

insider, yet a target of insiders' wrath; in the brotherhood, yet also kept out of its highest colloquy and little enamoured of its most deeply held Calvinist verities: Coffey's descriptors betray the difficulties of holding down the man. Thus, for all that Coffey competently lays bare Goodwin's religious and political "radicalism" and "revolutionary" commitment, we also hear of Goodwin the "orthodox" disputant, the besieged deflector of heresy animated by "residual conservatism," the "cautious," "tradition"-bound occupant of the doctrinal "mainstream" (155, 235, 249, 252). This descriptive instability makes an important point of its own, namely, that Goodwin the apostle of liberty of conscience was not espousing a theological free-for-all. Rather, he knew his heresies, and despised them; but his weapons were determinedly and controversially "spiritual." Antinomians, Socinians, Seekers, Ranters, Baptists, Quakers, Fifth Monarchists, Jesuits — these were the constituents of a gallery of horrors, but they were to be put down with discursive rather than punitive weaponry.

John Coffey has painted the colours of John Goodwin, giving us splashes of the rancorous red of Thomas Edwards's heresy-spitting monster, but carefully applying manifold tints and layers in order to compose an absorbing and intricate picture. Meticulous in its scholarship, *John Goodwin and the Puritan Revolution* is a much-needed contribution, a must-read for scholars of the seventeenth century.

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DANIEL DUBUISSON: *The Western Construction of Religion: Myths, Knowledge, and Ideology*. Trans. William Sayers. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003 [1998]; pp. xii + 244.

Dubuisson's book appeared in French in 1998 and by the time of its translation into English in 2003 much of his argument had ceased to be controversial and had been absorbed into a subset of Studies in Religion scholarship that investigated the origins of the discipline, the political and religious allegiance of key scholars, and particularly focused on the Eurocentrism of the term "religion" (Talal Asad, Russell T. McCutcheon, Timothy Fitzgerald, among others). Dubuisson asks three questions: is Christianity the Western form of a thing (religion) that all cultures possess? Is "religion" a term which actually is derived from Christianity and therefore unique to the West? Finally, "should we not, moreover, go somewhat farther and ask whether religion is not effectively the West's most characteristic concept, around which it has established and developed its identity, while at the same time defining its way of conceiving humankind and the world?" (9).

All these are interesting questions and worthy of consideration. However, as is the case with most deconstructive activities the results are unsatisfying. Dubuisson does propose an alternative to "religion"; he is an anthropologist and suggests that "cosmographical formation" is better (this concept is articulated in Chapter 9, "Prolegomena"). However, the gaping holes in the argument that precedes this revelation do not encourage confidence that he has the right answer. Dubuisson glories in the disparate nature of the phenomena called "religious" (as if the disparity constituted illegitimacy) and reproduces one-dimensional views of religions other than Christianity (for example, his insistence that Confucianism is not religious at all is dependent on very selective scholarship — he clearly is unaware of Herbert Fingarette — and his discussions of Buddhism and Hinduism are similarly flimsy). He constantly questions the legitimacy of using "religion" in any context, but sanctions the equally problematic and equally Western-centric terms like science, art, history, poetry, and politics.

One last example illuminates a final problem with this book and others of its ilk. In Chapter 7, “Three Twentieth-Century Debates,” Dubuisson attacks Mircea Eliade (who formerly bestrode History of Religions like a colossus), among others. This is quite a popular pastime in Studies in Religion and is thus unremarkable. However, in the world of multiplicitous discourses, none authoritative evoked by Dubuisson, it is neither interesting nor important whether Eliade’s theories within the History of Religions were the result of his commitment to Fascism and deeply connected to his membership of the Romanian Iron Guard or not (or, for that matter, whether Nathan Soderblom’s theories were the result of his Lutheran faith or Rudolf Otto’s theories the result of his absorption of German Pietism). This is because there is no reason to think Swedish Lutheranism is preferable to Romanian Fascism; it’s a matter of taste (or of power and domination, to evoke Foucault). Dubuisson compounds his misunderstanding of his own position here; evidence that it is incoherent and obscurantist may be found in his assertion that people of varying politics and theological views (European neo-pagans, Roman Catholics, fascists and Guenonian Traditionalists [174–75]) admire Eliade’s work. (It might be evidence that the work can be separated to some extent from the man and has appeal for a range of reasons, some intellectual and some affective). It is nowhere acknowledged that the despised Eliade was deeply influenced by the acceptable Otto.

