

and allusions to the trial which provide clues as to Luke's understanding and interpretation of this event. 'The fact that virtually all these trial references come in contexts where their function is to provide assurance with regard to Jesus' identity and his role in the economy of God's salvation strongly suggests that the account of Jesus' trial is itself meant to have a similar function for Luke's readers'. Therefore he concludes that previous scholarship has marginalized what is at the heart of Luke's representation of Jesus' trial: 'the author's concern with the confirmation of the Christological tenets of the gospel'.

Part Two, the Church on Trial, finds similar themes throughout the trials of Acts. Even where Peter, Stephen or Paul or those explicitly on trial, in reality it is the gospel which is the primary focus of their trials. The apostles do not defend themselves but testify to the gospel, whether in the face of Jewish, pagan or Roman opposition. Thus Luke provides an *apologia* for the gospel which shows that it is the true fulfilment of Jewish Scripture, that it has a legitimate place in the Gentile world of the Roman empire, and that there is no incompatibility between being either Jewish or Roman as well as Christian, as seen especially in the person of Paul.

Neagoe's study offers a reading of Luke-Acts which incorporates much of the text into one consistent understanding of Luke's purpose in writing. It also offers numerous helpful exegetical insights along the way. Thus, for example, it makes the whole account of Paul's shipwreck and deliverance an integral part of the trial of the gospel and the basis for his preaching of the gospel in Rome, and it supports the view that the ending of Acts is a carefully crafted and fitting conclusion. Only now is it clear not only that Paul has done nothing to deserve death, but also that he is competent to help others experience divine salvation. 'His innocence is a sign that this message can truly lead God's people to salvation. It is only after Paul's personal innocence and the trustworthiness of his witness have been established that the success of the gospel in Rome can be envisaged'.

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Goethes Theologie
Peter Hofmann

Paderborn-München-Wien-Zürich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2001, 542pp., EURO 84, ISBN 3-506-73931-X.

SUMMARY

An intriguing study of Goethe by a 'fundamental theologian' who shows himself well-versed in the primary material of Goethe's works, even if the interaction with secondary literature both Germanist and historical-theological insights seem lacking overall. Stimulating for

the student of culture and the Christian apologist alike.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Eine faszinierende Studie über Goethe von einem Fundamentaltheologen, der zeigt, dass er mit dem Werk Goethes gut vertraut ist, auch wenn die Interaktion mit germanistischer sowie historisch-theologischer Sekundärliteratur insgesamt fehlt. Das Buch ist stimulierend sowohl für den kulturell interessierten Studenten als auch für christliche Apologeten.

RÉSUMÉ

C'est là une étude surprenante sur Goethe de la part d'un théologien fondamental qui se montre bien versé dans les œuvres de Goethe, même s'il semble manquer à cet ouvrage la prise en compte de ce qui a été écrit sur Goethe et son œuvre tant du point de vue de la littérature allemande que du point de vue historico-théologique. Un travail stimulant au plan culturel et au plan de l'apologétique chrétienne.

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This book shows how Goethe replaced 'book of Scripture' with 'book of Nature', and thus it is really a theology of Nature which was self-confessedly only semi-Christian. This may seem like the old 'natural science versus faith' conflict, but in Goethe it came to mean a lot more. Nature is not just to be studied scientifically but viewed symbolically, adored and communed with. He stood against the position of Jacobi who would only take that wisdom from nature which agreed with Scripture: that was, for Goethe to be ungrateful. To know God where he reveals himself is the most blessed thing. But that is in the receipt of pure phenomenon, the idea in its appearing, from which many reception one has to form into an 'aggregate'. (254)

We might wonder just where Goethe's theology is to be found. I would have thought, in Faust and in sections of *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. It is however Goethe's theory of colour (the *Farbenlehre*) which provides Hoffmann with his fundamental Goethean theological text. There are some similarities with Schelling's 1809 'Freiheit' but of course it is a development out of Spinozism in regarding the unity of all to be found in the aperçu of all in symbol. A theology of Nature as setting limits and framework for what a theology of History can do. Nature is thus an *Offenbarungsdatum*, and Goethe provides something more than the subjectivity of an Idealist philosophy of Identity.

