

David G. Firth and Philip S. Johnston, Editors

***Interpreting Deuteronomy:
Issues and Approaches***

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Interpreting Deuteronomy: Issues and Approaches is the fruit of the 2011 Tyndale Fellowship Old Testament Study Group and the third in a series of books devoted to current “issues and approaches” in OT books (following *Interpreting the Psalms* [2005] and *Interpreting Isaiah* [2009]). It is not intended to serve as an introduction to the book nor to engage with “scholarly minutiae,” but rather to “bridge the gap” between the two (p.14). This collection of essays thus assumes a basic knowledge of Deuteronomy and Deuteronomy scholarship and draws the reader deeper into the themes and issues found in this theologically rich book.

The book’s eleven contributors form a diverse cast. Most, including the editors, teach or study in the UK (six contributors), but the US (three), Australia (one), and Asia (one) are represented as well. The group is a mix of seasoned scholars and young, recent PhD graduates (or candidates), including two women. Although some of the most prominent evangelical Deuteronomy scholars are absent, the entries are consistently insightful and well-reasoned and will not disappoint.

The essays are organized in three parts. Part one consists of two entries on current approaches to the book. James Robson reviews the endless debate regarding the compositional history of Deuteronomy, highlighting the seven most significant factors in the debate. He concludes that the evidence ultimately favors an early (i.e., Mosaic) date for the book, but that it has been redacted and edited throughout subsequent centuries, making it difficult to hear Moses’ actual “voice” (p.58). Not all readers will be satisfied with this conclusion, nor with his propensity to emphasize tensions and apparent difficulties within the book without attempting to resolve them. Paul A. Barker provides an excellent introduction to the theology of Deuteronomy by treating some of the book’s primary themes: mission, election, war, politics, community, monotheism, name theology, covenant and grace. In the process,

he provides a wonderful bibliography of resources for further consultation on each theme.

Barker's essay in particular provides the perfect backdrop for the essays in part two, which examine particular themes and issues in Deuteronomy. The Deuteronomic Laws in Deut 12–26 represent half of the book, yet this material is often neglected, perhaps in part because the modern reader gets lost among hundreds of seemingly random laws because they cannot see the "forest," i.e., structure, progression, or purpose within the collection. John H. Walton, revisiting his thesis from 25 years ago, provides such a framework, suggesting that Deut 6–26 can be divided into ten sections which mirror (in order) the "ten commandments" found in Deut 5. As he carefully walks through these chapters, he provides additional evidence for his theory, yet acknowledges when connections to the Decalogue are not as apparent. Overall, his case is compelling, and his insights into the Decalogue, Deut 6–26, and their function for Israel and for the Church are of immense value. Peter T. Vogt argues, contrary to the prevailing critical view, that although sacrifice is centralized at one location (which may change), worship is "decentralized and extended to the people throughout the land" (p.119). Philip S. Johnston examines the roles of the civil leaders (elders, judges, commanders and officers, and the king) in Israelite society as described and/or mandated within Deuteronomy. He observes that, for a law code, there are surprisingly few references to these leaders, especially in the case of the king, and concludes, "[c]ivil responsibility rests largely with individual Israelites, while officialdom exists as a light framework to enable all Israelites to exercise their responsibility" (pp.144–45). David G. Firth explores the various ways in which Deuteronomy encourages the people to pass along Yahwistic faith, which entails explicit commands to teach the faith, regular patterns of worship, Moses' role as a representative teacher, Israel's modeling of the faith to the nations through her lifestyle, and the structure of the book itself. Heath A. Thomas surveys the themes of life and death in Deuteronomy, including their relationship to the covenant, the law, the land, and blessing.

