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Editorial

Mark Elliott

This is my last editorial for the European Journal of Theology. I leave it, I hope, in a healthy enough condition. I have been very pleased and grateful over the last year or so to have had a number of contributions of good quality from a variety of countries. In this volume Slovakia, France and Lithuania are well-represented, as of course pan-evangelical ventures such as the Scripture and Hermeneutics series as reviewed by myself. There are not only the good number of reviews of English and German books, but also French ones thanks to the efforts of David Gysel of Vaux-sur-Seine, and we look forward to contributions from Holland and Italy for example. We hope to upgrade the journal by making sure that each contributed article will be read not only by the editor, but by a specialist in the subject area, so that *EuroJTh* will be known henceforth as a 'refereed' journal of high academic quality, or should I say even higher than it has already been. Under the editorship of that Polish-speaking Scot (Dr. Jamie Grant) the journal promises much for the near future.

We also have a great FEET (Fellowship of European Evangelical Theologians) conference in Berlin to look forward to this coming August (22-26). The subject is Spirituality. This is a topic that might seem more tasteful to the educators and institutional funders of Europe than 'dogmatic theology' or 'Old Testament ethics', but which to be true to itself must very quickly relate to both

those sub-disciplines among others, and in reading the Scriptures listen for answers to hard questions. Like the journal whose parent it is, FEET seeks to cover a wide range of themes in its conferences but also to bring people across Europe together to seek to share and think through their fellowship in the gospel. We always have a well-resourced bookstall on these occasions, owing to the wonderful service of Ford Munnerlyn of Giessen, but we would also encourage people to bring a sample copy of their own (or friends') publications along with information on how to order. Having had a successful conference in Prague in 2006, we now move a little north to a location we hope will be just as accessible to many.

We live in an on-line world. This journal now has a webpage as part of FEET's <http://www.feet-europe.net/journal/>. If you look at it you will see that there is not much there, but we do hope that we can begin to put at least some sample articles, and who knows, have a discussion forum, even a place to advertise employment or openings in the realms of theology and ministry. We are conscious that most of our colleagues in Europe do their work of teaching theology along with church responsibilities - as it should be, and yet how important, as Bishop JC Ryle said is the personal holiness of a pastor and teacher. For that reason spirituality matters just as much as ecclesiology as the 'horizon' for our work of Christian thinking.

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David W. Torrance studied theology with Karl Barth and is a Presbyterian Minister in the Church of Scotland;
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The Reconciliation Of Joseph With His Brothers

Sin, Forgiveness And Providence

Genesis 45.1-11 (42.1-45.11) and 50.15-21¹

Pierre Berthoud

Faculté Reformée, Aix-en-Provence

* * * * *

A. Introduction: the two aspects of this study

This Bible reading is divided into two major parts which together show how sin, forgiveness and reconciliation are included in God's providential purposes without the human actors losing their significance:

- 1) The story of Joseph within the broader context of Genesis
- 2) The meeting and reconciliation of Joseph and his brothers in Egypt (Gen 45.1-11) and its lasting effects (50.15-21).

B. The story of Joseph within the broader context of Genesis

The story of Joseph begins with chapter 37. More precisely this tenth section of Genesis (Gen 37.2-50.26) is introduced by the well-known formula, *אלה החלום* (37.2) and deals with the account of Jacob's line, the history of his family and specifically, but not exclusively, of Joseph, the main actor of the events recorded in the concluding part of the book. Indeed, as Stephen recalls in his speech to the Sanhedrin in which he summarizes the early history of Israel, this section contains narratives related essentially to Joseph, but are of utmost importance to the fulfilment of the Abrahamic promise (Ac 7.9-16). The stage moves from Canaan to Egypt and the whole story has a distinct Egyptian flavour to it. Evangelical biblical scholars, on the basis of external and internal evidence, have generally located the events recorded in these chapters during the middle kingdom, period of his-

tory when the foreign (Hyksos) fifteenth dynasty reigned over Egypt and had as its summer capital, Avaris (Tell el-Dab'a) in the East Delta. Thus, the cultural and linguistic background reflect, generally speaking, this epoch, but one can also observe traces of later editorial adjustments.²

Though integrated into the general genealogical and historical structure of the Book of Genesis, the Joseph narrative (Gen 37; 39-50) is more readily recognized as a literary and theological unit. Thus, the fragmentary literary approach arguing that the present text is a combination of at least two major documents, J and E (with some sections belonging to the P strand), has given way to a synthetic analysis that emphasizes both the literary coherence and qualities of this composition.³ The 'Joseph story' has often been qualified as a piece of Wisdom literature and Joseph, the wise man, an illustration of the true nature of wisdom. We would tend to agree with this analysis as long as one retains the historical frame and setting of the narrative. It is not just fiction, a short story conveying some moral and spiritual truths, but the narrative is rooted in history and integrated into a larger literary entity. The drama that comes to a climax has its origin in the family tensions that are related in the preceding chapters. As G. J. Wenham indicates 'the tension between Leah and Rachel in Gen 29.31 erupts into open warfare between Leah's sons and Jacob in Gen 34 and 35.22. These rifts between the sons and the father and between Joseph (Rachel's son) and his half brothers are deepened in chapter 37'.⁴ The narrator of the 'Joseph story' is both talented and creative. He ably captures the attention and

the interest of his audience as he pictures the different scenes of the drama and its developments. All along the narrative there is not a moment of boredom and the level of interest remains high, right up to the denouement (Gen 44). We, no doubt, stand before a work of art revealing profound psychological insight and theological significance.

In comparison with other sections of the patriarchal narrative in which we are told that Abraham, Isaac and even Jacob are the object of divine communication there are, in the last chapters of Genesis, very few allusions to special revelation. Apart from the dreams of Joseph, the cupbearer, the baker and Pharaoh, which emphasize the implicit nature of divine communication, the only explicit manifestation of God is given to Israel/Jacob at the time of his departure for Egypt. In 'a vision at night' the Lord reassures the patriarch: 'I am God, the God of your father', he said. 'Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again And Joseph's own hand will close your eyes' (Gen 46.2-4). Jacob is anxious. As he is leaving Canaan for Egypt, he must be wondering if and how the promise God made to Abraham would come about. In revealing himself specifically to Jacob, the Lord reassures him. The stay in Egypt, though significant, would only be a parenthesis. The threefold promise made to Abraham would be fulfilled in due time! With the arrival of Joseph on the scene, the patriarchal history was to take a decisive step. Jacob's household, including the patriarch's twelve sons was to be the basis upon which a holy nation would be edified. The time had come for the patriarchal family to become a nation. It was in Egypt that this metamorphosis was to take place. It is a time of natural growth during which God bestows his blessing and protection upon His people, but of reduced revelational activity. It is during such times that God's promises are maturing and growing towards fulfilment. This is also true of our own lives. At times, we are witnesses of God's spirit as he renews our lives in depth. These are times of intensity and excitement, but they are followed by times of calmness during which apparently nothing is happening. It is precisely then that daily faithfulness and perseverance are crucial for they are the prerequisite to growth and maturity.

