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Documentary History of Religion in America (Book Review)

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nature's realm and Scripture's message of grace came to be regarded as matter of logic and truth. (See John Vander Stelt's *Philosophy and Scripture: A Study in Old Princeton and Westminster Theology*.)

Perhaps Malik's failure to evaluate the origin of the university is a result of his own view of knowledge and reality—a view which is more informed by the Greeks than by the Scriptures. He likes Aristotle's definition of knowledge. Knowledge assumes its own identity and exists apart from a human being's faith response to God:

What you know, or think you know, that you cannot articulate in such a way as to share it with all mankind is not knowledge. It could be faith, it could be feeling, it could be intuition, it could be hallucination, it could be daydreaming, but it is not knowledge. (p. 17)

Malik also seems to embrace a kind of Christianized

Platonism. God is the Beauty, the Goodness, the Justice that men like Socrates and Plato reasoned to exist in our world as only shadows of the real thing. While he admits that Socrates and Plato are still far from the living love of a personal God and are lost in a "deadly loneliness," he still declares: "How close the heart of Socrates and Plato to the living God—almost there!" (pp. 61-62). While Malik keenly recognizes the non-Christian character of the contemporary university, he has failed to embrace a biblically based epistemology and ontology.

Nevertheless, Malik has performed a valuable service for the evangelical Christian community in his critique of the university. And while there are problems with some of his basic assumptions, his critique provides an excellent starting point for trying the spirits of our Christian institutions of higher education—institutions whose faculty have received their graduate degrees from the secular university that Malik describes.

A Documentary History of Religion in America, by Edwin S. Gaustad, Ed., 2 Vols., William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982, 1983, n.p. Reviewed by Louis Y. Van Dyke, Professor of History.

Edwin S. Gaustad, Professor of History at the University of California, Riverside, has compiled an encyclopedic array of documents on the history of religion in America from pre-Columbian times to the present. He chooses the time of the Civil War as the break between volumes one and two. Gaustad divides the work into chapters that correspond approximately with the various phases of political and economic development in North America such as pre-Columbian, discovery and exploration, colonization, independence, early national period, etc. Gaustad has included well-written introductions to each chapter and to each document as well as useful suggested readings at the end of each chapter.

Gaustad's aim in producing this monumental work is threefold. He wants the amateur historian to be able to reconstruct the religious history of America on his or her own; he wishes, by his choice of documents, to reflect the religious variety evident in America's past; and, asserting that "what is written by a committee often deserves to be read only by same," he desires that

private and personal voices speak as well as those of officials and bureaucrats.

On the whole, Gaustad succeeds admirably. The books will serve as excellent reference and resource material for teacher as well as minister and the "amateur" who has the courage to plow through every document will receive his or her own reward. Gaustad correctly includes documents from religions other than Christian in his attempt to demonstrate that pluralism as a religious phenomenon is as old as civilizations in America themselves. One can sympathize with the editor as he faces the choice of which private voices to include and which to leave out, but I would have liked to have seen more included than a fleeting reference to the Christian Reformed Church (II, 34). The CRC statement on war or its view on conscientious objection could certainly have been included to reflect the religious diversity of our own time.

This is the type of work that can be read enjoyably for five minutes or five hours.