valuable reading for those who would explore Calvin and adaptations of Calvinism in different contexts in a postmodern, culturally sensitive era. These 257 pages worth of reading and reflection make a welcome contribution to Calvin and Reformation scholarship.

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Christine Schirrmacher. *"Let There Be No Compulsion in Religion" (Sura 2:256): Apostasy from Islam as Judged by Contemporary Islamic Theologians: Discourses on Apostasy, Religious Freedom and Human Rights*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2016. Pp. 620.

Christine Schirrmacher, Professor of Islamic Studies at the Evangelisch-Theologische Faculteit in Louvain, Belgium, and teacher of Islamic Studies at the University of Bonn in Germany, is a leading specialist on Islam in the West today, author of numerous books and articles in several languages.

In this hefty work, termed a postdoctoral thesis by the publisher, the positions of three contrasting Islamic scholars on the topic of religious freedom and apostasy are excellently documented and presented. Foreign language sources, particularly Arabic, are usefully translated and analyzed and so made accessible. It gives a good idea of what the West is up against, although this is little recognized—the most blind are those who do not want to see.

The main issue of the work is problematic for any religious faith—the situation of those who fall away, how this state of declension should be considered, and what can or should be done about it. Behind these questions lies the fundamental issue: what sort of freedom is permissible to unbelievers, and what are the rights of freedom of conscience? These are questions with which the Christian tradition has struggled since the time of the Reformation, with different responses, and the positions of the three Islamic scholars examined here have their equivalents in Christianity. Let's not forget Pierre Bayle and his criticism of Calvin and Beza! So the scope of this study, while it is highly specific, has universal import. The choice is also one that is compelling, given the global movement of Islamic populations and hence their exposure to different cultural situations. This question is highly relevant for those who now have on their doorstep Muslim neighbors whose religious motivations are incomprehensible to liberal, secularized politicians and media commentators who wish all Muslims were like Sadiq Aman Khan, the present Mayor of London.

The three Muslim positions presented are: 1) thoroughgoing advocacy of religious freedom; 2) its bipolar opposite, the denial of freedom and its punitive consequences, including the death penalty for apostates (recent events mean that this is the position commonly retained in secularized contexts); and 3) the centrist position, in contrast with the left and the right, which advocates a median position that recognizes the rights of inner freedom of conscience, but falls short in practice: when a believer converts to another faith and manifests open apostasy, the death penalty is legitimate as the ultimate sanction. In Islamic theology, at present, this *via media* seems to be the most common position. For secularism, however, even this middle way is a form of extremism, as would be the position of many of our Protestant or Roman Catholic predecessors. It is interesting to note that two of the three positions advocate the ultimate penalty for unbelief, which means that many of the faithful must be exposed to this as the orthodox acceptable idea. This must have some knock-on effect in the way they consider "apostates" in general.

After an informative introduction presenting the question of religious freedom, what the idea of apostasy entails in Islam, its history, and the status of apostates in majority Muslim societies, the main views on the subject are introduced through the work of three influential twentieth-century Islamic theologians, two of whom are presently active.

Yusuf al-Qaradawi (1926–), based in Doha, Qatar, is the unofficial ideologue of the Muslim Brotherhood (pp. 133–39) and one of Sunni Islam's most influential scholars, known for his rhetoric and militant fatwas. He has allegedly authored over 120 books (none of which he has himself published in English), is the founder of IslamOnline.net, and has a weekly broadcast, "Sharia and Life," on Al Jazeera that reaches sixty million Muslims. He has been sentenced to death in the best way possible (that is, in absentia!) in Egypt, and in 2017 several Islamic states sanctioned him. He condemns Shiite Muslims as heretics, and his fatwas have reputedly called for the death of American civilians and troops in Iraq, gay people, and Jews (p. 155—Israel is a military unit and the object of jihad).

In light of this, it is rather surprising that the author presents al-Qaradawi's as representative of a centrist "moderate position," but obviously she is using the word *moderate* in a particular context, one unfamiliar to our way of thinking. What Dr. Schirrmacher means is that al-Qaradawi is "moderate"—in quote marks—on the question of apostasy from Islam and does not call for execution every time he mentions the topic (p. 280). However, he does make it clear that punishment is a duty and apparently makes no exceptions. He draws the line between those who are inwardly inclined to other

beliefs and those who show outward signs of apostasy; it is these latter who are a danger to the community, the *umma*, which has to be protected. However, he does caution against the suspicion of other Muslims. Schirrmacher correctly remarks that this is a "concession to a purely hypothetical freedom of thought, which … is by no means what the 1948 UN Declaration on Human Rights understands under the rubric of religious freedom" (p. 281). Religious freedom is limited to internal freedom of conscience, a freedom that does not extend to words and deeds that are considered apostate.

Al-Qaradawi has not the slightest doubt about the superiority of Islam and the need for its interests to be protected. Non-Muslims might look askance on executions, whippings, and the severance of members, but within the Islamic community ruled by sharia, this is part of the faith, whether it be Muslims or others who are punished. Nor does al-Qaradawi make any contextual concessions by toning sharia down or suspending it in the interest of religious freedom in places where freedom is the norm. So Schirrmacher considers al-Qaradawi the creator of an ideology with a lack of basis in reality, one that can survive only in his own thought-world or in a closed Islamic society (p. 285). This is not necessarily someone you might wish to have as your friendly Muslim neighbor.