C. The meeting and reconciliation of Joseph and his brothers in Egypt (Gen 45.1-11)

1) The wounds of discord⁵

At the beginning of the tenth section (Gen 37), suddenly events speed up. The family crisis that had been simmering for quite some time surfaces with extraordinary violence. It is comparable to a bush fire that has been ignited by some stray sparks on a windy day and that has rapidly become uncontrollable, destroying everything on its way.

Joseph is the eleventh son of Jacob and Rachel's first child (Gen 30.24; 35.24). Rachel was Jacob's favourite wife and he showed special affection to the two sons she gave him. But it is quite evident that Israel showed favouritism⁶ towards Joseph and this could only provoke discord, deception and hostility. We are told that Jacob 'loved Joseph more than any of his sons because he had been born to him in old age' (3a). As if this was not enough 'he made him a richly ornamented robe', mark of favouritism towards Rachel's son (3b), and perhaps an indication that Jacob wanted Joseph to be 'the ruler over the family'.⁷ B. K. Waltke has noted that the word 'report' (*dibbā*) by itself denotes news slanted to damage the victim (see Prov 10.18)⁸. This negative connotation is suggested by Wenham's translation: 'he (Joseph) told tales about them to their father.' Whether what Joseph told his father concerning his brothers was true or false, it could only bring about a negative response, enrage them.

Further, Joseph's dreams which emphasize that he would be honoured and revered by his brothers and even his father and mother (probably his surrogate mother since Rachel had died when she gave birth to Benjamin) could only fuel their existing hostility towards him. Even Jacob is shocked by his son's account of his second dream and he rebukes the young lad for 'his dream threatens to reverse the social order of patriarchy'.⁹ The verb, 'to rebuke' (*נָעַר*) is more often used with God as subject and conveys both the ideas of authority and righteous anger (Ps 9.5. 106.9; 119.21). No doubt Joseph's attitude did not help the situation and probably contributed further to the breakdown of the family relations. This is implicitly suggested by the narrator as he recalls the way Joseph told 'tales about his brothers' (2) and shared his dreams with them (5, 7, 9). Quite obviously he was very fond of his robe and had no qualms about wearing it. Maybe Joseph, and Jacob too, were not sufficiently

aware of the gravity of the crisis that was smouldering.

This, of course, did not alleviate (lighten) the responsibility of Jacob's sons as they gave way to bitterness, resentment, contempt, hatred and jealousy. Three times, we are told, that they hated Joseph (4, 5, 8). Their growing hatred was so deep that they could not even 'speak civilly' to their younger brother, speak a kind word to him or greet him (lit. 'for peace').¹⁰ (Cf. Wenham [351]; Waltke [500]). Such a strong aversion could only breed jealousy with all the damage it causes. (Wenham argues that the biblical evidence suggests) 'it is a feeling that is liable to spill over into violent action' (Nu 25.11, 13; 5.11-31).¹¹ Will the sons of Jacob resist this strong and violent inclination and thus take heed to the advice of the wise (Pr 14.30; 23.17; 24.1, 19), or will they give full expression to the violence that is burning within them? All the danger signals are flashing. The dark clouds and the apparent stillness herald a storm of unusual magnitude! But we must not forget Joseph's brothers outrage was first of all against the Lord. Indeed, they couldn't ignore that 'dreams were a common means of divine communication and prediction'.¹² This implicit or indirect revelation at the beginning of the story reminds the auditor that God is in control. Whatever the sum of the events may be, however dramatic the situation, the Lord, in His providence, is at work. Though surprised and disturbed by the dreams of Joseph, Jacob 'kept the matter in mind' (11). He thus 'held on to what has been said'.¹³ These dreams were not 'merely the product of Joseph's own inflated ego'!¹⁴

The storm was devastating beyond imagination. In eight scenes (37.12-35), the narrator recounts how arbitrary violence took over and brought about even greater havoc within the family of the patriarch. It was the cause of a lasting rupture, the breaking apart of family ties, the breach of peace and concord that had far-reaching consequences. The discord was to last for twenty years! The crime of the brothers was both grievous and intolerable. They derided and mocked Joseph (20b), they stripped him of his dignity (23, 28) and even premeditated his murder (19)! Fortunately, the brothers were divided and the worst was avoided (21: Ruben; 26: Judah) and Joseph was sold as a slave to the Ishmaelites who were on a business trip to Egypt (28). But their inhumanity was such that they lied to their aging father and deceived him by suggesting that Joseph had been mauled and killed by a wild animal (31). In their duplicity and

cruelty, they even went as far as to seek to comfort Jacob as he grieved Joseph! Imagine living within a family where truth has been suppressed and replaced by falsehood. What kind of relations do double-dealing and hypocrisy breed? The wound that hatred, jealousy, wickedness and duplicity had inflicted was so deep that it took more than twenty years to heal.

2) The process of reconciliation

The time has come to indicate how the rifts and discords were overcome, for the story of Joseph is also the relation of the reconciliation that took place within the patriarchal family and specifically between Joseph and his brothers.

a) The first of the two passages we read this morning belongs to a larger section that cover chapters 42 (1) to 45 (27). In fact this passage is the climax of the process of reconciliation that began when Joseph, governor of Egypt, met and recognized his brothers. It is important to highlight some decisive moments of this process initiated by Joseph himself:

Jacob's sons have arrived in Egypt (ch. 42) but without Benjamin for their father was 'afraid that harm might come to him' (42.4). They have been introduced to Joseph who has recognized them. The patriarch's sons remain ignorant as to the identity of the governor. The attitude of the two parties at hand is significant.

