

*Analyzing Doctrine: Toward a Systematic Theology.* By Oliver D. Crisp. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2019. x + 270 pp. \$39.95.

Through his *Analyzing Doctrine*, Oliver Crisp sets to the task of defending the primary claim “that analytic theology can (and should) be practiced as a species of systematic theology” (p. 17). In support of this thesis, Crisp develops a number of essentialist accounts of foundational doctrines. Each of these is “conceptually thinner” (p. 77) than what some may want from a systematic theology, but the goal of this work is to apply the tools of analytic philosophy, which are adept “at analyzing and clarifying; at stripping away ambiguity and distinguishing difficult and subtle concepts” (p. 238), to the systematic task in such a way as to provide a clear picture of each doctrine’s core and place in the theological story rather than to fully explicate them.

In setting these tools to work, Crisp treats doctrines and topics ranging from divine simplicity and Trinitarianism to dyothelitism and atonement. Chapters 2 through 4 broadly cover the doctrine of God (“Picturing God,” “Divine Simplicity,” and “Trinity and Mystery”), chapters 5 through 7 address creation, sin, and salvation (“God’s Eternal Purpose,” “Incarnation Anyway,” and “Original Sin”), and chapters 8 through 11 tackle Christological concerns (“Virgin Birth,” “Christ’s Two Wills,” “Salvation as Participation,” and “Bodily Resurrection”). Each chapter lucidly and accessibly defines the concepts used in its syntheses throughout as well as in their applications. The more philosophically minded will find Crisp’s employment of analytic strategies for conceptual clarification in the service of theology helpful for placing theological topics in an intelligible framework; the more theologically minded will find his attention to historical theology, and the norms of theological inquiry as a whole, heartening since not all philosophers, or even analytic theologians, accomplish this sort of work with such grace.

While readers may well find points of disagreement with Crisp throughout, the ease with which one is likely to do so can itself also be attributed to the volume’s clarity. For example, consider the notoriously tricky doctrine of divine simplicity following a discussion of which Crisp offers “a parsimonious model of divine simplicity” (p. 70). His six-point model

attempts to give a conceptually thin account of the manner in which the divine nature is simple, which concedes the more controversial aspects of the maximal doctrine to its contemporary critics while holding out a hand toward the traditionalists by proposing it as only an approximation to the truth of the matter, which may be beyond our ken. (p. 71)

In presenting such moderated stances throughout, *Analyzing Doctrine* tills theological soil which may have previously appeared so tightly compacted as to allow little room for new dialogical growth.

Of additional benefit here is the generally ecumenical tone assumed by Crisp in accomplishing his various tasks. In his proposal of a “moderate Reformed doctrine of original sin” (pp. 152–153), Crisp highlights his interest “in finding a doctrine that has ecumenical promise” (p. 154) regarding both Roman Catholicism and Orthodoxy. This interest surfaces prominently again in his treatment of “salvation as participation” (p. 199), which pays close attention to the concept of *theosis*. Here, Crisp not only seeks a

sense of the doctrine which variegated parties might find amenable but also provides helpful analogical illustrations aimed at drawing out the doctrine's fundamentals for scrutiny. Specifically, he offers the analogy of Christ as like a "wireless hub" who "is a kind of metaphysical bridge between divinity and humanity" (p. 206) enabling our participation in union with God. While such an image is somewhat sterile and simple, it nevertheless provides a straightforward expression of Crisp's meaning in discussing what can be a difficult theological concept around which to wrap one's mind, especially if talk of this sort of participation is uncommon to their tradition. Aspects of *Analyzing Doctrine* like these render this work beneficial for those from a variety of traditions who may find points of stimulating connection (and disconnection) present throughout.

While this work's success may depend greatly on whether Crisp persuades a given reader of the legitimacy of analytic systematic theology, even readers entering with suspicion will find it difficult to claim they have not had a strong case presented to them. This volume's general accessibility renders it of particular use to those who may not have previously engaged analytic theology much (if at all), but its thoroughgoing precision means that specialists ought also to take note of its entrance onto the literary scene. *Analyzing Doctrine* is, therefore, earnestly commended to advanced undergraduates, graduate students, theology and philosophy faculty, and also to those in ministerial roles seeking a deeper understanding of doctrines central to Christianity.

AARON BRIAN DAVIS

*Union Presbyterian Seminary, Richmond, VA, USA*

*Misrecognitions: Gillian Rose and the Task of Political Theology.* Edited by Joshua B. Davis. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2018. 232 pp. \$23.20 (pbk).

From whichever perspective one approaches her, Gillian Rose is an enigma. Her life, prose, and intellectual achievements alike resist easy classification and categorization. She was, in turns, a profoundly Jewish thinker who resisted modernity's obsession with Judaism (and was baptized on her deathbed), a critical Marxist whose relationship to Marxist thought is widely debated, and a champion of Hegelian speculative thought who intentionally highlights the *agony* of knowledge. In other words, she intended to be difficult. The steadily growing body of scholarship elucidating and expanding Rose's thought, to which this collection is a welcome addition, has thus been an enormous gift to those daunted by her opacity. This volume, edited by Joshua B. Davis and composed of nine essays, is a simultaneous investigation of and expansion on Rose's political thought in both its theoretical and practical dimensions.

Davis' excellent introduction alone will prove immensely valuable to readers unfamiliar with Rose. "What interested her," Davis explains, "was not the absence or instability of truth, but the fact that unpredictability and even failure are essential aspects of all truth worthy of the name" (p. 2). All communication and political activity entails a "fundamental risk—of failure, falsehood, misunderstanding, devastation, loss" (p. 3). This basic predicament of requiring risk to achieve both truth and justice is what Rose termed the "broken middle." The broken middle is characterized by a number of practical and