The final essays pertain to uses and interpretations of the book of Deuteronomy subsequent to the time in which it was written. Csilla Saysell explores the post-exilic community's use of Deuteronomic laws to address an intermarriage crisis in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, despite the fact that Deuteronomy does not explicitly address this issue. Greg Goswell examines aspects of Deuteronomy that are not part of the text itself, particularly where the book occurs within the canon of the OT, the name of the book in Greek and Hebrew tradition, and four different ways in which the text has historically been subdivided through paragraph and chapter breaks. This essay helpfully enables the reader to be more conscious of these various factors that inevitably shape the way we view and interpret the book. Jenny Corcoran highlights the significance of the inclusion of the resident alien within the people of God in the covenant renewal ceremony recorded in Deut 29:10–15,

concluding with some useful applications for the Church today. Finally, Christian Hofreiter grapples with perhaps the most troubling issue within Deuteronomy and, arguably, within the entire OT, namely, God's command to destroy the Canaanites. His categorization of the various approaches to this issue will serve as a fantastic introduction to the topic for the beginning student. However, the primary contribution of his essay is his argument that "there is nothing new under the sun:" all of the major positions have existed throughout the history of the Church. His survey includes a discerning critique of the different approaches, but since his primary purpose is to document the history of Christian interpretation, Hofreiter never suggests which of these positions ought to be adopted.

The editors assert that, "all the contributors are committed to the authority of Scripture and therefore to faith-based scholarship" (p.15). Since this is an evangelical collection, it is not surprising that a couple of the contributors are concerned with counteracting critical positions. However, those who believe that the authority and inspiration of Scripture demand Mosaic authorship of Deuteronomy may be disturbed by occasional references in a few essays to later editors/redactors and the completion of portions of the book centuries after Moses.

Although the reader with little knowledge of the world of biblical studies will doubtless feel a bit overwhelmed at times, in the estimation of this reviewer *Interpreting Deuteronomy* succeeds in providing a foray into Deuteronomy that builds upon a foundational knowledge of the book without engaging in too much "scholarly minutiae." And therein lies the book's primary contribution. Accordingly, this collection would be ideal for an upper-level undergraduate class devoted to Deuteronomy and should be of interest for any serious student of the OT.

It is essential for African pastors and students of the Bible to have a solid understanding of Deuteronomy given its influence upon the rest of the OT and its central importance in OT theology. This book should help fill this need. However, since it is designed primarily for the classroom (rather than ministry) setting, its value for the contemporary pastor who is seeking to preach and apply Deuteronomy faithfully in the local church is somewhat limited. Although many of the contributors suggest the abiding relevance of Deuteronomy for Christians today, this is often implicit or noted only in passing. Even given the collection's academic orientation, the editors could have included an essay or two in the third part of the book devoted to the use of Deuteronomy in the NT, its contribution to Christian (not just OT) theology, or preaching Deuteronomy, which would have rendered the collection more useful for those engaged in ministry. Nevertheless, there is clearly much in these essays from which the Church can derive faithful applications for her faith and practice.

Abhijit V. Banerjee and Esther Duflo

***Poor Economics:
A Radical Rethinking of the Way
to Fight Global Poverty***

New York: Public Affairs, 2011, 320 pages.

Pb. \$15.99. Also available in hardback, Kindle and audio editions.

Reviewed by Sandra F. Joireman

Professor of Political Science at the University of Richmond

Poor Economics is one of the most important books to come out about development in several years. Banerjee and Duflo are both economists who co-direct the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The role of the center is to use experimental data to determine which sorts of interventions are most effective in changing health, educational and nutritional outcomes for the better in the developing world. Banerjee and Duflo write for a popular audience, but do not enter into debates about whether aid is good or bad or support a particular development technique. Instead, they focus on the types of interventions that improve the lives of poor people, as proven in randomized controlled trials.

The book is divided into two parts: the first on private lives and the second on institutions. In the part on private lives there are chapters on hunger, health, education, and birth control. In the second part of the book the chapters address issues such as insurance, banking, microfinance and business development. There is much to be learned in each of these sections from the method of randomized controlled trials. For example, in the area of food consumption, they found that in India poor people do not seem to want to spend more money on food. If they get more money, they are more likely to spend it on entertainment or tastier food, rather than more food. This is in spite of the fact that many of India's poor do not receive the necessary micronutrients they need for a healthy life. Banerjee and Duflo note the need for a serious rethinking of food policies to address the actual needs and preferences of the poor. They don't need more food, but better nutrition. Better nutrition is particularly important for pregnant mothers and children under 2 years old as good nutrition at an early age can have a lasting impact on earning and educational potential. More food for everyone may not be the answer, but better nutrition for some certainly is.