During the first encounter, Joseph begins by speaking to his brothers harshly (7). Suspecting them to be spies (9, 12, 14, 16), he decides to throw them into prison (17). They respond by protesting their innocence and share with the governor some aspects of the family history (10, 13). But Joseph is determined to test their integrity, the truth of their words; one of the brothers will return to Canaan and bring back to Egypt their youngest brother (15, 16). In this first encounter one can imagine the mixed feeling he experiences, both joy and bitterness, hope and suspicion. This is apparent in the first version of the testing. Indeed, in this time of famine, to keep nine brothers in prison while one could go and fetch Benjamin would create major difficulties for Jacob's family and perhaps even jeopardize its survival.

But, after three days of reflection, Joseph has mellowed somewhat and his attitude is more balanced. Simeon alone will remain in Egypt as a hostage while his brothers will return to Canaan with plenty of goods and bring back Benjamin to Egypt (18-20; 24).

As to Jacob's sons, the events surrounding the selling of Joseph into slavery surge up in their memories as if it had just happened. They recognize their guilt, acknowledge their heartlessness and relate their present distress (צרת: a word used in extreme situations: 35.3; Dt 31.17; 2Kgs 19.3), to their past wickedness. Are they not under divine judgment and is not God demanding them to account for the life of Joseph, for the blood they have shed, whether literally or in thought (21-23; cf. Gen. 9.4-6)?

Actually, a process of repentance and confession of guilt has begun in their troubled and restless hearts. As to Joseph, while keeping his feelings hidden from them, he is deeply moved as he overhears his brothers' conversation. His subsequent generosity is an indication that forgiveness is also at work in his life (25). But the acts of kindness of the governor only add to the despondency, dejection and fear of Jacob's sons (28, 35). As Wenham says 'their aroused consciences (cf. v. 21) are interpreting every unexpected development as a sign of God's wrath on their deeds'.¹⁵

Some time has passed and Jacob's sons have returned to Egypt to buy more food but this time Benjamin has come with them. They meet the governor a number of times (43.1-45.15).

Joseph begins by inviting the sons of Jacob to dinner. In fact, he organizes a feast in their honour. Such a time of conviviality is an occasion to get acquainted, to build up trust and to establish relations. But the two parties at hand are not at ease. The brothers are edgy and on the defensive. As they cannot figure out the strange things that are taking place, they give way to fear and imagine the worst scenario possible: they will all become the slaves of the governor (43.17, 18). Moreover, it is not without humour that the narrator tells us that it is Joseph's steward who reassures the sons of Jacob as he tells them not to worry¹⁶ (23)! As to Joseph, a sensitive man, he is again overcome by his emotions. At the sight of Benjamin, his true brother, son of the same mother, he was 'deeply moved', lit. 'his compassion, affection boiled over'¹⁷ and he hurried out of the room so as to hide his tears from his brothers (30).¹⁸ While his brothers experience fear and anxiety, Joseph, though very successful, becomes all the more aware of his loneliness in Egypt. Each party has his own mind-set and lives in its own world. The time has not yet come for them to meet in truth. There is yet another trial to come!

Jacob's sons have bought food to bring back to

Canaan. As they are on the verge of leaving Egypt, Joseph sets up a trap into which Benjamin was to fall (ch. 44). The governor's cup from which he drinks and that he uses for divination (5) is found in Rachel's son's sack! Imagine the consternation, the utter dismay of the brothers (13, 14). What they had dreaded most of all was on the verge of happening. Benjamin at best would remain a slave in Egypt, but could very well, though innocent, pay the price of his life....¹⁹ Just like Joseph twenty years before! Such a dramatic outcome could only bring further turmoil in the family and hasten Jacob's descent to the grave. They, therefore, offer to all remain in Egypt as the governor's slaves. Such a solidarity bears witness to the change that is taking place within the family mentality and relations. But Joseph, feigning discontent and annoyance (4, 5, 15) is inflexible: Benjamin alone will remain in Egypt as his slave while the ten other brothers return to Canaan 'in peace' (17) and 'free from blame' (10). As we come to this moment of the story, one can feel the extreme tension created by such a cornelian dilemma. Benjamin's brothers have no reason to stay in Egypt since they are blameless, but how can they leave Egypt without Benjamin, the beloved son of their father? Is there a solution to such a dilemma? The initiative is in the camp of Jacob's sons but will the governor modify his stand? In a most impassioned and moving speech (18-34), both eloquent and persuasive, Judah seeks to soften Joseph's stance. After reviewing the past events since their first arrival and describing the likely and disastrous consequences if Benjamin was not to return to Canaan, Judah, out of compassion for his aging father (27-31) and commitment to guarantee the safety of the young man, offers to take the place of Benjamin and to stay in Egypt as Joseph's slave.

Judah's impassioned plea was the irrefutable demonstration that a significant change had taken place in the mind-set and attitude of Jacob's sons. This is what conversion is all about: a mutation in mentality and life style. With the realization of one's sin and repentance it is a prerequisite to reconciliation for we are in the realm of holy love or severe mercy where justice and lovingkindness work hand in hand. By imagining and enacting such an astute and sly scenario, Joseph had put his brothers to the test and they had passed it for there is no greater expression of love and loyalty than to substitute oneself for another. It is not surprising that the Messiah was to come out of the house of Judah (Gen 49.8-12, specifically v. 10; cf. also

Num 24.17; Ezek 21.26, 27)! But the questions remain: how will Rachel's elder son respond? Will he soften his stance? What will be the outcome of this most dramatic episode of the patriarch's family life/history (45.1-15)?

The self-controlled governor of Egypt could not restrain himself any longer. Overcome with emotion (2), he openly makes himself known to his brothers (3) and identifies himself: 'I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt' (4, 12). His tears are those of joy and love for he has recovered a family, even his father (2, 3, 14) and he has witnessed a profound change in his brothers. Jacob's sons are totally taken by surprise when they begin to realize that the Egyptian governor is in fact Joseph. They are amazed and bewildered, dismayed and petrified as if they were contemplating a nightmarish sight! The words used to express the brothers' anguish are significant. *They are 'terrified' (bāhal)* at his presence' (3). As Waltke indicates, this term is 'used of paralysing fear as felt by those involved in war (Ex 15.15; Jdg 20.41; 1Sam 28.21; Ps 48.5)',²⁰ 'they are distressed' (*āstab*, 5). The grief they experience is 'a mixture of rage and anguish' (Gen 33.7; 1Sa 20.34; 2Sam 19.3; Isa 54.6: of man; Gen 6.6, Ps 78.40; Isa 63.10 of God;²¹ they are even '*angry (khārāh)* with themselves' (5), because of their sin and wickedness towards their younger brother. They clearly saw that their lives were in the hands of the one they had once sought to kill and they were dumbfounded. For the second time, they were unable to speak a word to Joseph (37.4), but for a very different reason: they feared Joseph's vengeance and retaliation. But the dispositions of their brother were very different. Joseph was eager to restore a personal relationship with his brothers and to make peace with them (4.14). So he seeks to reassure the sons of Jacob. They have no need to be alarmed nor to be irritated with themselves. It is so easy when one's conscience is stricken by the reality of the evil one has committed to either sink into morbid despair or to impose on oneself self-inflicted injury! But even more, he seeks to re-establish their dignity which in their wickedness they had spurned. In a most significant way, Joseph is the agent of God's grace and kindness towards his brothers. They were to take a long time – and this is often the case even for us today – to appreciate and to fully receive the transforming loving-kindness of the Lord into the very depth of their beings. This process of sanctification was to go on until the finale of the story, when again Joseph reassures and speaks kindly to

