

(134–35). This composition was part of a restructuring of the material he found in 2–12, to yield a result which demonstrated a transition from a time of judgment to a time of salvation.

The argument involves the detailed comparison of many words and expressions and their contexts in order to trace the hand of the Babylonian prophet, and it is pursued with the author's accustomed lucidity and persuasiveness. The argument is cumulative, and many cases discussed entail debate with others who have read them differently. Readers will find some arguments more convincing than others, as indeed the author would expect.

There are important general issues, however. Clearly the extent to which the thesis presented here will be found convincing will depend in large measure on the acceptance or otherwise of certain basic postulates about interpreting the Old Testament, which will have become evident from the foregoing. Readers who are convinced that Isaiah is the entirely the work of Isaiah of Jerusalem may feel out of sympathy with the enterprise. Others, broadly sympathetic, may question the particular thesis. One question might concern the relationship between the product of Deutero-Isaiah's work that is postulated here and the similar structures of other prophetic books (*i.e.* a movement from judgement to salvation that now seems embedded in the form; Hosea and Jeremiah are cases in point). This question needs an answer in relation to the common belief that the prophetic books have received their shape from the all-embracing activity of the Deuteronomists. Williamson seems unwilling to accept this kind of account of the composition of Isaiah. But was Deutero-Isaiah, alternatively, conforming to a known pattern of activity in producing his specific work, and if so was it to be found in already existing prophetic books?

Behind this kind of question lies another controversial matter. In the concept of a given tradition of belief available to and taken up by a new generation, there is an important theological affirmation. This consists in a belief in the vitality of the theological ideas that underlie the process described, and even a correspondence between faith and event. It is a view which is characteristic of those critical approaches to the OT which have not sought ultimately to separate the critical and the theological endeavours. In this important respect it differs from a certain new breed of discourse in OT studies which has chastised

older critical scholarship for being too much in the pocket of Theology. It is encouraging to find a work of criticism from the hand of a leading OT scholar which is informed by a belief in the vitality of the word of God as formative of Israel's religious experience.

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Reclaiming the Ground: Christianity and Socialism

John Smith and Others

edited by Christopher Bryant

London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1993

142 pp. £5.99

RÉSUMÉ

Nous avons là une série d'articles de John Smith, jadis chef de l'opposition au Parlement britannique, ainsi que d'autres auteurs, sur le christianisme et le socialisme. L'essai sur la logique de la communauté par Hilary Armstrong est de loin le meilleur et le plus utile.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Eine Essaysammlung von John Smith (herausgegeben zu seiner Zeit als Oppositionsführer im britischen Parlament) und anderen zum Thema „Christentum und Sozialismus“. Der mit Abstand beste und am stärksten praxisorientierte Essay ist „The Logic of Community“ von Hilary Armstrong, MP.

John Smith led the Labour party in opposition to government in the U.K. and died not long after the publication of this volume.

By far the best chapter in it is by the only woman contributor, Hilary Armstrong MP, PPS to John Smith on 'The Logic of Community'. She examines the roots of the Labour Party in Methodism and notes that for them 'there was no opposition at all between the hard work of self-improvement and the gift of skill and self to neighbours and the community. It was easier to learn and improve yourself because it was done in the context of others and the community . . . you need to be self-developed in order to work for social development. This relationship has been absent from our policies and politics for some

time ... Jesus quite explicitly enjoined his disciples to fulfil his law by loving their neighbour as themselves, not instead of themselves. Part of the gospel is definitely the genuine love of oneself, born of one's knowledge of the forgiveness and love of God. We need to fight against the false idea that building a community means denying people the right to do well for themselves. We must find practical ways of creating a society where individuals build up communities and the community builds up individuals.'

This essay is by far the most practical, but needs to go further and suggest ways in which its vision can be fulfilled. Until it does that the idealism of the other essayists (Bob Holman, Tony Blair M.P., Rev Dr John Vincent, Paul Boateng M.P., Chris Smith M.P. and John Smith M.P., will remain fine words which raise hopes only to dash them, and leave the field free in the UK for policies which encourage self-help mostly at the cost of community.

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The Metaphor of God Incarnate

John Hick

London: SCM, 1993; pp. x + 180. £9.95 pb.

RÉSUMÉ

Il y a bien des années, John Hick a publié un ouvrage intitulé Le Mythe du Dieu incarné où il critiquait la crédibilité d'une interprétation littérale de la doctrine de Jésus-Christ Dieu incarné, et se faisait l'avocat d'une interprétation mythologique de cette doctrine. Dans le présent volume, il continue ses attaques contre le point de vue littéral, mais défend maintenant une interprétation 'métaphorique'. Les écrits de Hick sont toujours caractérisés par une clarté et une vraisemblance de surface. Les théologiens orthodoxes seront en désaccord avec lui sur presque tous les points importants. L'auteur de la recension pense qu'il est plus important de critiquer sa reconstruction historique des données du Nouveau Testament (selon laquelle Jésus n'aurait pas revendiqué la divinité), plutôt que de réfuter les arguments philosophiques contre la cohérence de la formule de Chalcedoine.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Vor vielen Jahren gab John Hick The Myth of God Incarnate heraus, einen Band, der den wortwörtlichen Glauben an Christus als den inkarnierten Gott attackierte, aber zugleich eine mythologische Interpretation dieses Glaubens verteidigte. Im vorliegenden Werk setzt der Autor den Angriff auf die wortwörtliche Sicht fort und verteidigt nun eine „metaphorische“ Auffassung. Hicks literarische Produktion ist rein äußerlich betrachtet stets von Klarheit und Plausibilität geprägt. Orthodoxe Theologen werden jedoch an fast jedem wesentlichen Punkt anderer Meinung sein. Der Besprecher des Buches hält eine Kritik der historischen Rekonstruktion der neutestamentlichen Daten (die zu der Schlußfolgerung führt, daß Jesus für sich selbst niemals Göttlichkeit beanspruchte) für notwendiger, als sich über die philosophischen Argumente zu ärgern, wonach das Chalcedonense inkohärent sei.

Many years ago, John Hick edited *The Myth of God Incarnate*, a volume which attacked the literal credibility but defended a mythological interpretation of belief in Christ as God incarnate. In this present book, he continues to attack the literal view and now defends a 'metaphorical' view.

The arguments he offers will not surprise those acquainted with Hick's work. An historical-critical approach to the New Testament suggests that Jesus did not claim deity for himself. That being the case, any other foundation for claiming his deity is dubious. Hick further thinks that, over the course of church history, no one has been able to give a satisfactory account of the Chalcedonian formulation, understood as a declaration of literal incarnation. These attempts include some sophisticated contemporary philosophical expositions, which Hick critically analyzes. Nor will kenotic theories of the incarnation work. This makes it the harder to overlook alarming side-effects of the traditional doctrine; people have appealed to it to justify antisemitism, colonial exploitation, patriarchalism and an attitude of superiority towards adherents of other faiths. What we may hold literally is that God was acting through Jesus who opened his life entirely to the will of God and that Jesus' love was of a self-giving quality reflecting in a finite life the infinite love of God. This being so, we can speak of the incarnation positively as a metaphor. When a metaphor forms the basis of a complex cluster of ideas, a myth develops.