God Down Under sets out to explore the naming of God as Trinity in the Australian context. This is not gumtree theology but a worthy goal to explore a global theme of theology like the Trinity from the Australian perspective, in order that the local expression will be ‘at home’ in our context.

Most of the papers appear with responses, which helps the reader get a feel of the conversations of the ATF 2000 conference the book draws on. The introduction and some of the articles (most notably Elaine Wainwright’s story-telling and David Hunter’s account of black-white relations in Australian mission history) explicitly address the theme, but the rest of the articles include only occasional references to the Australian context and many have only oblique references to the Trinity. It seems more a collection of theological writing by Australians than deep level cultural analysis or Trinitarian reflection.

I did appreciate the Eastern and Ecumenical perspectives on the Trinity’s implications for community and worship, Wendy Mayer’s thorough analysis of ‘Pastoral Care in the Early Church’, and discussion of destructive research on human embryos. But for naming the Trinity in Australia I was hoping to read, for example, some serious reflection on Australian egalitarianism. If you do not expect much cultural analysis and enjoy reading Australian writers, it is an interesting volume, but it does not deliver on its promising title and cover blurb, and is not up to the standard of Church and Civil Society.


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