his brothers on the occasion of their father's death (50.21).²² Indeed, now that Jacob, the guarantor of social-family stability and peace (50.15; 27.41-45) is dead, their lingering uneasy conscience makes them fear the worst, that Joseph would take the law into his own hands and dispense justice himself²³ (Gen 50.15-21).

Coming back to chapter 45 and the amazing encounter between these separated brothers, how come Joseph is both so generous, magnanimous? In the speech which follows the breakdown of a major emotional barrier, he not only seeks to persuade his brothers that he is indeed Joseph, but he also gives them (as well as the auditor-reader of the narrative) the key that enables them (and us) to understand the ultimate significance of the past and present events, of the specific moment of history that has been unfolding before them (and us). If he is free of resentment and willing to forgive, this however does not mean that Joseph denies the horror of wickedness, that he is complacent with sin or that he condones evil. No, wickedness, sin and evil can in no ways be justified. It is intolerable and must be opposed for it is incompatible with the goodness of God. The gradual change that takes place in the sons of Jacob bears witness to this capital truth. Joseph has understood that beyond and above the foul schemings of his brothers, God is in control. It is the Lord himself that gives and reveals the ultimate and true meaning to history. In his monologue, the son of Rachel reiterates three times, 'God has sent me' (5, 7, 8) and twice, 'God has established' (*śim* 8, 9).²⁴ Joseph has been sent to Egypt by God in spite of his brothers' intrigues and manoeuvres, notwithstanding his own trials and tribulations, his perplexities and misgivings, in order to fulfil a specific and vital mission: to keep alive a family, to ensure a remnant, and to preserve a great number of survivors. The two terms 'remnant' (*she'ērīt*) and 'survivors' (*pelētāh*) designate the 'surviving descendants',²⁵ i.e. the 'embryonic nation'²⁶ who has narrowly escaped destruction (45, 7, 11). An impending danger was threatening the existence of the patriarchal family. Joseph, as 'an agent in the divine saving plan' snatches it out of destitution²⁷ so that it would become a nation. Not only does he comfort his brothers in their plight, restore their dignity and courage, remove the fear of retribution from their minds, but his deep affection for the sons of Jacob and his tears guarantee the truth and authenticity of his words and forgiveness (14). Such a gesture was to free them from their disheartened silence. In fact, the

narrator ends this section with this little phrase: 'Afterward his brothers talked with him' (15b), with Joseph! After conversion and repentance, recognition of divine care and guidance, forgiveness and the desire for a personal relationship, we come to the final step of the process of reconciliation, the restoration (and even birth) of communication, the heart beat of true and substantial communion. After more than twenty years of rift and alienation and perhaps for the first time, words were flowing and bouncing from one person to another; words of truth and trust, of intimacy and sincerity, of love and kindness, of joy and life... Jacob's sons had, no doubt, much talking to catch up! A double miracle had taken place: the reconciliation of a family torn by descent, feuds and rivalry, the survival of a remnant people threatened by destitution and destruction. Both miracles were essential to the birth of the nation of Israel which God called to play an unique role in His plan of redemption and on the scene of world history! As the Book of Genesis closes, Joseph reminds his brothers (and all of us) once again that God cares and is in control: 'Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You planned evil against me. It was God who planned it for good, so that it should happen as it is today to keep many people alive' (Gen 50.19).²⁸

Notes

- 1 The first of three Bible readings on reconciliation and forgiveness presented at the FEET Conference, 2006. Additional texts: Genesis 27.41-45; 33.1-16. The apprehension of Joseph's brothers is illustrated by the discord between Esau and Jacob. This event which could have brought about a major tragedy in the patriarchal household ends up in the reconciliation of Esau and Jacob.
- 2 Cf. K. A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mi.: Eerdmans, 2003), pp. 343-352; 477, 478. This explains why some critical scholars have sought to argue for a late Egyptian background to the Joseph story, cf. D. B. Redford, *A Study of the Biblical Story of Joseph* (Leiden: Brill, 1970); *Egypt, Canaan and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 422-429. This author argues that the Joseph narrative is an 'exemplar of a widespread story line much in use in Egypt and the Levant' figuring a wise man typical of the late period (7th and 6th centuries B.C.). For a critical evaluation of Redford's position cf. K. A. Kitchen above mentioned study pp. 477-478.
- 3 G. J. Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, WBC II (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1994), 343-345, cf. also the study by André Wénin, *Joseph ou l'invention de la fraternité*

