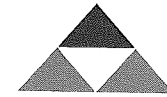


# T GOD'S LIFE IN TRINITY



Miroslav Volf and Michael Welker, editors

S Fl 125a

FORTRESS PRESS  
MINNEAPOLIS

## GOD'S LIFE IN TRINITY

Copyright © 2006 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Except for brief quotations in critical articles or reviews, no part of this book may be reproduced in any manner without prior written permission from the publisher. Write: Permissions, Augsburg Fortress, Box 1209, Minneapolis, MN 55440.

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA and used by permission. All rights reserved.

Sponsoring Editor: J. Michael West

Production Editor: James Korsmo

Copyeditor: Emily Cheney

Proofreader: Laura Weller

Design and typesetting: James Korsmo

Cover art: Half Shield of Triangles from an Apse. Musee Archeologique, El Jemm (Thysdrus), Tunisia. © Gilles Mermet / Art Resource, NY

Cover design: Ann Delgehausen

### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

God's life in Trinity / edited by Miroslav Volf and Michael Welker.

p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN 0-8006-3823-9 (alk. paper)

1. Trinity. I. Volf, Miroslav. II. Welker, Michael.

BT113.G595 2006

231'.044—dc22

2006003301

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1984.

Manufactured in the U.S.A.

10 09 08 07 06 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

## CONTENTS

Contributors	vii
Preface	xiii
<i>Miroslav Volf and Michael Welker</i>	
PART ONE. TRINITY AND HUMANITY	
1. BEING AS GOD IS Trinity and Generosity <i>Miroslav Volf</i>	3
2. THE SOCIAL TRINITY AND PROPERTY <i>M. Douglas Meeks</i>	13
3. THE SPIRIT OF LIFE AND THE REVERENCE FOR LIFE <i>William Schweiker</i>	22
4. "SPEAK, 'FRIEND,' AND ENTER" Friendship and Theological Method <i>Nancy Elizabeth Bedford</i>	33
5. WISDOM, THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY, AND MODERN SECULAR INTERPRETATION OF HUMANITY <i>David H. Kelsey</i>	44
6. JÜRGEN MOLTSMANN'S ENGAGEMENT WITH THE NATURAL SCIENCES <i>John Polkinghorne</i>	61
PART TWO. TRINITY AND RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS	
7. CHURCH UNITY IN FREEDOM <i>Dirk J. Smit</i>	73
8. MAKE WAY FOR THE SPIRIT <i>Harvey G. Cox Jr.</i>	93
9. THE TRINITY AND THE THEOLOGY OF RELIGIONS <i>Daniel L. Migliore</i>	101
10. BEYOND EXCLUSIVISM AND ABSOLUTISM A Trinitarian Theology of the Cross <i>Ronald F. Thiemann</i>	118

PART THREE. TRINITY AND GOD-TALK

11. THE TRINITY AND GENDER RECONSIDERED <i>Sarah A. Coakley</i>	133
12. GOD'S PERFECT LIFE <i>John Webster</i>	143
13. DIVINE PROVIDENCE AND ACTION <i>David Fergusson</i>	153
14. SPIRIT-CHRISTOLOGY AS ACCESS TO TRINITARIAN THEOLOGY <i>Philip J. Rosato</i>	166
15. IS THERE JUSTICE IN THE TRINITY? <i>Nicholas Wolterstorff</i>	177

PART FOUR. TRINITY AND HISTORICAL THEOLOGY

16. ESCHATOLOGY AND CHRISTOLOGY Moltmann and the Greek Fathers <i>Nicholas Conostas</i>	191
17. JOHN DONNE ON THE TRINITY <i>Gerald O'Collins, SJ</i>	200
18. TRINITARIAN BELIEF AND WORSHIP A Historical Case <i>Bryan D. Spinks</i>	211
Notes	223
Index	257

CONTRIBUTORS

**NANCY ELIZABETH BEDFORD** was born in Comodoro Rivadavia, Argentina. She studied in Tübingen from 1989 to 1994, where she obtained her doctorate in theology under the supervision of Jürgen Moltmann. Her most recent book is *Puntos de Encuentro* (Buenos Aires: ISEDET, 2005), co-edited with Mercedes García Bachmann and Marisa Strizzi. It explores feminist theory and theology from a multidisciplinary Latin American perspective. She is Georgia Harkness Professor of Applied Theology at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, and Profesora Extraordinaria No Residente at the Instituto Universitario ISEDET, Buenos Aires.

**SARAH A. COAKLEY** is Edward Mallinckrodt Professor of Divinity at Harvard Divinity School, where she teaches systematic theology, philosophy of religion, gender theory and feminist theology, and the history of Christian spirituality. Before coming to Harvard in 1993 she held posts at Lancaster University and Oriel College, Oxford. Her books include *Christ without Absolutes: A Study of the Christology of Ernst Troeltsch* (1988), *Powers and Submissions: Spirituality, Philosophy and Gender* (2002), and *Re-Thinking Gregory of Nyssa* (editor, 2003). She is at work on a systematic theology, the first volume of which will appear as *God, Sexuality and the Self: An Essay 'On the Trinity'* (2006). She is the recent recipient of a \$2 million Templeton Foundation grant to develop, with Professor Martin Nowak, the discussion of theology and evolutionary biology at Harvard.

