

still asking at the end of the discussion whether the sort of overall synthesis attempted here was not too ambitious, and whether at best we were not talking (sometimes at least) about family resemblances between what remain nonetheless different realities. If this is the case then the categorical substitutability of any one for another cannot simply be presupposed. Thus, for example, questions about which of them apply and which (arguably) do not in a statement such as 'Faith is essential to salvation' (270) may be asked and must be answered. Of the various 'models' offered for consideration in Chapter 8, while it may well be the case that more than one might legitimately be appealed to or tolerated in relation to this question, some, it would seem, do not really belong there, and we should not be afraid to say so.

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EuroJTh (1996) 5:2, 170-171

0960-2720

Reclaiming Dietrich Bonhoeffer: The Promise of His Theology

C. Marsh

Oxford: OUP, 1994, 185 pp., £22.50, H/B,
ISBN 0 19 508723 2

RÉSUMÉ

Dans le flot ininterrompu d'ouvrages sur Bonhoeffer, celui-ci a des chances d'exercer le plus d'influence dans le milieu théologique. Il explore le fondement souterrain, souvent négligé, de la pensée philosophique de Bonhoeffer, qui a joué un rôle primordial dans son orientation. L'exposé de sa pensée philosophique est profond et techniquement réussi. Dans une première partie, l'auteur présente l'arrière-plan de Bonhoeffer, non seulement dans la théologie dialectique, mais aussi avec plus de recul dans la tradition théologique allemande. La seconde partie explore les relations de Bonhoeffer avec Barth, Tillich, Hegel et Heidegger. Une troisième partie, assez brève, noue la gerbe, en un excellent résumé du cheminement philosophique et théologique de Bonhoeffer.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Von den weiterhin in großer Menge produzierten Büchern zu Bonhoeffer wird dieses Buch wohl eines der einflussreichsten sein, zumindest im Bereich der akademischen Theologie. Es untersucht die vernachlässigte

unterschwellige philosophische Gedankenwelt Bonhoeffers, d.h. die Einflüsse, die ihn am stärksten geprägt haben. Das Werk stellt eine profunde und beweiskräftige Behandlung seiner philosophischen Theologie dar. Im ersten Teil behandelt der Autor Bonhoeffers Hintergrund, nicht nur im Kontext der dialektischen Theologie, sondern im Gesamtzusammenhang der deutschen Tradition. Der zweite Teil untersucht zudem seine Beziehung zu Barth, Tillich, Hegel und Heidegger. Ein abschließender, kurzer Teil vereint die verschiedenen Fäden zu einer ausgezeichneten Zusammenfassung von Bonhoeffers theologisch-philosophischer Pilgerfahrt.

Of the continuing flow of books on Bonhoeffer this book is likely to be one of the most influential in academic theology. It explores the neglected subterranean world of Bonhoeffer's philosophical thought where the most fundamental influences upon him are to be found. Whereas most recent works have mainly picked away at the popular and applied Bonhoeffer, this book is a profound, technically skilled and sustained treatment of Bonhoeffer's philosophical theology. The text uses some relatively rare technical words when it does not need to but this is excusable when the underlying labours are so highly competent.

The book falls into three major parts: I *The Context of Reformation*, II *Life Together* and III *The Self for Others*. In the first part the author tackles the background to Bonhoeffer not only in dialectical theology but also much further back in the German tradition. On the question of Bonhoeffer's relation to Barth, the former's thought emerges as 'a continuous wandering along the various paths of the secondary objectivity of relation, attentive with an intensity not found in Barth to the inner rhythms of worldliness', but without jettisoning Barth's attention to the aseity of God. This and later chapters provide a rare illumination on Bonhoeffer's often alleged role as the theologian of 'secular' Christianity. The second part of the book explores further Bonhoeffer's relationship to Barth, especially on philosophy and revelation. It then proceeds to achieve a similar goal with Tillich. Analyses of Hegel and Heidegger follow, and all the time Bonhoeffer's stature as an interpreter of this tradition grows. A brief final part brings the threads together and points the way towards an appreciation of Bonhoeffer's theology.