- (Genèse 37-50), (Bruxelles: Ed. Lessius, 2005), in particular 11 to 21.
- 4 G. J. Wenham, op. cit., vol. 2, 345.
- 5 In addition to the commentaries by Wenham and Waltke, cf. the interesting study by André Wénin and his narrative and anthropological reading of the history of Joseph. He emphasizes the literary coherence and the psychological dimension of the story. He however is too dependent a times on a psycho-analytical reading of the text and its deterministic overtones. This is well illustrated in his comments on the story of Cain and Abel. Furthermore, his theological analysis is not always satisfactory. For instance, Wénin suggests that Joseph calling upon Providence is a way to excuse his brothers when in fact the son of Jacob is stating that God remains sovereign without in any way undermining the responsibility of his brothers in the tragic events that have taken place. Cf. A. Wénin, op. cit., 14-17, 271 to 289 and especially 282.
- 6 Favouritism was common in Jacob's family: Isaac's love for Esau to the detriment of Jacob; Rebecca's special love for Jacob to the exclusion of Esau; Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah (25.28; 29.30). Cf. G. J. Wenham, op. cit., vol. 2, 350.
- 7 B. K. Waltke with C. J. Fredricks, *Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 500. The same expression is used to qualify the spies' report when they return from exploring the promised land (Num 13.32; 14.36-37). Cf. also the LXX which conveys a negative, but ambiguous connotation, M. Harl, ed., *La Bible d'Alexandrie*, LXX 1, La Genèse (Paris: Le Cerf, 1986), 259.
- 8 B. K. Waltke, op. cit., 499.
- 9 Ibid., 501.
- 10 G. J. Wenham, op. cit., vol. 2, 351; B. K. Waltke, op. cit., 500.
- 11 This is true even with God, but as an expression of righteous indignation and justice.
- 12 B. K. Waltke, op. cit., 500.
- 13 G. J. Wenham, op. cit., 352.
- 14 Ibid., 351.
- 15 Ibid., 409.
- 16 The NIV translates: 'It's all right, he said' (lit. 'he told them peace').
- 17 The root *kamār* means in the Niphal, 'to be agitated, to be hot' (cf. 1K3.26; Ho 11.8: compassion, Lam 5.10 ('the skin is hot as an oven' because of famine)).
- 18 Three other times we are told that Joseph wept: 42.24; 45.2, 14, 15; 46.29.
- 19 In fact, Jacob's sons actually consider that the culprit of such an offence should die and the remaining brothers should become slaves (9).
- 20 B. K. Waltke, op. cit., 563.
- 21 G. J. Wenham, op. cit., vol. 2, 428; vol. 1, 144, 145.
- 22 Lit. 'he comforts them and speaks to ('al) their

hearts.'

- 23 Lit '... holds a grudge (*sātam*: to treat as an enemy, to act out of spite, Gen 27.41) against us and pays us back (*shoub*: here to return, he makes to return on us) the wrong we did (*gāmal*: to do, accomplish) to him.' A. Wénin argues that forgiveness and reconciliation only take place at the end of the narrative, when the brothers fearing Joseph's reprisals now that Jacob is dead, seek his forgiveness. But Joseph's tears and the fact that he responds to his brothers in similar terms as on the occasion of his self-identification (Gen 45.5-9) is an indication that forgiveness and reconciliation had already taken place (45.14, 15). In both passages reconciliation is

made possible because the mindset of the brothers has changed and both parties have recognized the evil that had been committed (45.5, 6; 50.20). In the former passage, the recognition is more implicit, but it underlies the events related in ch. 42-45. Cf. A. Wénin, op. cit. 305-327, in particular 306, 311, 313, 314, 317.

- 24 Lit. 'The Lord has made me, set me up.' Joseph is both chief advisor (8) and governor of Egypt (9).
 25 G. J. Wenham, op. cit., vol. 2, 428.
 26 B. K. Waltke, op. cit., 563.
 27 Niphal of the root *yārāsh*, 'take possession, destitute.'
 28 G. J. Wenham, op. cit., vol. 2, 456.

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Nigel Oakley is World Development Officer for the Anglican Diocese of Durham, UK. He has a PhD from the University of Durham in political theology.

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From Discord To Concord

Ján Henžel

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SUMMARY

In this article the author examines vertical and horizontal dimensions of the doctrine of reconciliation. Starting with current self-understanding of Western culture of her need (or better lack of need) to be reconciled with God, he goes on to prove the great relevance of this doctrine. Maintaining the primacy of the vertical dimension, he

points out that reconciliation is not only mutual but also dual in the sense that it is a reconciliation between man and God and a reconciliation between man and man. Thus the divine gift of reconciliation becomes the human responsibility to be reconciled both with God and with other people. The article concludes with several practical examples of reconciliation in post-war and post-communist European contexts.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In diesem Artikel untersucht der Autor vertikale und horizontale Dimensionen der Lehre von der Versöhnung. Startpunkt ist das gegenwärtige Selbstverständnis der westlichen Kultur in Bezug auf ihre gefühlte Notwendigkeit (oder besser die gefühlte Abwesenheit der Notwendigkeit) der Versöhnung mit Gott. Von da aus schreitet der Autor zum Erweis der großen Relevanz dieser Lehre. Obwohl er das Primat der vertikalen Dimension beibehält, stellt er

heraus, dass Versöhnung nicht nur gegenseitig ist sondern auch eine doppelte Ebene hat: Versöhnung zwischen Mensch und Gott und Versöhnung zwischen Mensch und Mensch. Damit wird das göttliche Geschenk der Versöhnung zur menschlichen Verantwortung, sowohl mit Gott als auch mit anderen Menschen versöhnt zu sein. Der Artikel schließt mit mehreren praktischen Beispielen für Versöhnung in europäischen Kontexten der Nachkriegszeit und der Zeit nach dem Kommunismus.

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RÉSUMÉ

Dans cet article, l'auteur traite de la doctrine de la réconciliation avec sa dimension verticale et sa dimension horizontale. Ayant exposé de quelle façon la culture occidentale actuelle considère son besoin de réconciliation avec Dieu (ou plutôt l'absence de ce besoin), il s'efforce de montrer la pertinence de cette doctrine. Tout en maintenant que la dimension verticale est première, il souli-

gne que la réconciliation n'est pas seulement mutuelle, mais qu'elle comporte aussi deux aspects, la réconciliation entre l'homme et Dieu et la réconciliation entre humains. Ainsi, le don divin de la réconciliation devient la responsabilité humaine d'entrer en réconciliation avec Dieu et avec d'autres hommes. L'auteur donne ensuite quelques exemples de réconciliation dans le contexte européen post-communiste d'après guerre.

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The FEET conference hosted by the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Prague compelled me – among other things – to base my contribution on the works of Arthur B. Crabtree,¹ former professor of IBTS and Jan Milíč Lochman,² former professor of KEBF in Prague, both of whom made an excellent contribution to our theme.

Reconciliation is a mutual affair. God is reconciled to people as he lays aside his wrath and turns

to them in grace, and people are reconciled to God as they lay aside their waywardness and turn to God in obedience. Then this process is to be translated from the vertical perspective of the broken and restored relationship between God and people into the horizontal perspective of relationship among people. This transformation of relationship takes place by the initiative of the offended party and by the appropriate response of the offender. Now a

change of relationship implies three things: an old relationship, a new relationship, and the transformation of the one into the other which in this case is called reconciliation.

