Grounded on his previous three monographs, namely The Open Secret (2008), A Fine-Tuned Universe (2009) and Darwinism and the Divine (2011), in this work Alister E. McGrath sets out the re-imagination of nature as an approach to a Christian natural theology. In doing so, he intends to provide an approach to natural theology that can accommodate diverse forms of natural theology ‘within a distinctively Christian theological vision of its grounds and possibilities’ (2).

Through a survey of the genealogy of the idea of natural theology, McGrath judges that the notion of natural theology is largely influenced by cultural contexts (11–12), which indicate that ‘[e]very natural theology is a view from somewhere’ (33). Given this, McGrath proposes a Christian natural theology project, which is articulated on the basis of the Christian tradition and aims to ‘hold together the various strands of the notion as a coherent whole’ (25). In his view, essential to this project is a Christian imaginariurn, which ‘offers an imaginative and cognitive framework’ (36).

McGrath then explains the notion of imaginariurn, which is intended to ‘[explore] the interplay of the reason and imagination within a Christian natural theology’ (2–3). In McGrath’s view, the imaginariurn is social and ecclesial, indicating Christian fresh view of the world shaped in the Church (45–47). The notion beneath the imaginariurn is metanoia (μετάνοια), which refers to the transformation of human mind by God. This transformed mind enables humans to see things as they really are (50–54). Moreover, this transformation is mediated through the Church, which enables human imagination and reason to work together to see nature as rational through the lens of the Trinitarianism (55–65).

In the third chapter, McGrath proposes three interpretative strategies to undertake natural theology in order to overcome the ambiguity of nature. First, viewing nature as a book, McGrath maintains that the Church’s reading of the book of Scripture interprets the book of nature (86). Second, framing a landscape of nature as an approach to natural theology, McGrath suggests that the Church as ‘a community of visualization’ could frame the landscape in its own concerns (93). Third, seeing nature as a sign, McGrath argues that nature should be understood on the basis of the sign of cross within the Church as the community of interpretation (93–100).

In the two chapters following, McGrath moves on to elaborating the motivations and contexts of natural theology and relevant major concerns as well
as challenges. In his view, the context of natural theology is the two thousand years of Christian history, which is concretized in specific cultures and places (101–105). Of the motivations for natural theology during the Christian history, the prominent one is religious, such as to appreciate God’s wisdom better and to strengthen one’s piety (106–107). Despite those challenges to natural theology in the modern world, the beauty and wonder of nature still entail the human imagination of nature, which could serve to confirm the rationality of Christian faith and the coherence of reality (113, 116–121). This reflects human innate aspiration for meaning. In this sense, natural theology is ‘an enterprise of theological reflection or speculation which happens naturally’ (124). McGrath argues that these motivations for natural theology bring about challenges, concerning its propriety, ontotheology, its intellectual adequacy, the immanent frame of the world, the Barth-Brunner debate (1934) and fideism. In his view, the responses to these challenges should be grounded in Jesus Christ and re-image nature in the Church as the interpretative community (132–153).

In the final chapter, McGrath presents the promise of natural theology: enriching theology itself and promoting the dialogue between the Church and culture (154–155). A Christian natural theology with the Christian *imaginarius* provides ‘a richer vision of reality’ than that of scientism (158). Moreover, it endues nature with spirituality by the transformed Christian mind (163–168). In this sense, a Christian natural theology enriches and broadens systematic theology (172–173). On the other hand, it also strengthens Christian apologetics with ‘an act of faithful imagination’ (180).

Several merits could be discerned explicitly. McGrath’s notion of the Christian *imaginarius* strongly confirms that natural theology is more than the rational understanding or doctrinal formulations of nature. Rather, Christian natural theology shows how the transformed human mind accesses to nature intellectually, aesthetically and affectionally. Moreover, the concept of the ecclesial *imaginarius* sets the whole tradition of Christianity as the resource for undertaking natural theology in the Church. Thus, natural theology occupies a significant place in Christian dogmatics.

Despite these merits, McGrath appears to overemphasize historical contexts at times. For example, he argues that Barth’s critique of natural theology is best grasped according to the political context of Nazism (145). However, some Barthian scholars judge that this viewpoint is highly doubtful. Barth’s theological contexts and the long tradition of the criticism of natural theology in Germany should be reckoned with. Nonetheless, McGrath’s work convincingly attests that re-imaging nature is a legitimate and strong approach to the Christian natural theology.