyond a direct critique of the explicit text of Volf's volume, he helpfully examines the sources that Volf relies on in constructing his proposal (predominantly Moltmann although others are considered), and also analyses the work of Volf's dialogue partners to see whether or not Volf's understanding and critique of them is accurate and justified (focusing on Ratzinger and Zizioulas' alternative ecclesial proposals, and John Smyth's ecclesiology as the *voice* of the free church tradition).

In terms of sources, Bidwell correctly recognises that Volf unquestioningly adopts Moltmann's non-hierarchical social Trinitarian model. He argues further that this understanding departs significantly from both Western and Eastern understandings of the Trinity, and moreover is out of step with the Biblical text, the historic creeds and the Church Fathers. His analysis of Volf's use of biblical and patristic sources is particularly damning. From a biblical perspective, Bidwell claims that Volf (and Free Church ecclesiologies in general) place more weight on Matt 18:20 than is exegetically warranted, and argues that there are more viable alternatives than interpreting 1 Cor 11–14 in particular and the early Corinthian church in general as evidencing a "congregational model" (pp. 218–28). Even more compellingly, Bidwell notes several places where Volf has utilised patristic sources to argue for positions that are clearly contrary to their authorial intent. In one telling example, Volf quotes Ignatius' *Epistle to the Smyrneans,* "wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic church," to support his contention that the presence of Jesus Christ alone constitutes the church (p. 179). The sentence before and after his chosen quote, however, have Ignatius arguing that the role of the bishop is also constitutionally mandatory (pp.179–80). Overall Bidwell remains concerned that Volf adopts a "pick and choose" approach to Scripture and tradition where he emphasises those portions with which he strongly agrees (e.g. Gal 3:28) and (sometimes explicitly) dismisses and neglects those which don't immediately support his egalitarian understanding (p. 54).

In terms of dialogue partners, Bidwell argues that Volf's analysis and understanding is often mistaken. Bidwell suggests that Ratzinger's ecclesiology is primarily christologically determined, as opposed to Volf's argument that it mainly depends on a Trinitarian framework that emphasises the one divine substance over the three *hypostaseis*. Bidwell recognises that there are significant points of overlap between Zizioulas and Volf, particularly in that Zizioulas explicitly acknowledges the church as an image of the Trinity, but he also claims that Volf has failed to understand and address the universal aspects of Zizioulas' ecclesiology, and consequently Volf mistakenly focuses his framework almost exclusively onto the local church. For Smyth, Bidwell claims that Volf's failure to acknowledge the evolving context in which this church reformer was writing, and the consequent evolution in Smyth's thinking, reduces the value of Volf's references of his work to mere proof texting. Bidwell's overall argument in these chapters is that Volf is excessively motivated by his supposition of an egalitarian and non-hierarchical Trinity and ecclesiology. This *a priori* assumption influences Volf's analysis of his dialogue partners and results in him misunderstanding much of their theological proposals.

In the book's final chapters, Bidwell directly addresses Volf's attempt to form a direct link between a non-hierarchical Trinity and a Free Church ecclesiology. Given this section is readily recognised as the most valuable and influential part of Volf's monograph, it is somewhat disappointing that Bidwell only spends a small fraction of his work (roughly a quarter) critiquing Volf's proposal directly. Certainly Bidwell adequately and perceptively addresses in these chapters the broad perspectives that Volf proposes, but one wonders whether a more detailed critique would have been even more valuable. Nevertheless, Bidwell certainly raises some pertinent points. For example, he notes that a detailed explanation of the Trinity's features is conspicuously absent from Volf's work. You would expect such a rigorous treatment of the link between the Trinity and the Church to begin with not just a defence of Volf's (or Moltmann's) understanding of the Trinity, but a detailed explanation of its multifaceted characteristics. Both are absent. Further, Bidwell notes that the primary use that Volf makes of the analogy between the Church and the Trinity is structural, whereas surely missiological, liturgical, and church piety implications are just as significant. Bidwell's overarching critique in this section, though, is that while there remains a place for drawing an analogical link between the Trinity and ecclesiology, Volf in focusing exclusively on the Trinitarian analogy has neglected the importance of Christology. Bidwell writes "Volf provides a timely and valuable caution in that he loses sight of Christology in his pursuit of a church to reflect the Trinity" (p. 240).

Overall, Bidwell's work is a fine and necessary piece of analysis and it effectively critiques an important and influential theological work. Particularly his recognition of the strong (and not always positive) influence of Moltmann on Volf, the untested and assumed nature of his (i.e. Volf's and Moltmann's) Trinity, and the less than optimal use of primary sources are valid points. Volf certainly gives Bidwell ample opportunities for such detailed critique. In his overarching critical conclusions, however, Bidwell overreaches. For example, Bidwell's claim that Volf "effectively condemns every local church that has any vestige of hierarchical leadership" and that Volf's "thesis desires universal obedience to his revisionist view of Trinity and church" (p. 231) goes too far. If Volf's ecclesiological proposal is interpreted more accurately as merely carving out a theological space where the Free Church can be justified in its own

existence, then such criticisms could become less ardent in both content and tone. Similarly, if it is recognised that Volf's work makes no claim to be all-inclusive and complete, but is merely an exploration of the links between the Trinity and the church, then Bidwell's overarching critique of its neglect of Christology becomes less significant. For a complete view of the church must surely look beyond the analogical links between the Trinity and the church, *and* beyond the links between Christ and the Church. There are also analogical links between the eschatological kingdom and the Church, between missiology and the Church, between creation and the Church, and between anthropology and the Church. Indeed, for an ecclesiology to even approach completeness there must be adequate links formed to every theological *loci*. Volf certainly makes no claim to exclusivity or completeness, so the overarching critiques of Bidwell that is predicated on this assumption are quite overstated.

KEITH L. JOHNSON, *KARL BARTH AND THE ANALOGIA ENTIS*. LONDON: T&T CLARK, 2010. [ISBN 978-0-567-44134-8]

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Early in Barth's career he was negatively reviewed by Adolf Jülicher who accused him of a "subjectivist" reading of Paul's *Epistle to the Romans*. Since then Barth's work has been dogged by criticisms that have raised charges of "irrationalism", "fideism", and so on. A key moment in that critical story has been Barth's famous 1934 *Nein* to Emil Brunner's appeal to a form of "natural theology". Particularly in England (and to a lesser degree the United States), where a response to a more empiricistic version of the Enlightenment traditions dominated the modern intellectual imagination, this was perceived to be a clear indication of Barth's theological obscurantism. In this way, then, Barth's theologising has frequently been regarded as unhelpful to the engagement in fruitful conversation with an increasing post-Christian world, and as a betrayal of the *ratio fidei* (or the rationality of faith).

More recently, however, scholars have begun to appreciate more fully Barth's intellectual context—that his work was conceived in many ways as a response not simply to the legacy of nineteenth century theological liberalism, but more particularly to the impact of German Idealism. This has helped shape an appreciation of his critical response to certain types of rationalistic theology that have been uncritically generated by modern intellectual currents. In this context Keith Johnson's readable and insightful historically attentive theological study, the fruit of his Princeton doctorate, is most welcome. In several ways it may even be one of only a handful of near model doctoral theses on Barth in published form, coming as it does with an admirably clear, focused and manageable thesis; a careful depiction of texts and their contexts; a good scholarly theological style not threatened into self-justifying polemic; and attention to the development of thought in the story's two main figures.