1. The Old Relationship

The old relationship is conditioned by sin. And here comes our major difficulty. Apologists, evangelists, counsellors and sociologists are all confirming that ours is a sinless society. The hardest thing today is not to prove the existence of God, the deity of Jesus Christ and other major Christian doctrines, but the sinfulness of people. Meic Pearse in his penetrating evaluation of western culture speaks of 'corporate guilt' but 'personal sinlessness'.²³ 'Human rights are not the correlative of obligations, as its defenders might claim, but the converse; instead of being a mirror-image way of expressing duties, it is – in its cumulative effects, even if not explicitly – a denial of them.'²⁴ Thus saying 'I have a right to...' is just a cover up for 'I want to...' But with no sense of obligations people have lost their sense of personal sin. 'Human beings have been ducking responsibility since Eden; it is only our own generation that has had the ingenuity to reject it as a category. We have no need of a Saviour; in our own minds, at least, we are already perfect.'²⁵ Responsibility was handed over to corporate institutions – first of all the government – and private life has assumed the unencumbered right to individual autonomy. David Wells is right in his warning that 'if we abandon our moral obligations and indulge our "right" to do and say whatever we want, we will have to live in a society that is trivialized, emptied out, and increasingly more dangerous and inhospitable.'²⁶ And he goes on to point out that 'this is the first time that a civilization has existed that, to a significant extent, does not believe in objective right and wrong. We are travelling blind, stripped of our moral compass.'²⁷ To be sure, we continue to sin also in the 21st century. What has disappeared is not sin itself but our cultural capacity to understand it.

On this background we need to provide a general, non-technical but comprehensive definition of sin. We may adopt Cornelius Plantinga's definition which points to the context of our subject of reconciliation. 'Sin, then, is any agential evil for which some person (or group of persons) is to blame. In short, sin is culpable *shalom*-breaking.'²⁸ In theological terms sin means missing the mark by turning from God's grace and glory, turning from his ways

to one's own. It means pride rather than humility, disobedience rather than obedience, autonomy rather than theonomy, freedom *from* God instead of freedom *for* God.

This turning away from God cannot remain without its consequences. It alienates us from God. As it alienates us from him, it alienates him from us, 'but it also alienates us from our fellow men, turning families into feuds, friends into foes, concord into conflict, amity into enmity. And in this alienation from God and from one another, we find ourselves alienated from ourselves.'²⁹ Nietzsche, Sartre and Camus knew this alienation only too well. For Heidegger it is a *Sein zum Tode* but for the apostle Paul it was a living death.¹⁰ And he also knew its cause – sin.¹¹ According to J. Atkinson: 'The human situation is like that of a man trapped in a bog: unless somebody comes along to give power and leverage from a base firmer than his, he will go under.'¹² The ultimate outcome of this old relationship for us is being 'punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power.'¹³ The old relationship may be explained partly as pollution, partly as the breaking of the law and slavery to evil.¹⁴

Without a clear understanding of ultimate seriousness of this old relationship the gospel is not an ultimately good news and the need of reconciliation is not necessary. This old relationship of man and God (vertical), and man and man (horizontal) is changed by the saving action of God through Christ and the Spirit.

2. The New Relationship

Man in conversion (*metanoia*) is turned toward God instead of away from God. He now looks toward God instead of away from him, moves toward God instead of away from him. His life becomes theocentric rather than egocentric. This brings a new freedom (*eleutheria*) which is a freedom *for* God rather than freedom *from* God. It is freedom from the guilt and power of sin, from wrath and condemnation of God, from bondage to the devil, from dread and fear and despair, from emptiness and meaninglessness, from death and hell. It is freedom for God's grace and glory, his pardon and power, his presence and service. It is the liberty of the children of God. This is nothing less than adoption (*huiiothesia*) and regeneration (*palingenesia*) as children of God. Once more we belong to the family of God, which is the king-

dom of God (*basileia tou theou*). The kingdom of God is the righteousness of God (*dikaiosune theou*). The relationship of God and man is set right again as we trust God as Father and serve him as King. This right relationship is the work of God and the gift of God.¹⁵ The biblical concept of justification (*dikaiosune theou*) should be understood in forensic sense.¹⁶ A. E. McGrath points out: 'The concept of justification and the doctrine of justification must be carefully distinguished... The church has chosen to subsume its discussion of the reconciliation of man to God under the aegis of justification, thereby giving the concept an emphasis quite absent from the New Testament.'¹⁷ The doctrinal development has taken up a more dynamic sense. Thus even for the Reformed theologian O. Weber, is justification God's *Zuspruch* of forgiveness as well as God's strong *Anspruch* on our whole life.¹⁸

To be brought into a right relationship with God is to be reconciled with God (*katallage*). A formerly hostile, strained and discordant relationship becomes now friendly, relaxed and harmonious. God and man are now at one. There is, however, no equality between them. This reconciliation is mutual in the sense that God is reconciled to man and man is reconciled to God. God lays aside his wrath and turns to man in grace, and man lays aside his waywardness of unfaith and turns to God in the obedience of faith.

Reconciliation is not only mutual but also dual in the sense that it is a reconciliation between man and God *and* a reconciliation between man and man. The same thing (reconciliation) has two dimensions – vertical and horizontal. It cannot be one without being the other. This means that we can be reconciled to God only as we are reconciled to our fellow men. That is why Jesus teaches us to pray: 'Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.'¹⁹ We are to forgive one another just as God forgave us,²⁰

But God forgives us as we forgive one another.²¹ We are reconciled to one another as we are reconciled to God, but we are reconciled to God only as we are reconciled to one another.

When we are reconciled with God we belong to him as Father and as King. We are no longer our own, we are the Lord's as we trust God as children and serve him as subjects. And that is sanctification (*hagiasmos*). Let us only remember that God is either lord of all or not at all. 'We are his, if we are his at all, in every realm and relationship of life; his in solitude and society, his in work and worship, his in duty and leisure, his in the church,

his in the home, his in business, his in society, his in culture.'²² H. Bonar puts this truth in beautiful rhyme:

So shall no part of day or night
From sacredness be free;
But *all my life*, in every step,
Be fellowship with Thee.

