

Preface

This book is a modestly revised version of the Hensley Henson lectures that were delivered at the University of Oxford in Hilary Term 2013. They are the product of many years of teaching and reflection: the initial idea for the series stems from my very first weeks teaching at the Anglican theological college at Cuddesdon just outside Oxford in 1992, when I was first charged with giving an introductory course on systematic theology. I had never taught theology before. Before coming to Cuddesdon I had had the luxury of a research fellowship in Sheffield, where I spent a fair amount of time investigating the history of theology and biblical studies, especially in Germany. I had earlier had the privilege of spending a year as a DAAD scholar in Munich from 1986 to 1987, while I was working on my doctorate on Ernst Troeltsch. In my first weeks at Cuddesdon I decided that I would try to make theology interesting to prospective clergy by showing how it related both to the wider society in which it was set, as well as to the ministry of the church in which most of my students were to serve. And this is why I began to read a bit of Schleiermacher and Prussian history. I remember talking about the Battle of Jena in my very first lecture (and wondering what I was doing). I am very grateful for the opportunity to develop this lecture into something a little bit more polished. An interest in Chicago came next. This grew out of various studies of Walter Rauschenbusch and the Social Gospel, which gradually mutated into an interest in the development of sociology as a discipline. It was in lecturing to a group of Masters' students in the early days of the Oxford Master of Theology in Applied Theology that I was first able to test out my interpretation of the close relationships between the two disciplines as they developed in a very different sort of university from that of Berlin. Oxford came last, but has been my main focus of study over the past few years as I have supervised doctorates and taught nineteenth-century theology. I have developed more than a passing interest in the great figures of Oxford theology, including the well-known Tractarians, Newman and Pusey, as well as more liberal

figures such as Benjamin Jowett and Frederick Temple. Earlier studies that provided some of the material for Chapter Three and Chapter Four were published as 'Newman and the Anglican Idea of a University' in *Zeitschrift für neuere Theologieggeschichte/Journal for the History of Modern Theology* 18:2 (2011), 212-227, and 'Essays and Reviews: 150 Years on' in *Modern Believing* 52.2 (2011), 14-22. Fitting these different themes together has proved a rewarding, if at times somewhat laborious, task. In the end, I decided to draw on a method I had developed in a programmatic article, 'On Sociological Theology', featured in the *Zeitschrift für neuere Theologieggeschichte/Journal for the History of Modern Theology* 15:1 (2008), 3-15, when I took over as one of the editors. Parts of that article are used in Chapter One and Chapter Six.

As always, I am grateful to the many different people who have challenged me and listened to what I have had to say over the years, and especially to the Hensley Henson electors for inviting me to give the lecture series. A few stalwarts stayed with me for the duration through the very cold winter and encouraged me with their comments. I hope that I have drawn some of their insights into the published version. I am also aware that my family and my colleagues at Cuddesdon have had to put up with me dashing off to speak in all sorts of places and trying to make deadlines.

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