Goethe's religion, which was wary of tradition and all that seemed too obviously confessional-theological was a good one for *Kulturprotestantismus* to use in its attack on Catholic doctrinalism, despite Goethe's obvious sympathies for the catholic religious aesthetic which was full of 'awe' and symbolism, and despised Kant's cosy optimism which did not see how life was about suffering and the experience of the cross (see 394-403). As the angels sing at the end of Faust: 'Wer immer strebend sich bemüht/Denn können wir erlösen'. He was aware

of all thought being caught in history, such that he viewed Kirchengeschichte als 'Mischmasch von Irrtum und Gewalt' (359) but history itself is not per se a fall but is full of the demonic, chaotic and unpredictable, from which poetic myths are inspired and the heavens filled. Importantly, 'Das Dämonische vertritt nicht das Göttliche im patheistischen Naturkonzept, sondern es zeigt die Ambivalenz und Widersprüchlichkeit des Göttlichen..' (367) Against Blumenberg and W. Muschg, it is not a Goethean pantheism here in which God is good and evil spirit, order and disorder, earthquake/wind fire and 'still, small voice', but that God is ultimately unpredictable: 'Neomo(sic) contra Deum nisi Deus ipse'(ibid.)

One thing that is annoying about this book is its lack of an index. I wanted to see whether he was aware of Nicholas Boyle's work and his view of the 'Leibnizian' Goethe. Eventually I found that he is not aware of it, nor of much of non-German scholarship. Goethe's nonconfessional theology was more than just a philosophy of Nature. One might want to call it a fundamental theology, in the sense that 'seine Theologie ist sein Werk als Ganzes' with the principles of the Farbenlehre worked out in *Faust* and *Wilhelm Meister*.

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SUMMARY

This review will attempt to give some flavour of what has been achieved so far in print by the first three volumes of the Scripture and Hermeneutic series, under the general oversight of Craig Bartholomew of the University of Gloucestershire and Colin Greene of the Bible Society. There is no doubting the spiritual energy, intellectual engagement and Christian conviction at the core of this project.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Diese Rezension versucht einen Geschmack von dem zu vermitteln, was bisher in den ersten drei Bänden der Reihe Scripture and Hermeneutics geleistet wurde, die unter der allgemeinen Verantwortung von Craig Bartholomew von der University of Gloucestershire und von Colin Greene von der Bible Society steht. Die geistliche Energie, die intellektuelle Auseinandersetzung sowie die christliche Überzeugung im Herzen des Projekts sind unbezweifelbar.

RÉSUMÉ

Cette recension tente de donner une idée de la contribution apportée par les trois premiers volumes de la série *Scripture and Hermeneutics*, dirigée par Craig Bartholomew, de l'université de Gloucestershire, et par Colin Greene, de la Société Biblique. On ne peut douter de l'énergie spirituelle, de l'implication intellectuelle et de la conviction chrétienne qui sont à l'œuvre dans ce projet.

* * * *

The title of the first volume, *Renewing Biblical Interpretation* is fairly self-explanatory.

In trying to reintroduce typology as critically valid, Neil Macdonald's intriguing point is that events are bigger than author's intentions. The truth of Genesis 3 goes further than its meaning. He takes the example of someone referring to Jones as the one who is sweeping leaves when it is in fact Smith: it is not a very big mistake to make when they look so much the same. Using Barth's insistence that the Son of God assumed humanity (not an individual hypostasised man), 'Adam' is understood as common humanity who gets redefined as Christ. But can we actually claim that what the Hebrew prophets saw was 'Adam'? (In Macdonald's rejection of *kenosis*, I fear Thomasius' view of the Incarnation is somewhat misrepresented.) As early as Irenaeus it was clear that this act of redefinition was not an event 'thousands of years later' but of something latent behind the external 'OT' form. But what about other examples of biblical typology, where it is harder to think of the Hebrew bible figure as 'really' Christ (or some other New Testament referent)? Is it not better to see it as an example of seeing darkly, as in the case of , say, Zerubbabel? Mary Hesse's response is disappointing and seems to come down to two points: 1 the bible taken neat is sometimes plain wrong and univocity can be a