Scott's belief that "all people everywhere are made in God's image, even those who disagree with me, and they are worthy of great dignity, care and love" permeates the pages of *'Dear Abdullah'* and the approach he encourages Christians to embrace when engaging with Muslims. While Christians will not glean from *'Dear Abdullah'* a comprehensive understanding of Islam, *'Dear Abdullah'* is a good starting tool for Christians who wish to speak about the Christian faith in a meaningful way with Muslims and do not have much background in the study of Islam.

JENSEN, DAVID H. EDITOR. *THE LORD AND GIVER OF LIFE: PERSPECTIVES ON CONSTRUCTIVE PNEUMATOLOGY*. LOUISVILLE: WESTMINSTER JOHN KNOX, 2008. (206 PP) [ISBN: 978-0664231675]

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The book delivers what it promises in the Introduction. The essays represent a constructive attempt to explore the doctrine of the Spirit "as it informs and is shaped by issues that face life in the churches [and] the life of the world" (p. xiii). For a book with less than 200 pages, it is understandable that the topics selected for the reflections are limited to a few: the ecological crisis, the burgeoning influence of economics, the difficulties associated with the modern forms of empire and colonialism, the difficulties in interpreting Scripture, and the challenge of appropriating world religions. In a sense, the project can be considered as the first instalment of a colossal project and an example of what theological formulation would look like when pneumatology is integrated in the different areas of daily human life. The vision that it seeks to share, i.e. the importance of pneumatological approach to "a theology of everyday life" (in the words of Ignatius of Loyola), is convincing and worth pursuing, although the book is not the first to suggest the general idea. There is no mention, allusion or even acknowledgement of the agenda which Radical Orthodoxy propagates, but there is an interesting similarity in the desire of the authors to abolish the notion of the absolutely secular or of the *natura pura*. Sallie McFague's article that speaks of the Holy Spirit, quoting Gerard Hopkins, as "the dearest freshness deep down things," provides one of the clearest evidences of the books' agenda.

In the book, there are three articles that rebuke theology and ask it to end the welcome it has extended to the Platonic-Gnostic dualism between the spiritual and the physical which has prevented the church from appreciating the "spiritual-ness" of the bodily. Jensen opens up the discussion (and the whole book) by presenting a historical survey of how theologians throughout history have understood and affirmed the neglected and ill-forgotten fact that the Spirit works in animating and enlivening physical bodies. The Spirit, Jensen rightly reminds his readers, is the "Lord and Giver of life." Another article, situated far from Jensen's, both complements and transcends his proposal. For Eugene F. Rogers Jr., the Spirit does not only enliven bodies, but rests on entities paraphysically, "alongside, in excess of, and in addition to the physical" (87). It is the Spirit's particular agency to exist alongside creaturely existents, ordering and sustaining their contingent lives. Interestingly, however, Rogers adds that the Spirit also works *para* the Son and *para* the

Father, thus adding the important Trinitarian aspect to the Spirit's work. Sallie McFague furthers the arguments of both Jensen and Rogers, yet perhaps overdoes it in her essay "The Dearest Freshness Deep Down Things." Perhaps Jensen and Rogers may even be unwilling to accompany McFague in her radical proposal for understanding the God-world relation. If for Jensen the Spirit animates bodies and for Rogers the Spirit rests alongside bodies, for McFague, the world itself is the body of the Spirit. As such, although Jensen and Rogers view the Spirit as a distinct entity from the bodies the Spirit works with, for McFague such a distinction is completely abolished. Her statement "God is in all things and all things are in God" (p. 117) suggests a panentheistic cosmology. That she can claim that "God is not a being, but reality… God is the stuff out of which everything comes to which it will return… There is not 'God and the world' but 'God in the form of the world'" (p. 118) strongly supports panentheism. Nevertheless, with such a theologically shaky foundation, she proceeds to proclaim her environmental concerns and hope for the future of the planet. Her article gives one a picture of healthy flowering plants nourished by dung.