If al-Qaradawi is "moderate," Abu l-A'la Maududi (1903–1979) is another and more alarming kettle of *sunna*, representing a "restrictive" position. Founder of the political Islamist group *Jama 'at-i-Islami*, Maududi was born in India, moved to Pakistan after partition in 1947, and in 1960 wrote the influential *Islamic Law and Constitution* (p. 406), proposing the state as a complete social system where nothing is personal and private, but where Islam controls all of life, including government. Maududi has "lastingly affected the society and politics of Pakistan and has influenced Islamist and Jihadist movement up to the present" (p. 404). He died in Buffalo, New York, in 1979.

Maududi, like al-Qaradawi, makes no claim to be progressive, instead issuing an uncompromising call for applying the death penalty for apostasy from Islam in the context of a comprehensive implementation of Islam, the Quran, and hadith. Maudadi wants to reshape modernity into a homogenous Muslim society. Western secularism and Marxism are placed over against holistic Islam (p. 405). He has been one of the main influences in the Muslim renewal in the twentieth century, influencing the Muslim Brotherhood, Khomeini, and jihadists. In 1942 and 1943 he wrote on the punishment of apostates according to Islamic Law, a polemic with little theology that lacked even a definition of apostasy and avoided the question of what freedom of religion might mean for non-Muslims, as well as that of

what the motives for apostasy might be, and argued for the unconditional application of the death penalty to apostates (pp. 466–504). Ambiguities leave the door open for the condemnation of those who think differently, minorities of all sorts. Maududi disparages "the others," and one trembles to think what becomes of them in the hands of Islamist zealots. Unfortunately, we know the answer to that question. Everything becomes germane to the maintenance of Islamic purity. The Islamic way defines what liberties are, for both Muslims and non-Muslims.

So what about compulsion in religion (Sura 2:256)? Maududi limits the "no compulsion" formula to the question of whether a person can be forced to accept Islam. There is "unabridged freedom in matters of faith" (p. 516). However, once over the threshold, a Muslim (this goes for children born in Islam as well) is in a position of being able to be forced to keep the commands of Islam, including with the aid of the state. So there is no equitable coexistence and no acceptable pluralism. Maududi claims that non-Muslims have a right to practice and propagate their faith in the "limits laid down by the law and decency" (which are not defined, p. 522). This is hypothetical and implies reduced rights and the "duty to submit" (p. 530). While rights are spoken of, they are always limited in an Islamic society. Maududi does not advocate terror and mayhem in Islamic conquest. However, he is for a homogenous sharia-based Islamic state order and allows little or no room for equality or pluralism. The way minorities are treated in Pakistan is an illustration of the absence of tolerance for those who dare break the mold.

Abdullah Saeed (1960–) is an Australian academic and scholar of Islamic studies who is currently the Sultan of Oman Professor of Arab and Islamic Studies at the University of Melbourne. He is particularly known for progressive views on religious freedom in Islam and is a prolific author. Recently he has

> lamented the inadequate level of religious freedom in quite a number of Muslim majority countries and called for Muslim theologians to focus on the existing problematic topic of apostasy, to discuss it, and to distance themselves from the widespread practice of oppression of apostates seen up to now. (p. 287)

Saeed's position within Islam, his target audience, and his significance are presented. Then Schirrmacher describes his analysis of apostasy in his primary work *Freedom of Religion, Apostasy and Islam* (2004) and *The Quranic Case against Killing Apostates* (2011). Working in the pluralistic context of Australian society, and with academic activities in the West, Saeed's views, in contrast with other positions rooted within Islam, are very much affected by and geared to his background, peripheral as it is in the Muslim world.

His arguments tend to relativize the radicality of the other positions presented here by indicating their ambiguities and by using historical, theological, and contextual references. But Saeed is no liberal, secularized Muslim. He maintains that the Quran is divine revelation, and he proposes a renewed exegesis of its texts and a new way of thinking of sources (pp. 382–84, 387). From the perspective of the Protestant Reformation, we can understand that the debate resembles the one we know between Scripture and tradition.

Saeed defends Islam by arguing against the view that takes the death penalty for apostasy as a "'divine law' which for that reason limits religious freedom" (p. 362). The death penalty cannot be upheld on the basis of the few statements that are attributed to Muhammad. Saeed affirms,

> Given that the Quran, as the most important source for Islam, emphasises freedom of belief and does not seem to support the death penalty, any contrary sayings attributed to the Prophet should be read with a high degree of caution. (p. 365)

On human rights also, he argues not simply to make them compatible with Islam but to positively derive them from the center of the Islamic tradition, providing common ground for Muslims and non-Muslims.

This position of openness, in contrast with the rigidity of the preceding ones, can provide a basis for a dialogue on tolerance and freedom in modern multicultural societies. We have to hope that this attitude increases and wins adherents within Islam, as well as among those with other worldviews who are already convinced. Whether Saeed's views would "cut the butter" in the house of Islam is, however, another question. The danger for us in the West is to think hopefully that Saeed is representative, whereas it is probably al-Qaradawi or Maududi and the classic position on apostasy and human rights which sway Muslim minds, with the inevitable consequences.

Schirrmacher is to be praised for her seriousness, careful scholarship, and objectivity, as well as for the irenic tone that extends throughout her work, even when considering extreme ideas. I did regret the absence of an index and a glossary of Muslim usage, which would have helped novices such as myself. Investment in this subject, so foreign to our mentalities, will bring rewards when we as witnesses for Christ contact Muslims around us as fellow human beings. Is it not ignorance and fear of "the other" that spawn intolerance and hatred, whereas proximity brings hospitality, which is, after all, the message of the incarnation?

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