Some of the most interesting parts of the book are those where the authors run up against actions taken by poor people that they find inexplicable using standard models of rational behavior. Rather than arguing that poor

people are irrational, they step back and look more closely at what is happening in each case. The answers are not always predictable. For example, they examine the difficulty of getting poor children fully immunized in parts of India. Immunizations are free, so that is not the problem. They then tried a variety of incentives to make it profitable for families to fully immunize their children, such as giving away a set of plates or some food when the immunizations are given or a set is fully completed. Banerjee and Duflo argue that these sorts of ‘nudges’ are needed because parents are not fully convinced that immunizations are the best way to have healthy children. Without a state that enforces immunizations, for example by requiring them when children go to school, positive incentives are needed to get many poor families to complete the full set of childhood immunizations.

The authors make the point that small tweaks to the way services are delivered make big differences in effectiveness. For example, in Kenya, when farmers were offered half-price fertilizer during planting season, few took advantage of the offer because they didn’t have the cash reserves to afford the fertilizer even at a discounted rate. However, when they were given the opportunity to buy a full-cost voucher for fertilizer use, just after the harvest when they had cash, many took advantage of the opportunity and redeemed the voucher the next planting season. The issue in this case was the timing of the assistance that was being given to farmers. When it changed, there was a 50% increase in the use of fertilizer, despite the fact that it was not offered at a discounted rate. Many of the examples running through the book come from Africa, but those from other areas of the developing world are equally instructive.

As noted earlier, one of the benefits of their approach is that it is somewhat stripped of the heat and fire that are often apparent in the development literature. In their chapter on microfinance they note that it is a fine financial product for the poor and a very good thing, but it does not radically transform people’s lives. Banerjee and Duflo express some frustration that serious attempts to evaluate microfinance programs are often ignored or countered by anecdotes. They caution that “Trapped by decades of overpromising, many of the leading players in the microfinance world have apparently decided they would rather rely on the power of denial than take stock, regroup, and admit that microfinance is only one of the possible arrows in the fight against poverty” (172). In a more positive vein, they also note that one substantial benefit of the whole microfinance movement has been to prove that it is possible to lend to the poor.

The authors conclude that there are many things that we do not know about how to effectively alleviate poverty. Yet, we do know a number of useful things about poor people, which should go some way towards better policy development. 1) The poor often lack critical information and believe things that are not true. Therefore they do not necessarily make the choices that will

benefit them the most. 2) The lives of the poor are extremely complex and poor people bear responsibility for too many aspects of their lives. They face high risks with no insurance and have to make many more decisions in a day than wealthier people for whom the decisions are already made. For example, poor people have to decide if, how and for which family members they will purify their water, while wealthier people typically have access to clean water. 3) Some markets, such as health insurance, are missing for the poor because they cannot be sustained. 4) Countries are not doomed to failure because they are poor. 5) Expectations about what people are able or unable to do turn into self-fulfilling prophecies. Politicians commit fraud because no one expects them to be honest, nurses don't show up for work because no one expects them to do so.

If Christians are interested in improving the lives of the poor, information provision and insurance seem to be critical areas of need that are not being met at the moment. Christians involved in health and development activities can take away the practical lessons learned, but there is more here for those working in church-related activities. The conclusions that Banerjee and Duflo reach about the lives of the poor have ramifications far beyond economic development alone. They would suggest that we need to ask different questions about how to best reach and serve poor people. For example, what sorts of incentives are most appropriate in outreach work? What are the discipleship and religious education activities most necessary for people who are very stressed? The decisions that poor people make in privileging entertainment may also explain why so many churches are full and why religious practice thrives among the socioeconomically less-privileged.

Another area in which the church has a comparative advantage is in addressing the issue of expectations. Honesty and responsibility are issues of Christian character that we seek from those within the church, and the emphasis on developing Christian character is important for every church, everywhere. There is a role that the church can play in building expectations of honesty and responsibility from leaders and government workers. Several years ago in Kenya, Christians for a Just Society ran a campaign with posters and buttons that said, "I will not give a bribe; I will not take a bribe." In a society in which bribery is common, the public and visible statement of a position like this has an impact. It makes clear that there is a Christian way to act, and that is to avoid bribery. The conclusions from *Poor Economics* would suggest to us that these sorts of campaigns, to the extent that they are able to change expectations of politicians and government workers, will improve the lives of the poor.