Amy Plantinga Pauw's essay "The Holy Spirit and Scripture" addresses the problem of multiple, and often contradictory, interpretations of Scripture. She insinuates that diverse and incongruous interpretations may be the result of guidance from spirits other than the Holy Spirit. Thus, she enumerates three basic qualities of the Holy Spirit—bond of love, giver of all life, and exorcist—which are also the criteria for testing the spirits. Molly T. Marshall's "Breathing, Bearing, Beseeching and Building" supplements Pauw's arguments by stressing that "practices of discernment are critical" although she adds that "the role of the Holy Spirit in them seems indeterminate, at best" (p. 41). Although both Pauw and Marshall agree on the centrality of the Holy Spirit in interpreting the Scripture, they are quite different in their emphases concerning the agency of the Spirit in relation to a community of Christian believers, the church. Marshall argues for the centrality of communal reading and interpretation and the importance of building generative consensus. Pauw, on the other hand, challenges the traditional interpretation of the church. Although she believes that "the Spirit has institutional affiliations," the Spirit also "transcends church structures and even the boundaries of human society" (p. 31). In fact, she seems to argue that it is the church that is in need of the Spirit's work when she concludes that "it is only inherited readings of Scripture that need exorcism" (p. 38).

Two essays devoted to a pneumatological understanding of world religions go side by side: Roger Haight's "Holy Spirit and the Religions" and Amos Yong's "Guests, Hosts, and the Holy Ghost." It is indubitable that Haight's inclusivism is Rahnerian through and through, although Bernard Lonergan's thesis that the Father sent the Holy Spirit in the world first before the Son also provides the second grounding presupposition of his position. The Holy Spirit is indeed at work in the world democratically. The Spirit's agency is not confined within geographical, ecclesiastical or denominational boundaries. But to conclude from these premises that world religions are evidences of the Spirit's work is a huge interpretative leap. One should ask: Is it not possible that world religions are not positive responses to the Spirit's work but are actually formed precisely in rejection and opposition to the Spirit? If one's answer to this question is in the affirmative, then the discussion would proceed differently. Yong's essay offers a more neutral position that

Haight's, although Haight's optimism is evident in Yong's articulation too. Yong is more concerned to cut through Gavin D'Costa's threefold responses to religions – exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism – and claims that "a pneumatological theology of hospitality" is the way to achieve this. There is, however, a thorn in Yong's wonderfully prepared bed of roses. Readers will discern that his proposal to be hospitable to other religions, although he claims that "a pneumatological theology of hospitality can help us embrace exclusivist, inclusivist and pluralist practices" (p. 80), actually already involves an implied rejection of exclusivism.

Three essays in the book—Barbara A. Holmes' "The Spirit Holy, Hip and Free," Joerg Rieger's "Resistance Spirit: The Holy Spirit and Empire," and John B. Cobb Jr.'s "The Holy Spirit and the Present Age"—each addressing a specific context and concern, share a common argument: the Holy Spirit operates freely and is resistant to control and structure. Rieger argues that the Spirit is active in the world history resisting powers "which seeks to control all aspects of life and all of reality" (p. 130). Indeed, as Paul writes, "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Cor 3:17). But like the other essays in the book, Rieger radically stretches the implications of his proposals. Based on the assumption that "empire is manifest in unilateral and totalitarian structures," he vaguely concludes that "fostering pluralism and diversity seem to be the Spirit's way of resisting empire" (p. 137). Part of the problem is that Rieger neither specifies nor elaborates the pluralism and diversity he has in mind. Cobb is also concerned about humanity's freedom from empires, but his vision of the Spirit's freeing agency is more specific. For him, it is non-conformity of the mind to today's *aeon*—economism—which is the most pressing work of the Spirit in the world. For him the market is the new expression of an enslaving empire that the Spirit resists. He rebukes the church for its legalistic preoccupation to sexual issues, and argues that the church should be more concerned with addressing how the market is changing everyone's lifestyle on earth.

