

## Рецензії

## Reviews

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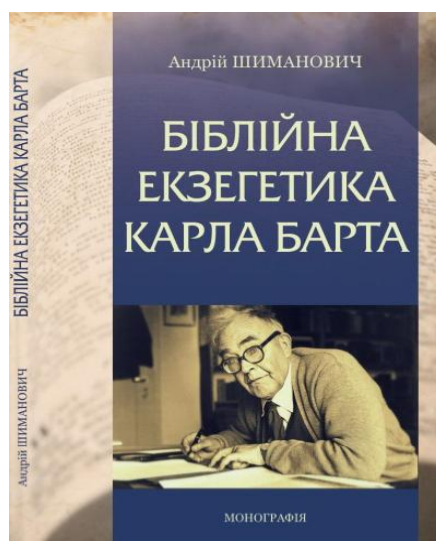
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**Andrii Bobryk***PhD in Theology,**Master of History and Law,**Researcher at the Center for the Study of the Heritage of New Martyrs and Confessors of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Kyiv, Ukraine*ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1141-6637>e-mail: [bobrik.andrei2017@ukr.net](mailto:bobrik.andrei2017@ukr.net)**KARL BARTH'S HERITAGE IN THE CONTEXT OF UKRAINIAN THEOLOGY**

(review of the monograph: Shymanovych A. The Biblical Exegesis of Karl Barth. Cherkasy, 2022)

**Андрій Бобрик***доктор філософії зі спеціальності богослов'я,**магістр історії і права,**співробітник Центру дослідження спадщини Новомучеників і Сповідників XX століття, Київ*ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1141-6637>e-mail: [bobrik.andrei2017@ukr.net](mailto:bobrik.andrei2017@ukr.net)**СПАДЩИНА КАРЛА БАРТА В УКРАЇНСЬКОМУ БОГОСЛОВСЬКОМУ КОНТЕКСТІ**

(рецензія на монографію: Шиманович А. Біблійна екзегетика Карла Барта. Черкаси, 2022. 184 с.)



The monumental heritage of the Swiss theologian Karl Barth (1886-1968) is a powerful example of an ambitious attempt to carry out a comprehensive reflection on the fullness of God's revelation, and to construct a coherent conceptual theological system on the basis of many decades of prominent intellectual activity. Few would disagree that Karl Barth was a dominant figure in the 20th century Christian theology and undoubtedly the most prominent figure in post-Reformation Protestant theology. Moreover, each representative of the future generations of theologians in the 2nd half of the 20th century simply could not ignore Barth's work and had to react in one way or another to Barth's proposed vision of God's reality and the history of mankind's salvation in Jesus Christ.

In the 19th century, under the influence of the Enlightenment's anthropocentric ideas, the attention of theologians was mainly focused on human religious experience (pietism, romanticism). But it was Barth who became the revolutionary figure not only by reversing the development of Western theology. At the same time, he turned the theological lens anew to the side of contemplation not of creature but of the Creator by moving away from liberal theology to the newly established dialectical theology (theology of crisis). Hans Urs von Balthasar noted that this turn had been accompanied by the reactualization of analogia entis concept (Barth's idea of analogia fidei or analogia relationis) which had created the "theoretical grammar" for building a living relationship with God, which is quite

important and significant nowadays for human beings tending to turn a living faith into dead and meaningless forms of simulacra (Jean Baudrillard).

First of all, it should be noted that the monograph under the title “The Biblical Exegesis of Karl Barth” by Andrii Shymanovych is a complete individual theological work which – without any exaggeration – can be regarded as a significant intellectual contribution to the development of modern Ukrainian theology. The basic factor that allows us to assert the uniqueness of this publication is that we deal with the first Ukrainian-language monograph about the most prominent theologian of the 20th century that has been brought to the attention of the Ukrainian theological community. The book by A. Shymanovych contains a comprehensive analysis of the main principles of Karl Barth’s neo-orthodox biblical exegesis viewed upon in the context of entire set of socio-political factors that had influenced the formation of Barth’s theological methodology. In the era of the quantum revolution, in the context of the pluralistic postmodern paradigm’s dominance (when not only new meanings are discovered, but it is also claimed that there are many meanings and none of them has an essential advantage over the others) Karl Barth’s all-encompassing and filigree substantiated doctrine of the Word of God as the witness to the God’s revelation, his traditional for the Calvinist theology emphasis on the undeniable sovereignty of God in his attitude towards human beings (and not on human views on God), Barth’s desire to integrate the Holy Scripture into Christian communities’ life as the sole arbiter for all forms of Church activity, - all this sheds a bright light and creates a solid basis for the postmodern society in the quantum picture of the world. The multiplicity of meanings is the multifaceted revelation given to people by one God. The discovering of these and other important aspects of Barth’s theological mentality emphasizes the uniqueness of A. Shymanovych’s monograph as well as the indisputable relevance of this book for further theological and philosophical studies in modern Ukraine.