**NICHOLAS CONSTAS** holds a doctorate in patristics from the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. He has taught graduate courses in patristics and Orthodox theology at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology (1993–98) and at Harvard Divinity School (1998–2004). He is the author of *Proclus of Constantinople and the Cult of the Virgin in Late Antiquity* (2003), as well as numerous studies and articles in journals, including *Harvard Theological Review*, *The Journal of Early Christian Studies*, and the *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*. He is currently living in Greece.

**HARVEY G. COX JR.** is the Hollis Professor of Divinity, the oldest endowed professorship in America. He has been teaching at Harvard since 1965, when his book *The Secular City* became an international bestseller. His *Feast of Fools* (1969) was nominated for the National Book Prize. Among his other books are *Many Mansions: A Christian's Encounters with Other Faiths* (1998), and *Fire from Heaven* (1995), which traces the worldwide growth of Pentecostalism. Among his interests

## PREFACE

---

Perhaps no area of Christian theology has received such intense and fruitful work in the last century as our understanding of the Trinity. In this volume theologians from the entire world seek to advance our understandings of God's triune life, especially by engaging and extending the signal contributions of Jürgen Moltmann on the occasion of his eightieth birthday on April 8, 2006.

Jürgen Moltmann has shaped the international theological conversation in the twentieth century more than any other Protestant theologian since Karl Barth, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Paul Tillich. In the last decades, the power and attraction of his thought have been recognized throughout the world with more than two hundred dissertations written on his theology and with eleven honorary doctorates and countless other honors and prizes conferred upon him.

Moltmann's *Theology of Hope* (1965, English translation 1967), now in its fifteenth printing in 2005 in Germany, had an effect in the second half of the twentieth century comparable to that of Karl Barth's commentary on Romans in the first half: It was a passionate attempt at a new form of theological thought that was received with both enthusiasm and controversy. Works of "political theology," a field that Moltmann developed with Johann Baptist Metz and others, resulted and gave occasion for many-sided exchanges across the Iron Curtain. Moltmann, at the time energized by left-Hegelian and neo-Marxist thought, was criticized by Schwabian pietists as a theologian loyal to Moscow. Ironically, he was even forbidden to speak in some Eastern Bloc countries. In retrospect it is clear that this form of theology was an effective critique of orthodox Marxism and contributed more to the fall of the Berlin Wall than to the polarizing warriors of the Cold War.

The next significant theological impulse came from Moltmann's book *The Crucified God* (1973, English translation 1974), which—along with the *Theology of Hope*—influenced liberation theology in Latin America and elsewhere in multiple ways. The reception of this book also required the author to confront and respond to varying reactions. His attempts to promote a contextual theology of liberation met with both friendly reception and unfriendly distancing on the part of other theologians. Theology in critical engagement with contemporary trends was for some not sufficiently theological, for others not sufficiently critical, and for yet others not sufficiently timely.

Jürgen Moltmann's theological passion and delight in discovery nonetheless were not dampened, even in the midst of controversy and opposition. His next important achievement came in his trinitarian works, particularly his book *The Trinity and the Kingdom* (1980, English translation 1981). Here Moltmann

searched for new insights in the doctrine of God in an attempt to intensify dialogue with Orthodox theologians, especially those in Greece and Romania.

The contributions in this volume are based on this last strand of his thought: almost all the articles are devoted to trinitarian theology and the doctrine of God. The volume is divided into four major parts. The first, "Trinity and Humanity," explores intersections between the triune life of God and some thought patterns and practices of modernity. The second part, "Trinity and Religious Traditions," examines the bearing of the doctrine of the Trinity for some central ecclesial and interreligious problems of today. The third part, "Trinity and God-Talk," contains dogmatic reflections on the intradivine life and its bearing on the life of the world. Finally, the last part, "Trinity and Historical Theology," is devoted to a critical exploration of the resources offered by the Christian tradition for Trinitarian thinking today.

At the same time as this book is being published, a similar one is appearing in Germany, published by Gütersloher Verlagshaus. The German volume, *Der lebendige Gott als Trinität*, first offers contributions on the theme of "God's self-revelation and the doctrine of the Trinity" from the perspectives of classical dogmatics, biblical theology, theological ethics, and comparative religions. The second section offers contributions from systematic and biblical theology to the theme "the doctrine of the Trinity in Scripture, creeds, and doctrinal development." These articles throw light on certain developments in the recent history of theology in exemplary fashion. The third section examines the bases for and contemporary challenges of the conversation between the church and Israel about the doctrine of God under the title "Jewish theology and the Christian doctrine of the Trinity." The fourth section considers the challenges for the "Trinity in ecumenical and interreligious conversations," with particular emphasis on conversations with Orthodox theology and with Islam. The last section ("Trinity, ecclesiology, and spirituality") contains contributions from systematic and practical theology on the subject of worship and the communal spirit in postmodern societies and on the relevance of the doctrine of the Trinity in the theology of baptism, spirituality, and preaching. Further information appears on the final page of this volume.

We heartily thank Tobias Hanel and Wolfram Langpape on the German side. Particular thanks goes to Heike Springhart for her intensive support during the preparation of the contributions for publication. On the American side, special thanks goes to Rose-Anne Moore for preparation of the manuscripts for publication.

A good relationship with Gütersloher Verlagshaus and Fortress Press, especially with Dietrich Steen and Michael West, has enabled not only pleasant cooperation with the publishing houses, but also the aesthetic and thematic affinities between both volumes of this *Festschrift*. For that we are also thankful.

# TRINITY AND HUMANITY