

RESENSIES/ REVIEWS

Duck, R. *Worship for the whole people of God. Vital worship for the 21st century* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013), pp. xxii + 334. ISBN: 978-0-664-23427-0
<http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/actat.v35i1.15>

As teachers of Christian worship, we are always reflecting on and seeking whether we have the best possible resources available to welcome and guide our undergraduate students into this critical field of studying and doing theology. Well, cometh the hour, cometh the book! The majority of the scholars in the field have the greatest respect for James F. White's influential textbook *Introduction to Christian worship (Third Edition Revised and Expanded – 2000)*. However, what was helpful at the end of one era is not necessarily so at the beginning of the next.

White's work profoundly influenced Duck's book. She follows the same phenomenological approach by describing what Christians do when they come together, but differs deeply in that *participation, diversity* and *culture* are far more thoroughly addressed in teaching and leading worship. Instead of describing the language of time and space in which Christians worship, she takes our rootedness in context, culture, location – briefly, where “the people” are – as serious markers for departure. From this “given” the traditional *ordo* of gathering, serving the Word, (*and*) sacraments, and commissioning into pastoral liturgies is still followed – and even also with the same flow of going through the gears of historical roots, theological reflection and pastoral remarks – but the difference (reading: value) being, however, that it is much more conscious, reflective and attentive of the *worship for the whole people of God* – which makes it indeed *vital worship for the 21st century*.

It is interesting to note that this vital insight is stressed for the worship of the church, because it is discovered anew in the classroom. Put differently, this book thoroughly addresses the issues of diversity, difference, and culture, not simply because of their theological weight and importance for the church's worship, but also as an important way of doing worship as the whole people of God in the studying thereof together. Diversity, differences and cultures are not only envisioned as out there, in church and in worship, but also, already, in here, in the studying thereof. One of the great benefits of this book is that hospitality and justice are thought through not only for worship of the whole people of God, but also for the teaching thereof in studying worship with the whole people of God. The whole people of God are envisioned not only in the liturgy and worship of the church, but also

in the world of the liturgical classroom where we *do* Christian worship. The worlds (publics) of church, academia and society are much more integrated in this work, and it shows especially in the author's sensitivity for dealing with issues (reading: gifts) of sexual orientation (LGBT), gender equality – both in terms of marriage and ordination – and worshipping with people of different ages (especially the presence of children) and those with physical or mental disabilities.

Of course, this work is written from a North-American perspective, but at least it is honest, sensitive and critical about this. In addition, it endeavours to emphasize and embody the giftedness of historical roots *and* relevant connections, being simultaneously contextual *and* counter-cultural worship. *Lex orandi, lex credendi* and *lex convivendi* thus apply not only for worship, but also in teaching and studying, as well as in society and community. At least for the time being, we have a critical, hospitable, open and more accessible resource to help develop the epistemological transformation of our liturgical curricula in Southern Africa.

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