and the way they were, the ones that laid the foundation for the cathedrals of learning in which we now can thrive, provides a necessary perspective on one's own journey through time, in the service of a shared goal: *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*.

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Postdigital Theologies: Technology, Belief, and Practice, Maggi Savin-Baden, and John Reader (eds), Springer, 2022 (ISBN 978-3-031-09404-00), xxx + 251 pp., hb £89.99

In its critical passage beyond the digital, the postdigital invites theological reflections. At a moment of chronological uncertainty, the term 'postdigital' was first spoken of at the turn of the millennia by Nicholas Negroponte (1998), Robert Pepperell and Michael Punt (2000), and Kim Cascone (2000). It was introduced to characterize a new condition of art, in which aesthetic reflections pivot upon the 'rupture', 'glitch', and 'failure' of the digital at the apogee of digital media saturation. The essential rupture of the digital is the terminal aporia of its incomplete realizability. Since the virtual operations of digital computers exceed what can be known, this rupture of the digital invites an infinite aesthetic reflection on the use of multimedia analogue controls. Yet once the symbolic production of art has been saturated by digital computing and communication, the creation and criticism of art could no longer be sufficiently determined by the calculative reason of the digital alone. Rather, aesthetic reflection could thereafter pivot upon new analogue devices that would promise a momentary escape from digital hegemony. Since, however, even this escape can be virtually reproduced by digital computers, this escape of the postdigital must be captured under the hegemonic control of digital computer systems.

Two decades after its announcement, Maggi Savin-Baden and John Reader have edited a collection of essays that aims to 'deconstruct' the relationship between the digital and theology (p. xii). It critiques both the internal and external predication of the digital to theology: either of subsuming the digital within the divine; or of analysing the digital as a separate instrument apart from the ground of theology (pp. 60–72). Each of these standpoints would, it seems, ignore rather than acknowledge the reciprocal shaping of human life by digital computer and communication systems. Hence, theology should, they contend, be essentially qualified

by the digital at the point of this deferred rupture (pp. xi-xii). However, in a decisive lacuna, the editors appear to have deliberately refused, not only to define, but even to demonstrate the indefinability of the 'postdigital'. Having declined to offer an essential definition of the postdigital, they instead offer a plural characterization that predicates the 'postdigital' of plural 'theologies'. Its 'interrelationship' is only as meaningful as the intermediated relationship between the key terms of humanity, technologies, and theologies (p. xii). Since, however, none of these terms are dialectically analysed, the editors offer their readers no definitive understanding or scientific knowledge of the postdigital. In its reflections on an infinite network of digital computation, the postdigital ostensibly appears to announce an oblique return to negative or apophatic theology, where, as for the mystical theologian Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, the way to knowledge of the digital, like the way to knowledge of God, can be discovered through an infinite series of ascending negative judgments to and from the divine essence of God beyond being. Since, however, this infinite network of digital communication is not unsurpassably but only momentarily unknown, there can, on the contrary, be no higher meaning of the postdigital, except as its negativity is annulled, elevated, and yet internally mediated by the essential proportions of analogy. The way beyond the digital can be found not over but through the digital at its highest point.

Despite these conceptual difficulties, this volume contains many valuable contributions. In Part I, Maggi Savin-Baden surveys recent literature on posthumanism in relation to the postdigital, Petar Jandrić interviews Catherine Keller on postdigital spaces, and Andrew Braddock explores the emergence of a postdigital liturgy. In Part II, John Reader contrasts extrinsic with intrinsic attributions of the digital to God, Alcibiades Malapi-Nelson examines the implications of postdigital life for transhumanism, Eric Trozzo explores the sublime as an affective encounter with material objects, Jack Slater examines the postdigital quality of Queer Theory, and Steve Fuller asks how race underwrites transhumanism. In Part III, Douglas Estes illustrates how divine providence encourages the proliferation of new technologies, Paul Woods explores the challenges to religious belief in the city, and Simon Cross examines the use of language in artificial intelligence. In Part IV, Heidi Campbell and Grace Jones examine how religious responses to the Covid-19 Pandemic reflect a posthuman future, Agana-Nsiiri Agana argues for a postdigital conception of God in information theory, and Rebecca Taylor and Joan Ball trace the uncrossability of postdigital art and theology.