There is something additional to appreciate about this book, it is fundamentally sympathetic to those in poverty, while not endorsing the decisions they make. Banerjee and Duflo manage to bring the reader to an understanding of why a family might scrimp and save to buy a television set,

or throw a massive family wedding, while the children do not receive adequate nutrition. It is a wonderful example of good social science that is informative regarding why people make the decisions that they do, while at the same time providing suggestions about the things that might change their behavior in ways to make their lives better.

Readers will appreciate the respectful view of the poor as complete persons who make a variety of decisions, some wise and some not so wise. Readers will also be encouraged by the fact that providing certain 'nudges' does lead to improvements in health, nutrition, agricultural productivity and other areas. While this is an academic book, and not one that would be appreciated by every church member, it is necessary reading for those involved in development activities and would be interesting to those engaged in active ministry to the poor.

Norman N. Miller

Encounters with Witchcraft: Field Notes from Africa

New York: SUNY and African-Caribbean Institute, Hanover, NH
and Nairobi, Kenya. 2012.

ISBN 978-1-4384-4358-4. glossy pb. 232 pages.

1500 Ksh at ACTS Kenya.

Amazon.com \$24.95. Amazon.com Kindle Edition, \$13.72.

Reviewed by Andrew Wildsmith, Scott Christian University

Norman N. Miller is one of America's early African specialists, living in East Africa intermittently for 40 years since 1960. He came first as a hitchhiker, but later worked as a journalist, university teacher, researcher, documentary filmmaker, and as an advisor to African governments and United Nations agencies. His experience includes extended periods of time in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and visits to Congo, 16 years altogether spread over 26 trips to Africa. He holds a PhD from Indiana University in political science and African studies and a certificate in Swahili from UCLA. He has taught part-time at Dartmouth College since 1980.

This book is not a study of theology and witchcraft nor is it simply an anthropological treatise on witchcraft in Africa. It is a personal narrative that stretches over at least four countries in eastern African and across 40 years, beginning in 1960 in Kenya. The focus is on the author's struggle to understand the phenomena of witchcraft, its persistence in modern Africa, where it started and where it thrives, why witchcraft-based violence finds a ready home amongst families, and how witchcraft functions within a society.

Although the focus of this book is on witchcraft, the author's life in Africa is the setting for his growing understanding of the issue. The reader shares Miller's journey of discovery from the day in 1960 that he stepped off the ship in Mombasa in Kenya Colony and was confronted by a newspaper with the headline "European Geologist Attacked in Gogoland: Witchcraft Suspected". This led him to begin learning about witchcraft and it remained an important interest during all his journeys to Africa. After hitch-hiking around colonial eastern Africa in 1960, Miller returned to the US where he did graduate studies in African politics and anthropology as well as learning Swahili. In 1964 he obtained a two-year study grant for a PhD thesis focusing on the grass-roots political and economic changes in Kenya and Tanzania after independence. While conducting his research in a rural Tanzanian village, he met Mohammadi Lupanda, a poor widow accused of being a witch after a baby girl died. She was found guilty and banished. Her fate seemed to haunt Miller and her name reappears periodically in the book. When Miller returned to the same village in 2004, he discovered that it was Mohammadi's own family who

secretly agreed with her exile because they were afraid the accusations against her would spill over onto them.

In the book's prologue, Miller summarizes his first lessons on witchcraft in a library in Mombasa, especially how deep-rooted and widespread it is.

He also spoke with Peter Lavers, a retired headmaster of St. Andrew's, Turi, Kenya, then a Christian primary school, who passionately loathed witchcraft as much as Africans and who was also in favour of colonialism as a tool to save Africans from ignorance, disease and witchcraft. This focus on the human, secular and social aspects of witchcraft pervades the book from beginning to end even as Miller gains a deeper understanding of it over the decades. His negative attitude towards most (not all) Christians and their various views of witchcraft also surfaces in different places in the book.