3. The Transformation of the Relationship

We shall consider now how is our relationship changed from the old to the new. It is by the initiative of God in grace and the response of man in faith. The divine grace is always both pardoning and transforming. S. Motyer concludes his study of *Righteousness by Faith in the New Testament* saying that 'as men are grasped by it [God's righteousness], "justified" and made acceptable to God, so they are stamped with the image of their righteous Saviour, and summoned to live in imitation of him as his people. "Righteousness" thus becomes a matter of human character and behaviour.'²³ The divine initiative is the act of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. 'The work of the Father is that of commission: commissioning the Son and Spirit to go forth to seek and to save that which was lost. The work of the Son and Spirit is that of mission: going forth at the bidding of the Father to seek and to save that which was lost – and restore it to God.'²⁴

The work of Christ in restoring us to God is his whole redeeming work. Evangelicals sometimes make the mistake of locating it solely in the cross.²⁵ The cross is indeed the focal point of this restoration of man to God, 'for Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.'²⁶ But the cross is only part of the work of Christ for our restoration to God.

The whole embraces his incarnation, in which he became man for us men and for our salvation; his baptism, in which he identified himself with the sinners he came to save; his temptation in which he resisted all attempts to save them apart from this identification; his ministry, in which he both pardoned sins and transformed the sinners; his death, in which he bore the penalty of sin for us (on our behalf and in our stead); his resurrection, in which he rose to justify us (Rom. 4. 25); his ascension and exaltation, in which he reigns over his own and continued intercession for us and his return, in which he will finally vindicate us and dwell with us for ever in the

joy and glory of the kingdom. His work is one integral whole, past, present and future... It is only true to say that he who has saved us is still saving us, and will continue to save us – as long as we let ourselves be saved.²⁷

Similarly, the work of the Spirit in restoring us to God is his whole work: the work of the Spirit in baptism and ministry of the Lord, the work of the Spirit in mediating Christ to us through the outward witness of the church in her ministry of word and sacraments, and through the inward witness of the Spirit, testifying with our spirit that we are God's children.

Crabtree's emphasis on God's pardoning and transforming grace is important also for us if we are to keep the proper balance. 'If the Augustinian-Catholic tradition has erred in partially obscuring the pardoning aspect of grace, the Lutheran-Protestant tradition has equally erred in partially obscuring the transforming aspect of grace... God rectifies the relationship of the sinner to himself both by pardoning the sin and by transforming the sinner.'²⁸

How do we receive this grace? Through faith, obviously. But only through a living faith that believes the gospel, trusts in Christ and obeys his will. For the faith that believes but does not trust and obey is a faith of demons.²⁹ A faith that believes and trusts but fails to obey is the faith of prattlers.³⁰ We receive the divine grace of reconciliation exclusively by a faith expressing itself through love.³¹ This faith alone justifies us in the sight of God and transforms our whole relationship to God and to our neighbour. Thus Crabtree rightly warns us 'against the careless use of the phrase "justification by faith alone."³² Yes, we are justified by faith alone but that faith is never alone. This is the only faith that brings us into a right relationship with God, with others and with ourselves. Therefore our prayer remains: Lord increase our faith that works through love!

4. Commission and mission of reconciliation

We have already said that the work of God the Father in reconciliation was that of commission – sending his Son and Spirit to search and save that which has been lost. The work of the Son and Spirit was that of mission. The same pattern applies to us: 'God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, gave us the ministry of reconcilia-

tion.'³³ J. M. Lochman is one of few dogmatists paying attention to the ethical dimension of the doctrine of reconciliation.³⁴ He takes reconciliation as a priority from Jesus' admonition: 'Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.'³⁵ Even at the most solemn moment the necessity for reconciliation takes priority. In this context Jesus says that to fulfill the sixth commandment is not enough to avoid anger and cursing. 'The radical will of God is satisfied only by "reconciliation". The "murderer", therefore, is not just one who commits murder nor even one who is angry, but also the one who neglects and despises opportunities of reconciliation and who, by that very failure, is already under suspicion of murder and accused of murder.'³⁶ Because reconciliation is as creative as murder is destructive, the Christian ethic is an ethic of reconciliation.

Reconciliation receives his binding features from the Christ event, therefore it cannot be extended at will and there is no place for appeasement, spurious peace which avoids conflicts and conceals real tensions. Biblical ministry of reconciliation is alert to the demonic strategies of the principalities and powers and refuses to capitulate to them. 'A genuine Christian ministry of reconciliation will be characterized by a hopeful and inventive realism.'³⁷

While the ministry of reconciliation is personal, it is also concerned with conditions and systems. New Testament epistles demonstrate that reconciliation between individuals and groups is important. Reconciliation bestowed in Christ has direct implications in personal relationships and if the life of the Church. *Carmen Christi*³⁸ is sent into the context of tensions within the Christian community at Philippi.

The light of reconciliation shines in on the human – only too human – life of the congregations and is meant to operate there with transforming, renewing and, in fact, reconciling power... In the long run the Church of Christ can never be content to establish itself as a permanently structured and self-enclosed entity based on the divisions of race, nationality, culture and sex. It is the Body of Christ, an organic unity composed of many members.³⁹

We as evangelicals should especially heed Lochman's call for 'ecumenical order of reconciliation'

and consider what does this mean for our divided Christendom, our warring denominations, our hate-filled Christians, our segregated churches?

However, our ministry of reconciliation cannot be confined to the inner life of the Church. That mission is for the world – including the world of politics and economics. Thankfully, the Church does not lack positive examples in her past (Mennonites, Quakers, Brethren Church). The Barmen Declaration (1934) from the Nazi Germany and *Aktion Sühnezeichen* from the post-war Germany as well as the Fellowship of Reconciliation of Northern Ireland are just a few examples from the more recent history.

To close my paper let me offer an insight into our post-Communist experience from Czech and Slovak Republics. The non-violent way of removing the totalitarian regime (1989) was widely appreciated and thus named as 'Velvet Revolution.' However, relating the process to the above outlined doctrine of reconciliation and reflecting on the results of the past 17 years, we should have learned to apply consequently 4 major dynamics of the process of reconciliation outlined by D. Shriver:⁴⁰ First is abandonment of revenge by the victims (churches and dissidents) and abandonment of innocence by the perpetrators (Communists). Second is the provision of context of public hope for reconciliation as the basis for the uncovering of public truth about an evil past. Such context was there but the uncovering of evil past is extremely slow. Third is the finding of a new empathy between former enemies. Those who caricatured each other as somehow subhuman are brought together as fellow human beings rather than political and economic forces. Fourth is the move from apology to reparation. Material reparations cannot unmake wrongs, but they can be symbolic of restored relationships and new intent. The recent establishment of Nation's Memory Institute with some of the above mentioned goals is a step in right direction but rather late in coming.