Dubuisson’s avowed prejudices include a dislike of Traditionalists, phenomenologists of religion, anyone with right-wing political views, the Annales school, the academic study of religion, and Western science, which falsifies the essentially disorganised complexity of the world. The book is quite readable (which is a credit to the translator) and instructive for Anglophone scholars of religion in that the notes provide access to many fascinating works in French that are little known and deserve to be better known. However, the argument is tired and “cosmographical formations” fail to convince. Dubuisson is right that Western scholars should interrogate their disciplines and praxis, but it is to be hoped that most of us are capable of a more reasoned, defensible interrogation than that of *The Western Construction of Religion*.

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JAMES DAVID EARNEST and GERARD TRACEY, eds.: *John Henry Newman, Fifteen Sermons Preached before the University of Oxford*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006; pp. cxviii + 436.

This edition of John Henry Newman’s Oxford University sermons is the latest in the excellent critical editions of Newman’s published and unpublished works to be produced by Oxford University Press since the 1970s. It complements the Letters and Dairies of Newman, and his church-based sermons, with these fifteen university sermons (more a lecture than a sermon) for a more academic audience, preached mostly during his years as vicar of the university church of St Mary the Virgin. That one of the editors is Gerard Tracey, the late Lay Archivist of the Birmingham Oratory, the repository of Newman’s papers, and editor of the excellent volumes 6 to 8 of Newman’s Letters and Dairies, is an indication of the quality of this edition. His work is ably complimented by the collaboration of Emeritus Professor James Earnest of Murray State University in Kentucky.

The editors proceed on the premise that these university sermons are the key to Newman’s thought, and, accordingly, they offer a long Introduction to the volume of

Daniel Dubuisson's book, newly translated from the French, is not merely one more in this line. His is the richest, broadest dissection to date of at once the origin, the function, and the meaning of the term. (Steven Engler Religious Studies Review). "In this important book, Dubuisson offers what could be described as a Feuerbachian critique of religious studies, including comparative, sociological, and especially anthropological accounts of the phenomenon taken to be 'religion.'" (Choice). Daniel Dubuisson is director of research at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, CNRS, in Lille and author of many books in French and English, including *Twentieth Century Mythologies and Impostures et pseudo-science: L'oeuvre de Mircea Eliade*. Dubuisson, D. (2003). *The Western construction of religion: Myths, knowledge, and ideology*. Trans. W. Sayers. These cookies may be set through our site by our advertising partners. They may be used by those companies to build a profile of your interests and show you relevant adverts on other sites. They do not store directly personal information, but are based on uniquely identifying your browser and internet device. If you do not allow these cookies, you will experience less targeted advertising. A review of Daniel Dubuisson, *The Western Construction of Religion: Myths, Knowledge, and Ideology*. Tr. by William Sayers. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003. NAYAR: Western Construction of Religion 107. very notion of a "true" religion through the processes of interiorization and universalization. The first process individualized conscience. In this book, Daniel Dubuisson analyses the long history of the dichotomy between religion and magic, as well as the great stakes of power which it has concealed over the centuries. The Western Construction of Religion Myths, Knowledge, and Ideology. Daniel Dubuisson - 2003. *Magic, Religion, Science, Technology, and Ethics in the Postmodern World*. Barbara A. Strassberg - 2005 - *Zygon* 40 (2):307-322. *Religion and Culture a Critical Survey of Methods of Approach to Religious Phenomena*. Frederick Schleiter - 1919 - Columbia University Press. *What's in a Name?: Reflections on Language, Magic, and Religion*. George Albert Wells - 1993 - Open Court. *Religion and Magic* S. R. Asirvatham, C. O. Pache, J. Watrous (Edd.) by Daniel Dubuisson. No Customer Reviews. Select Format. Hardcover. In this book, anthropologist and historian of religion Daniel Dubuisson contests Mircea Eliade's theory of the existence of a universal Homo Religiosus and argues that "religion" as a discrete concept is a Western construct, an invention of nineteenth-century scholars who created it as a field of scientific study. Before that time, there was little attempt to step outside religious experience and objectify it. In fact, the difference between "secular" Read Full Overview. Edition Details.