In 1960 Miller's informal interviews yielded information from a white museum curator who defined witchcraft terms for him; from an African caretaker who guarded ancient rock paintings; from a British Acting District Commissioner who didn't like proselytizing missionaries but did discuss witchcraft and the colonial laws and the activities of AICs as witch-hunters; from people in Nairobi who told him about Mau Mau connections with witchcraft power; from a traditional healer in Uganda who provided witchcraft protection charms; from a Scottish doctor who was only too familiar with witchcraft as an explanation for disease and death; from Belgian Jean Pierre Hallet in the Congo who had close contact with Batwa Pygmies who only believed in witchcraft when they visited Bantu tribes (Hallet: "*Even the idea of poison does funny things to people who believe in witchcraft.*"); from a Dutch hunter and crocodile hide merchant who described how certain powdered roots mixed with crocodile bile yields a poison used to kill someone whose death is blamed on witchcraft; and from Muslim and Christian border guards who also believed in witchcraft power. At this point in 1960 Miller was merely dabbling in witchcraft research compared to his next encounters with witchcraft while doing his PhD thesis field research from 1964 to 1966.

Miller's description of his two years "Living with Witches" (the title of chapter two) focuses on two witchcraft cases - those of Mohammadi Lupanda (see above) and of Welelo Mkombe, the youngest wife of an old chief who she admitted killing by "poisoning". Although Miller's interviews and his research into the court records in Mkombe's trial told him most of what had happened in both cases, he was left with questions. This is despite the fact that all the most important informants were Africans and more or less closely involved with the cases mentioned.

By concentrating on interviews with a European museum curator and knowledgeable Africans who uncovered the meanings behind the physical objects used in or associated with witchcraft and the art depicting witches, Miller discovered some of the inner workings and meanings behind the events

he had witnessed. This is the subject of chapter three, "Through African Eyes: The Arts". Objects relating to witchcraft practice are symbols of witchcraft power, and can be either defensive (for protection against witchcraft attack) or offensive (used to attack people) depending on the nature of the practitioners, whether they are good or evil. Aside from poisons and actual weapons used in killing, the belief in the power of witchcraft, the fear inspired by the masks, powders, charms etc, etc, is where the power comes from.

Miller investigates witch-hunters and witch-cleansers in 1969 and finds a great deal of fraud, extortion and fear involved in their methods. From his research in 1971-1978 Miller learns about witchcraft as a political tool, the role secret societies play in witchcraft, that pastoralists don't have witchcraft beliefs and problems while agriculturalists do, and also learns about witchcraft as scapegoating. In Chapter 6 "The Spirit Wars", which cover his research from 1980 to 1986, Miller learns about "Christian witchcraft", that is, how various AICs combat, cleanse, and convert witches – and how some of the "born again" and charismatic sects defraud people. He pursues the differences between the evil eye amongst the pastoralist Borana in northern Kenya and witchcraft amongst settled agriculturalists. His extended discussion with a new American missionary who knew next to nothing about witchcraft reveals why Miller believes witchcraft beliefs persist alongside Christian beliefs – both postulate a supernatural worldview that depends on good and evil spirit beings. His view of missionaries, "*As long as you teach [not preach or convert] and bring relief to the poor, I'm pro-missionary. It's when you start forcing a particular rigid doctrine on Africans, that we part ways.*" (p. 147)

In the rest of the book Miller studies the economics of witchcraft and its link to poverty and natural disasters, its role in politics as an alternate form of "government", its use by political parties and rebel movements (including Mungiki and the Lord's Resistance Army), and how it functions as a process of dealing with some form of misfortune. Witchcraft beliefs persist when young children learn of them informally from older generations so that it becomes part of their reality, their worldview. In addition, witchcraft accusations result from fear of social disintegration brought on by natural disasters and war. Harmony is restored by accusing and eliminating witches, and family members who fear being implicated offer up older women (and men) like Mohammadi Lupanda, who are already on society's margins for some reason.

Miller's book is a useful background guide to witchcraft's social foundations and manifestations. His dim view of most missionaries and his thoroughly secular point of view challenge African Christians and Western missionaries in different ways, whether we agree with him or not. The book's narrative style makes for enjoyable reading. Its many photos, maps and drawings, and the index and bibliography add to its usefulness. The book is recommended for anyone interested in learning more about the topic and is a useful but not essential addition to theological libraries.