Along the way the discussion focuses on such matters as Bonhoeffer's ability to 'Chris-

tify' Hegel, Heidegger and friends, and it demonstrates more than most treatments do just how much he owed to Barth, particularly the emphasis on revelation as a thorn in the flesh of all philosophy, idealist or transcendentalist. But is it, in the end, theology with a full commitment to revelation or is it skewed by the peculiar pilgrimage of the German philosophical tradition? How far should Kant's epistemology and the chain of reactions to it, from Hegel to modern existentialism, whirl theology around its head?

For all the protests to the contrary, it seems virtually impossible to penetrate the caverns of German philosophical theology without being diverted into wrangles about subjectivity, existence and self-knowledge. It is Bonhoeffer's greatness to have held on to a Christocentric, even on occasion Trinitarian, supposition in the very thick of this intellectual struggle. Barth, perhaps rightly, avoided some of the cul-de-sacs altogether and can claim some of the credit for Bonhoeffer's virtue here. Many evangelicals will be reserved over Bonhoeffer precisely at the point where they are over Barth: on the nature of revelation. All the same, they can only be impressed with the determination with which Bonhoeffer refuses to yield sovereignty even to 'man come of age'. In this main we can see, with the help of Marsh, the triumph in Bonhoeffer of Luther over philosophy.

The final few pages are an excellent summary of Bonhoeffer's theological-philosophical pilgrimage and the book, with its somewhat technical handling of the subject, is worth reading just in order to reach these pages.

This is probably not a work to recommend to theological students in general but should be read by any teacher of Bonhoeffer's thought or any enthusiast for the subject.

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EuroJTh (1996) 5:2, 171

0960-2720

The Glory of Christ by John Owen
Edited and abridged by R. J. K. Law
Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1994, 168
pp, £2.95, pb, ISBN 0 85151 661 0

RÉSUMÉ

La théologie de John Owen, connue pour sa profondeur, et qui s'exprime dans l'adoration plutôt que dans des formules christologiques,

est rendue plus accessible dans ce résumé de grande valeur.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

John Owens tiefsinnige und bedeutsame Theologie, die sich in der Anbetung statt in christologischen Formeln äußert, ist nun dank dieser wertvollen, gekürzten Fassung besser zugänglich.

This paperback is the third in the series 'The Treasures of John Owen for Today's Readers'. These volumes (and there are more to follow) are edited abridgements of John Owen's most significant treatises. They were prepared by Dr. Law for his own benefit and, their value having been recognised, have now been released to a wider readership.

Those who are familiar with John Owen and who possess the sixteen volume edition of his Works (edited by Goold, published by the Banner of Truth) will be interested to compare this volume with the original version (Vol. 1 pages 285ff.). There can be little doubt that this edited and abridged version is much more readable for those who are not already comfortable with Owen's style and language. For example:

Original: 'Reckon in your minds, that this beholding of the glory of Christ by beholding the glory of God, and all his holy properties in him, is the greatest privilege whereof in this life we can be made partakers' (page 306).

Law's Version: 'Make up your mind that to behold the glory of God by beholding the glory of Christ is the greatest privilege which is given to believers in this life' (page 22).

Owen does not attempt to provide a Christology in the academic sense of that term. Instead he calls us to contemplate the significance of Christ. There is indeed a deep and significant theology here but it is a theology which expresses itself in worship rather than in an examination of Christological formulae.

Owen's treatise on *The Glory of Christ* is a treasure indeed. In a day when so much theology is man-centred rather than God-centred, concerned with the sociology of religion rather than the revelation of the living God, this book provides a welcome counter balance. It also demonstrates how much is yet to be learned by the Church today from the seventeenth century Puritans.

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