The absolute importance of this book also lies in the fact that it reveals a systematic theological reflection on the Christocentric character of Barth’s biblical exegesis with its teleological ecclesiocentrism, which may be regarded as quite significant for supradenominational theology of today. This main topic is carried out by Shymanovych in the context of several subdivisions of Barth’s theology: cosmogony, anthropology, amartology, ecclesiology, and Mariology. In addition, such an approach makes it possible to analyze the veracity of modern Church’s kerygma that is being proclaimed in the liturgical life of Christian communities, as well as it provides a theoretical basis for checking the adequacy of all other aspects of Church communities’ practical life at the beginning of the 21st century.

The author also substantiates the point of view that the radical Christocentrism of Barth’s theology is also of considerable importance for theological epistemology because according to Barth’s conclusions the personality of Jesus Christ is the only unique way for a person to truly know the Triune God and to find his or her authentic identity. Shymanovych masterfully reveals the connection between the anthropology of the great Swiss and Christological issues with trinitarian insights, reminding us that the primary value of a human person lies in his/her being the image and likeness of God, not the servant of any ideology or artificially constructed system of pseudo-religious

ideas. This is what exactly can be regarded as an urgently important message for the entire modern world, especially in the period of Russia’s full-scale aggression against Ukraine, which is closely related to the dehumanization of a human, the deprivation of his/her metaphysical value, as well as the extreme ideologization of the Church (namely, Russian Orthodox Church). Such impregnation of the Church with ideological patterns carries out an unjustified reduction of the God-human essence of Christ’s Church to the level of just one of many other social institutions, and nullifies its primary heavenly calling to be a herald of the Word of God, not a servant of authoritarian secular power.

Among other advantages this monograph has not only great theoretical and practical potential for the intensification of ecumenical dialogue, but it also can join in strengthening the development of confessional theological schools and theological faculties of higher educational institutions in modern Ukraine, since it takes into account and comprehensively reproduces the significant degree of influence of Karl Barth’s intellectual activity upon theological seminaries and universities all over the Western world.

A characteristic feature of the reviewed monograph is sufficient validity of judgements, balanced conclusions, and clarity of wording presented by the author. Also of particular value is the involvement of leading modern English-language sources on the given topic into author’s research process. The book contains many interesting thoughts and author’s conclusions which make a tangible intellectual contribution to modern Ukrainian theology.

It remains to express the hope that this book will not be the last in the creative researches of A. Shymanovych, and will also be the beginning of a new wave of academic interest in the theological heritage of Karl Barth, causing a public discussion among representatives of the Ukrainian intellectual community, namely, philosophers, theologians, historians of ideas, as well as not indifferent Christians and ordinary believers of modern church communities of any denomination. After all, Barth’s unparalleled greatness and the universality of his theology to a certain extent nullify any of our pretended advantages of one over another. It is no coincidence that the German theologian Paul Althaus claimed that “compared to Karl Barth, we are all just dwarfs”.

Finally, it is worth noting that Andrii Shymanovych’s monograph “The Biblical Exegesis of Karl Barth” is undoubtedly a great achievement and a significant contribution to the field of modern theological research in Ukraine which fully meets established academic standards. The author uses a reliable methodology, refers to the relevant works of Ukrainian and foreign researches, and also goes from the purely theological to the interdisciplinary field of humanitarian study. Therefore, this monograph has all the grounds to serve as a reliable foundation for further academic research in the field of historical theology, ecumenical studies, philosophy of religion, biblical exegesis, hermeneutics, and other area of modern Ukrainian humanitarianism.

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