

In *Ministers of the Law* and previous writings, Jean Porter has demonstrated clearly that she is one of the foremost Thomist scholars of her generation. By bringing Aquinas's position into productive dialogue with contemporary analytical jurisprudence, she assists in clarifying key debates in legal philosophy. This is a work of considerable erudition that will stand as a leading scholarly statement of a distinctively Thomist jurisprudence for some time to come.

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## The Gospel and Globalization: Exploring the Religious Roots of a Globalized World

**Michael W. Goheen and Erin G. Glanville (Editors)**

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This important collection of essays has its origin in a series of invited lectures on the religious significance of globalization held at Trinity Western University in Vancouver, British Columbia. Thus, the reader might well expect in this volume, and actually does find, a range of evangelical perspectives on globalization, seasoned perhaps with a dose of brisk, Canadian common sense. The collection is remarkably innocent of the kind of enthusiasm with which some evangelicals in the United States embrace globalization as the providential vehicle for ushering in the kingdom of God—or if not the kingdom of God, at least the global expansion of personal freedom, democracy, and free-market capitalism. Although the essays are contributed by a wide range of Christian authors, appropriately selected from various disciplines, including but not restricted to theology and economics, they are arranged and edited in such a way as to form a single metanarrative.

They mean to witness to the gospel, and they know their Bibles well enough to realize that any uncritically optimistic assessment of globalization simply cannot be squared with biblical teaching. Thus, the collection opens with Richard Bauckham's chapter "The Bible and Globalization," which takes the reader through the stories that ought to inform any seriously Christian assessment of globalization: the original unity-in-diversity of the human race (Gen. 10); the idolatrous agenda of the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11); the ongoing struggle with God's own design for globalization, beginning with the calling of Abraham (Gen. 12); specific warnings against the pretenses of global political hegemony—epitomized by Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Dan. 4)—and global economic domination captured by Ezekiel's prophecy against Tyre (Ezek. 26–28); culminating in the book of Revelation's vision of the final conflict between Roma Aeterna depicted as the whore of Babylon and the Holy City decked out like a bride on her wedding day, the New Jerusalem (Rev. 17–21). Framing the assessment of globalization within the parameters established by these stories insures that both positive and negative aspects as well as outcomes of globalization will be given their due and that through it all the criticism

will remain unmistakably biblical and Christian. Not surprisingly, most of the subsequent contributors refer back to Bauckham's magisterial essay, either obliquely or implicitly.

The subsequent conversation is not simply that of a Bible study group. To be fully understood, the biblical perspective must first be clarified in relation to other attempts to discern the relationship between God and globalization. Jonathan Chaplin rightly devotes a full chapter to Max Stackhouse's four-volume interdisciplinary collection on that topic. While he gives Stackhouse full credit for highlighting the religious dimensions of globalization, he argues that Stackhouse's failure to treat "secular humanism" as a religion, an idolatrous "dominion" that Christians should resist, leads to an overly optimistic and uncritical identification of globalization with God's graceful presence in history. The consequences of Stackhouse's alleged theological error are sketched by Chaplin and filled out in the economic, political, and cultural analyses that follow. Pivotal among these is Dutch economist Bob Goudzwaard's "Globalization, Economics, and the Modern Worldview," which sees globalization as the ultimate outcome of the European Enlightenment's attempt to understand and manage the world as if God did not exist. Freedom understood as moral autonomy, the pursuit of happiness understood as economic growth for its own sake, and progress understood as unfettered capitalist development are thus rendered highly problematic, particularly in light of the mixed results of globalization in exacerbating economic differences between the rich and the poor, in disrupting traditional morality and local cultures, and in fomenting the political crises that inevitably follow from these.

To be sure, neither Goudzwaard nor any of the other contributors means to support a wholesale rejection of globalization and its unprecedented expansion of free-market capitalism. They do not identify their project with liberation theology. However, they do believe that an authentically Christian orientation must respect God's preferential love of the poor (Matt. 25:31–46) and seek to measure human progress by this biblical touchstone. Globalization thus has enormous potential for bringing the world closer to God's design, but, in its present form, it is seriously flawed and yields appallingly "asymmetrical" results. Thus, Peter Heslam's somewhat breezy contribution, "Commercial Entrepreneurship for the Good of the People," should not be dismissed as an outlier but as an indication of the kinds of creative engagement with globalization that these Christians mean to encourage.

Heslam outlines a biblical theology of entrepreneurship that is meant to support transformative moral leadership in business. Business, he argues, "is indispensable to the very goals it is so often assumed are achievable merely through public and charitable initiatives." What distinguishes his perspective from other more optimistic theologies of business is his recognition that transformative leadership will welcome the public's demand for accountability and effective governmental regulation. Just how serious he is about this is evident in his observations on environmental responsibility and the efficacy—based on efforts already underway in the United Kingdom—of cap and trade legislation for reducing carbon emissions (167f).

Nevertheless, he and the other contributors could go further. Heslam's essay is followed immediately by John L. Hiemstra's "Canada's Oil Sands Development as Icon of



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Globalization,” a timely case study on what globalization in the form of rapid economic development has meant for the Province of Alberta. Here the asymmetrical results of globalization are evident in great detail. Given the extent to which this volume focuses primarily on biblical theology and its ideological implications, it would be interesting to see responses from each of the contributors to the situation in Alberta. Should the oil sands development be allowed to proceed as market forces and technological considerations dictate, or should it be stopped in its tracks because the moral and social costs and benefits are so asymmetrically distributed by the markets? How would the transformative leadership evoked by Heslam, and implicitly supported by the others, make a difference in the way businesses, the Provincial government, and other stakeholders collaborate to achieve the common good? Judging by the merits of this collection of essays, I would say that Canadian evangelicals are generally better prepared to ask and answer such questions than their coreligionists south of the border.

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