Jørgen Skov Sørensen

***Missiological Mutilations – Prospective Paralogies:
Language and Power in Contemporary Mission Theory***

Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2007, viii + 282 pp., \$ 88.95 paper.

Reviewed by Robert P. French II
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Both in the academy and in local churches within ‘Western’ societies, there is substantial recognition of an identifiable shift that has been and is occurring in Western thought – namely, the shift from modernity to postmodernity. Despite this recognition, there is little agreement concerning how to define and identify postmodernity. This discord becomes apparent when Christian theology, especially mission theology, attempts to interact with postmodernity. It is precisely this interaction, or lack thereof, between postmodern theory and mission theology that Jørgen Skov Sørensen examines in his book, *Missiological Mutilations – Prospective Paralogies*.

Missiological Mutilations is a slightly revised version of Sørensen’s 2005 thesis from the University of Birmingham. Chapter one introduces Sørensen’s hypothesis that the power structures of a modern epistemological paradigm have naturalized language in mission theory. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is used to promote the use of postcolonial criticism and critical linguistics as ‘the major deconstructive tools of the study’ (29), which is discussed in chapter two. Chapter three serves to define, compare, and contrast modernity and postmodernity, with special attention to epistemology. Building upon this comparison, chapter four employs CDA to deconstruct three well-known missiologists – Hiebert, Kirk, and Bosch. Through the examination of terminology, implicature, and perspective, Sørensen concludes that all three ‘work theologically within a modern epistemological paradigm’ (203). Chapter five identifies characteristics of a postmodern epistemological paradigm, which reinforces Sørensen’s construction of a postmodern approach to mission based upon the work of three theologians – Hodgson, Placher, and Russell. Chapter six concludes his ‘thought experiment,’ which demonstrates that ‘naturalized mission theoretical language plays a decisive role in both shaping and maintaining the modern mission mind-set’ (251). Sørensen contends that it is only once we revise our mission theory within a critical, postmodern, framework that ‘a reinvented mission theory will find its space’ (258).

Sørensen’s well researched ‘thought experiment,’ demonstrates an impressively wide incorporation of interdisciplinary scholarship. In his interaction with a wide array of sources, Sørensen carefully attends to a variety of terms that can prove problematic. Similarly, Sørensen identifies the difficulty and irony in employing a postmodern theoretical approach in a Western context, and notes that ‘the fundamental scientific method and *raison*

d'être of the study is thoroughly modern and firmly part of a western scientific and academically modern tradition' (9-10, footnote 22). Such care and critical self-reflection demonstrates well the concerns and attention that a postcolonial critique requires. While Sørensen's attempt to engage mission theory through a postmodern lens is indeed commendable, the most noteworthy contribution of this study is the framework for understanding the transition from modernity to postmodernity as an epistemological shift. However, this framework is not Sørensen's main objective, but rather the *a priori* assumption that provides the foundation for his study (6).

Sørensen is right to note that postmodernity is hard to define and that the concept of postmodernity has caused some consternation in Western theology. Sørensen well encapsulates philosophical and cultural trends by defining postmodernity, at least in part, by its reaction to modernity. In this way, postmodern characteristics are identifiable by their opposition to and change from modernity. Unfortunately, modernity is not given a similar treatment.

A modern epistemological paradigm identifies knowledge as truth, and because this truth can be objectively observed, repeated, and rationally understood it is applicable to all people regardless of language, culture, or context. Postmodernity instead stresses the finite nature of human beings and is therefore strongly skeptical of human beings' ability to know truth and even more suspicious of universal truth claims. Although the study does not explicitly identify these characteristics, it is possible that universal truth claims are attributed to the epistemology of modernity for these reasons. However, universal truth claims, as exemplified by the history of the Christian tradition, did not originate from nor are they based upon a modern epistemology. Yet this understanding can be observed as significantly, and potentially errantly, shaping the study's use of CDA.

