political injustices in addition to those which touch on society, ecology and environmental disaster. These essays are enlightening and also challenging as readers realise that these universal issues are often perceived differently in other cultures.

Regrettably, the book draws from a predominantly male-dominated theological perspective on mission. It would have been helpful to have a conclusion at the end of every chapter, along with a bibliography and index. This book, however, is a welcome contribution for scholars and students of missiology and ecclesiology and useful for those wishing to explore their relevance at a local church level. It is a profound, scholarly and creative intellectual presentation of global mission in the twenty-first century and is thoroughly recommended.

Joseph Suray
Queens Foundation, Edgbaston, Birmingham-B15 2QH, UK
surayj@queens.ac.uk

doi:10.1017/S0036930615000447

Gerald R. McDermott and Harold A. Netland, *A Trinitarian Theology of Religions: An Evangelical Proposal* (New York: OUP, 2014), pp. 346. £64.00/£19.99.

This substantial contribution to the theology of religions, by two respected evangelical scholars, is offered as an evangelical reading of current debates that seeks to make use of the renewed trinitarian discussions. A lengthy first chapter describes the rise of theology of religion discussions, noting the early attempts to take religious diversity seriously (in the 1960s), first in terms of fulfillment, then of pluralism, and finally of evangelicals' (somewhat later) entry into the discussion. The authors then provide helpful chapters on the triune God, revelation and religions, salvation and conversion, the Christian life, religions and cultures, and Christian witness in the multi-religious world. In each chapter a careful exposition of evangelical (or, as they say, historically orthodox) teaching is placed in relation to (and often contrasted with) assumptions of other major religions (surprisingly, there is no sustained reference to primal or popular religions). In the later chapters, the authors provide insight on practical and ethical issues to complement the more strictly theological discussion. Part two includes responses from Lamin Sanneh, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, Vinoth Ramachandra and Christine Schirrmacher along with a few last words from the authors.

There is much that is useful in this work. It certainly makes a major contribution to evangelical reflection on interreligious theological issues and will find a ready market among evangelical students and pastors. But

as noted by two of the respondents, the emphatic evangelical character, especially when tied to a trinitarian framework, poses a challenge for the authors. Kärkkäinen suggests their definition of evangelicalism needs some 'opening up' in the light of twenty-first-century changes; Ramachandra goes further by suggesting such labels mean very little outside the North American and British context. In fairness, the authors do seek to put their discussion in a global context, noting the early missionary encounter with the world religions, which does something to blunt the critique of Ramachandra and resonates with Schmirrmacher's call for an historical reading of Christian–Muslim relations. As the authors note, because evangelicals came rather late to modern conversations – already taken over by various forms of pluralism — they have often found themselves on the defensive (a tone these authors generally avoid). The claim to have appropriated contemporary trinitarian discussions is more puzzling. As the authors admit, evangelicals have not been known for their trinitarian focus, and the authors really do not use the Trinity as an organising principle in their argument.

These challenges point up the difficulty of insisting on an elaborate *theological* reading of interfaith encounters (whether evangelical or orthodox). Ramachandra wonders if such a rational enterprise does justice to the richly textured practices, and diversity, of the world's religions, which are often imperfectly understood by Western Christians. The authors note the need to fairly and honestly understand these neighbour faiths, and their tone throughout is consistently open and irenic. But while their discussion includes many helpful insights, there is no serious demonstration of how ethnography, or social science methods more generally, could deepen understanding, or how comparative theology (which makes no appearance in their discussion) has already taken us beyond a simplistic pluralism to an openness to genuine learning across religious boundaries. Some of these problems might have been avoided by reversing the order of the chapters, placing the more ethical and practical ones first and then moving to the theological discussion – especially since the former constitute the usual point of encounter between Christians and followers of other faiths.

But these observations should not blind us to the many virtues of this important study and the resources it offers to move Western students outside their typically narrow perspectives and encourage a more vital and informed witness to the Gospel.

William A. Dyrness
Fuller Theological Seminary, Box 263, 135 N. Oakland Ave., Pasadena CA 91182, USA
wdyrness@fuller.edu

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0036930615000447 Published online by Cambridge University Press