There is a disturbing note, nevertheless, in the symphony that Holmes, Rieger, and Cobb are playing, although such a note can also be heard, however muffled, in the other essays as well. The authors seem to insinuate that religion in general and the church in particular, are an embodiment of an empire. Rieger illustrates that in Europe, "empire was often tied up with religious repression" (p. 141) so that the modern re-discovery of the dignity of individuals and human rights are the works of the Spirit. Cobb is more blatant than Rieger, claiming that today, like an empire filled with legal laws and expected customs, "religion both within and without the churches… is legalistic" (p. 152). Because we are living in a post-empire world, people, according to Cobb, "reject religion, and with it especially all forms of Christianity, in order to escape legalism" (p. 153). Thus, Cobb adds, "there are those who stand outside all religious institutions who embody the Spirit more fully than many who are within" (p. 153). This last quotation is a sentiment that Holmes shares in her essay. In fact, Holmes captures the bias shared by the authors of the book: "an underlying anti-establishment feel" (p. 110) that provide the foundation for the emphasis on the Spirit as both control-resistant and liberating.

Overall, in evaluating the book, one can borrow Colin Gunton's distinction between *doctrine* and *theology*. The former refers to the officially agreed teaching of the church, while the latter is a more open-ended activity. For instance, some of what Origen taught was considered heretical and some was accepted

as orthodox doctrines, but all that he wrote was theological. This means that theologians can theologize, raise questions and propose alternatives, but not all of these can be accepted as doctrines. In light of Gunton's distinction, we can say that *The Lord and Giver of Life: Perspectives on Constructive Pneumatology* is a work in theology, but a lot of what it says will find difficulty in becoming considered as doctrines.

MARTIN SUTHERLAND, *CONFLICT AND CONNECTION. BAPTIST IDENTITY IN NEW ZEALAND*. AUCKLAND: ARCHER PRESS, 2011. (XXIV + 260 PP.) [ISBN: 978-0473192167]

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Martin Sutherland, currently Vice-Principal at Laidlaw College in Auckland, is one of New Zealand's leading Baptist historians and this latest publication adds significantly to his deserved reputation. Not a conventional denominational history in the sense of a chronological and thematic narrative, it most helpfully marks out significant aspects of that history. This collection of essays is "an interpretation of Baptist life in New Zealand, exploring the tension between Baptists' talent for conflict and their desire for connection" (p. xix). His integrating theme is the quest for identity, a recurring question not only for settler nations like New Zealand and Australia but also for global Baptists. Although many of these chapters have been published previously as articles in a variety of places it is helpful to have them collected here and woven into a coherent theme. Thus this book complements and in some cases redefines earlier historical publications by New Zealand Baptists.

Indeed, Sutherland's book was only possible after these detailed local and denominational stories had been told as well as the valuable publication of documents and archival organisation had been completed. There is a scholarly maturity and reflective character to these chapters where the theme Sutherland identifies is abundantly illustrated.

Sutherland argues that Baptists are "the shape-shifters of Christian history", although it is not quite clear to this reader just what he means by this phrase. His view that Baptists are best studied not by "static essentialist understandings", such as doctrinal creeds or ecclesial practices, but as a dynamic movement changed by contexts and demands is perceptive. The competing forces of conflict and connection, quarrels and cohesion are key elements in understanding New Zealand Baptists and indeed the global Baptist community. Whilst many of his studies analyse conflicts of earlier periods he does not hesitate to discuss contemporary tensions in a spirit of "affection and respect". Here then is a Baptist history with relevance not only for those wanting to understand the religious experience in New Zealand but also for global Baptists.

In particular, Sutherland offers a wider context for the history of Australian Baptists. The parallels of development and direct personal influences across the 'ditch' of the Tasman Sea invite further reflection. Perhaps a collaborative effort by Baptist historians of both nations would be an instructive and valuable project for both bodies. Although 'Australia' is not listed in the index there are numerous individuals who