Economics and Religion

The International Library of Critical Writings in Economics series

Edited by Paul Oslington, Professor of Economics and Dean of Business, Alphacrucis College, Sydney, Australia

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- Andrew Henley, Association of Christian Economists Journal

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‘Economists and calculators are beginning – just beginning – to acknowledge the transcendent. Economics and Religion is a landmark on a spiritual journey. The long road from St Thomas through the Blessed A. Smith, so long diverted by the anti-Christ Jeremy Bentham, is taken up again in these volumes. They should be owned by every serious library, whether a library of God or of Mammon. It will not perhaps surprise people that economists have something to say about the economics of religion, since economists believe they have something to say about everything; what is surprising is that religion has something to say about economics.’

– Deirdre N. McCloskey, University of Illinois at Chicago, US

‘Paul Oslington has done a magnificent job in tracking down the papers and extracts from books reprinted in Economics and Religion. No longer will those who work in the field have to chase difficult-to-locate journals or books that are out of print. More than that, the selection indicates that this is an extremely lively and eclectic area of study, not deserving the benign neglect shown by most mainstream economists. The readings on “Historical Relationships” highlight the divorce between economic analysis and theology that occurred very early in the development of the discipline, and which now seems impossible to bridge. A second selection of readings reflects the critique of economic analysis from a theological perspective that has been developed mainly in the last 25 years. And a third set of readings picks up on the economic analysis of religion that has come mainly from the Chicago School in recent years. The selections indicated Oslington’s mastery of the field: it would not be possible to find a better guide.’

– Donald Hay, Oxford University, UK

‘Paul Oslington has done a simply marvellous job in pulling together the various bits of writing on the relation between economics and religion. The collection might surprise quite a few, who might have expected this area to be a trifle thin. In fact, the range and quality of these pieces should impress and delight everyone – including all such sceptics. Ranging across the history of thought, “economic theology”, ethics, methodology, and the application of economics to the study of religious behaviour, these are indeed rich pickings. It is a fascinating collection, taken from a surprisingly rich vein. Well done, Paul Oslington! And well done, Edward Elgar!’

– Geoffrey Brennan, Australian National University, Australia

‘Paul Oslington has gathered together a wide-ranging selection of important articles on the too often neglected links between economics and religion. This is an important service both to the profession and to all those concerned with the philosophical and moral foundations of economics and the economy. The volumes deserve to be widely read.’

– G.C. Harcourt, University of New South Wales, Australia