Therefore, since modernity is not defined by the epistemology that preceded it, universal truth claims become a fallacious characteristic of the modern epistemological paradigm. In this regard, Hiebert, Kirk, and Bosch are misrepresented. Sørensen critiques Hiebert's use of 'the international hermeneutical community, in which Christians and theologians from different lands check one another's cultural biases' (155) as demonstrative of naturalized language indicative of a modern epistemological paradigm. Sørensen observes that although Hiebert proscribes treating 'the other' as inferior, Hiebert utilizes language that dichotomizes Christians from non-Christians and suggests that Christian history and theology can be helpful tools in the hermeneutical process. Sørensen identifies this language as indicative of a modern epistemological paradigm, but it would appear from Hiebert's text that the foundation for using such language precedes modernity and can be observed throughout Christian history. Similar examples form the bulk of the study's criticism. Even more, the three texts exemplifying a

postmodern epistemology of mission theory also appear to be inadequately represented.

Sørensen utilizes texts from Hodgson, Placher, and Russell to construct a postmodern mission approach. It is an intriguing comparison as none of the texts are specifically written to formulate or contribute to mission theory. In addition, whereas Sørensen examined the texts of Hiebert, Kirk, and Bosch as a whole, Hodgson's, Placher's, and Russell's texts are mined for information that support and contribute to Sørensen's postmodern approach. This is well reflected by the attention provided to the modern mission texts (74 pages) and the postmodern texts (37 pages). While one text from each scholar is used to examine the mission theories of Hiebert, Kirk, and Bosch, multiple texts written by Hodgson, Placher, and Russell are used in Sørensen's attempt to construct a postmodern approach to mission theory. Compounding this difference, the methodology utilized to evaluate the modern mission texts – CDA – was not applied to the postmodern texts. In trying to understand the differing treatments, the criticisms levied upon the modern mission texts, and the characteristics associated with a modern epistemological paradigm, the summary of the fifth chapter reveals the presupposition informing the applied analysis and methodology, viz. 'the Christian tradition was submitted to the condition of postmodernity rather than postmodernity to the Christian tradition' (247).

This presupposition will likely be viewed as problematic for Christians from a variety of perspectives. It would seem this informed Sørensen's analysis of the modern mission texts and the association of universal truth claims with modernity. Further, the exclusive priority given to postmodernity by Sørensen identifies several other aspects of the study that warrant discussion.

Certainly, one is inclined to question if a postmodern thought experiment concerned with theories of Christian mission should limit itself to one cultural perspective. As Sørensen himself notes, central to the epistemology of postmodernity is the recognition and importance placed upon the plurality of beliefs, ideas, people, and communities throughout the globe. Therefore, if mission theory is to be examined from a Western perspective, one could question if representation from multiple Western perspectives – such as Anabaptist, Pentecostal, etc. – and non-Western influences upon modern mission theory in the West would not be more advantageous to a postmodern approach? Sørensen assumes that only Western mission theories can reflect the modern mission movement, but is one Western perspective realistically identifiable? In addition, the Western mission movement and Western Christianity are presented as a homogenous group, once again raising the question if it is possible to define Christianity in the West as homogenous. Sørensen does not address these questions.

In addition, the present study's formatting can be tedious. Specifically, the list of contents appears to have been altered little from its original form. Although comprehensive, the list is difficult to navigate and lacks clear and easy identifications to assist the reader in differentiating chapters from topics. This format muddies a cursory view of the study's argument and flow, and inhibits the reader from quickly locating chapters or topics. Nevertheless, it is a well-written work that includes excellent transitions and provides signposts to the reader that helps keep the entire text in perspective.

The current work is a useful contribution to academic discussions concerning Western mission theory. However, because of the heavy-laden jargon, postcolonial criticism, and many other aspects of ideological language and theory, this book will likely limit itself to academics interested in Western attempts at postcolonial criticism, postmodernity, or Christian theology. Solidifying this reality is the cost of the book, which likely limits Sørensen's audience to scholars and those with access to academic libraries. In conclusion, Sørensen should be commended for his attempt to engage mission theory through a postmodern paradigm with epistemology as the foundation, however, for the aforementioned reasons, the validity of his suggestions and methods may be viewed by many theologians and mission-minded people as contentious.