Postdigital Theologies has in my estimation been written far too late. For the intellectual movement of the postdigital has long since lost the critical momentum to reflect beyond and create art in a way that could ever genuinely escape from the hegemony of the digital. Yet, even if it had been

written two decades earlier, the editors would likely still have suppressed this higher theological voice. Rather than daring to interrogate the digital at the point of its rupture to the postdigital for theology, this volume frustrates its own design as it cedes the critical standpoint of analysis to the rhetoric of the secular, and predicates the 'postdigital' in a plural register of 'theologies' under an immanent frame of finitely entangled relations. The divine essence of God 'beyond being' has thus been evacuated into the relationality of things, such that, as for Catherine Keller and Gilles Deleuze, the simple and absolute idea of God has been unfolded across a 'differential ontology', in which the ontological difference of beings from being is determined nihilistically from nothing. In upholding this pure difference beyond conceptual identity, it refuses the logic of truth, even as it rejects the Christian and trinitarian difference of theology. And in evacuating the simple and absolute idea of God across the uncertain fluctuations of empty, material, and composite space, it ultimately abandons this higher standpoint for a theological critique of the digital and the postdigital alike. Hence, despite its efforts to escape from the hegemony of the digital, *Postdigital Theologies* can be argued to have collapsed the higher criticism of theology into an empty circuit of unscientific reflections, in which the negation of reflection is captured to endlessly recapitulate the ontological violence of the digital.

As soon, however, as one path is closed, another will be opened. Although asked, the absolute questions of theology could not begin to be answered so long as the analytical ground of scientific reason is deliberately withheld. In the absence of a higher genealogical and conceptual analysis of the digital, the ontological violence of the digital has been more chaotically ramified across all conceivable relations. Once, however, the digital has been dialectically analysed beyond this rupture into the grammar of infinite mechanism or cyberneticism, the concept of the postdigital could be further analysed to be, not 'ineffable', but, in the negation of its reflections, a negative judgment of cybernetic grammar. Since, further, this negative judgment is assumed into hyperbolic arcs and determined by the divine *Logos*, the truth of the postdigital can, for the hyperbolic grammar of mystical theology, be shown to be that of the hyperdigital. Beyond the fixed opposition between the postdigital and the digital, the 'hyperdigital' designates a hyperbolic reflection upon the digital, which exceeds beyond and enters in to accelerate its free use in a spiralling ascent to and from its creative source—whether among the creators of digital systems, or from the oldest creator of the eternal idea of the digital itself. Once analysed, the truth of the postdigital can be preserved for theology by the hyperdigital. The lasting value of this book resides less in its answers than in its questions that deserve to be asked again.

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The New Diaspora and the Global Prophetic: Engaging the Scholarship of Marc H. Ellis, Susanne Scholz and Santiago Slabodsky (eds), Lexington Books/Fortress Academic, 2021 (ISBN 978-1-9787-0624-8), xiv + 310 pp., hb $110

Is liberation theology geographically divided or thematically unified? How is Jewish liberation related to other such theologies? The lifework of Marc H. Ellis demonstrates the continued relevance of this movement born from political struggles in Latin America in the 1970s.

This edited volume gathers contributions from a *Festschrift* conference held at Perkins School of Theology in Dallas, TX, in April 2018. The range of authors represents the intersectionality of liberation theology and its joint resistance to colonialism, capitalism, racism, violence, and oppression. Most contributors are colleagues or students of Ellis who affirm the enduring significance of his work.

This collection of essays shows how Ellis' development was shaped by formative experiences which he responded to theologically. In the 1970s, he spent a year living in New York City at the Catholic Worker House founded by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. Later, he became a professor at Maryknoll Catholic Seminary, known for its missions to the global poor. Ellis traveled to the state of Israel for the first time in 1973 seeking to understand more about contemporary Judaism, and returned a decade later to dialogue with Palestinians and Jews about peace and justice. In the 1980s, he visited the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp and became one of the few post-Holocaust theologians who developed connections with liberation theology.

The introduction synthesizes themes in Ellis' corpus. It is structured as a set of questions posed by the editors to Ellis, giving an update of his views on current issues. He spells out the connections between key terms he became well known for such as: Constantinian Judaism, the ecumenical deal, and Jews of Conscience. Ellis holds that as Christianity became the official religion of the Roman empire in the fourth century under the Emperor Constantine, Judaism has become a state religion in the twentieth century beholden to uphold the political power of the nation of Israel. In observing Jewish-Christian Holocaust dialogue and interfaith encounters, Ellis argues that for Christians and others to enter into ecumenical relations with Jews, the tacit rule