G. Aulen in his *Christus Victor* has demonstrated powerfully that the gospel of reconciliation is not separated from the world of the principalities and powers but actually related to it. For us today, this means that even at the level of power politics and apocalyptic threats to the human race, Christians must do their thinking in the light of the atonement. The message of reconciliation can and must be transposed into political and economic terms.⁴¹ The message of reconciliation must not only be spoken, but also what is said must have the effect

of releasing the debtor or the transgressor from the debt. Christian peacemakers are called to seek reconciliation in situations of conflict without softening their opposition to the injustices that exist. We are motivated by our Christian faith and biblical vision, but this does not mean that we cannot work with those from different faiths or none at all. As all humanity is created in the image of God we can expect to share common points of ethical concern with those from different faith-communities. Moreover, in the Christian understanding of God as Trinity, the call to reconciliation is authorized by Father, carried out by the Son and empowered by the Spirit. As we respond to the same commission we may expect that our action and relationships will be empowered by the Holy Spirit, too. This not only provides motivation for reconciliation but also provides the basis for constructive action in the world created, redeemed and being moved to its final glory by the triune God.

Notes

- 1 A. B. Crabtree, *The Restored Relationship; A Study in Justification and Reconciliation*, London: Carey Kingsgate Press, 1963.
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- 3 M. Pearse, *Why the Rest Hates the West?* London: SPCK, 2003, p. 76-78.
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- 6 D. Wells, *Losing Our Virtue; Why the Church Must Recover Its Moral Vision*, Leicester: IVP, 1998, p. 9.
- 7 Wells, *Losing Our Virtue*, p. 17.
- 8 C. Plantinga, Jr., *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be; A Breviary of Sin*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996, p. 14.
- 9 Crabtree, *The Restored Relationship*, p. 190.
- 10 Romans 7:10-11.
- 11 Romans 6:23.
- 12 J. Atkinson, 'Justification by Faith: A Truth for Our Times,' In: J. I. Packer & others, *Here We Stand; Justification by Faith*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1986, p. 63.
- 13 2 Thessalonians 1:9.
- 14 See C. E. Gunton, *Actuality of Atonement, A Study of Metaphor, Rationality and the Christian Tradition*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988, p. 139. Blocher rightly emphasizes that we need to affirm the organic unity of the variety of biblical representations and shows several ways of doing it. See H. Blocher, 'The Sacrifice of Jesus Christ: The Current Theological Situation,' In: *European Journal of Theology*, 8.1(1999), esp. p. 29-32.

- 15 *The New English Bible* translates 'dikaiousune theou' in Rom. 1:17 as 'God's way of righting wrong' or *The New Living Translation* as 'how God makes us right in his sight.'
- 16 See an excellent argument in D. A. Carson, 'Reflections on Salvation and Justification,' In: *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 40.4(1997), p. 581-608. M. A. Seifrid also provided a very fine comprehensive elaboration in *Christ, our Righteousness; Paul's Theology of Justification*, Leicester: Apollos, 2000.
- 17 A. E. McGrath, *Iustitia Dei; A history of the Christian doctrine of Justification* 2 vols. Cambridge: CUP, 1997, p. 1.2.
- 18 O. Weber, *Grundlagen der Dogmatic*, vol. II, Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1962, p. 355-356 commenting on *Declaration of Barmen*, thesis II.
- 19 Matthew 6:12.
- 20 Ephesians 4:32.
- 21 Matthew 6:14-15.
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- 23 S. Motyer, 'Righteousness by Faith in the New Testament,' in Packer, *Here We Stand*, p. 53-54.
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- 25 A few examples are: J. McIntyre, *The Shape of Soteriology*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995, p. 26-52. L. Morris, *The Atonement; Its Meaning and Significance*, Leicester: IVP, 1983. J. Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*, London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1961.
- 26 1 Peter 3:18.
- 27 Crabtree, *The Restored Relationship*, p. 194.
- 28 Crabtree, *The Restored Relationship*, p. 194.
- 29 James 2:19.
- 30 Matthew 7:21-23.
- 31 Galatians 5:6.
- 32 Crabtree, *The Restored Relationship*, p. 195.
- 33 2 Corinthians 5:18.
- 34 Lochman, *Reconciliation*, p. 105-112. See also J. Moltmann, 'Versöhnung in Freiheit,' In: *Umkehr zur Zukunft*, and A. E. McGrath, *Studies in Doctrine*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997, p. 437-446.
- 35 Matthew 6:23-24.
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- 37 Lochman, *Reconciliation*, p. 108.
- 38 Philippians 2:5-11.
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- 40 D. W. Shriver, 'What Is Forgiveness in a Secular Political Form?' In: R. Helmick and R. Peterson (eds.), *Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Religion, Public Policy and Conflict*, Radnor: Templeton Foundation Press, 2001, p. 156-165.
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A Small Nation with a Big Soul: Reflections on the National Character of Lithuanian People

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London School of Theology/The Word of Faith Fellowship, Lithuania.

SUMMARY

The collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 initiated rapid and irreversible changes which have widened the geopolitical context of Europe. Europe is slowly becoming a bicultural community made up of people who retain ties

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to their original cultures yet at the same time are open for the exchange of ideas. This essay provides a brief historic review of Lithuania (a former republic of the Soviet Union), discusses the national character of Lithuanian people and draws some missiological implications for missionaries.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Mit dem Fall der Berliner Mauer im Jahre 1989 begannen schnelle und unumkehrbare Veränderungen, die den geopolitischen Kontext Europas erweitert haben. Europa wird langsam zu einer bikulturellen Gemeinschaft, die aus Menschen besteht, die Verbindungen zu ihren ursprüng-

* * * *

lichen Kulturen behalten, dabei jedoch gleichzeitig offen für den Austausch von Ideen und Vorstellungen sind. Dieser Aufsatz bietet einen kurzen historischen Überblick über Litauen (einer früheren Republik der Sowjetunion), diskutiert den nationalen Charakter litauischer Menschen und zieht einige Schlüsse hinsichtlich der missiologischen Implikationen für Missionare.

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RÉSUMÉ

La chute du mur de Berlin en 1989 a engendré une série de changements rapides et irréversibles qui ont élargi l'espace géopolitique européen. L'Europe est en train de devenir lentement une communauté biculturelle,

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comportant des gens qui conservent des liens avec leur culture originelle tout en s'ouvrant à l'échange d'idées. Cet article retrace brièvement l'histoire de la Lituanie (une ancienne république de l'Union Soviétique), considère les traits caractéristiques du peuple lituanien, et en tire des implications de stratégie missionnaire.

* * * *

A few years ago when I was studying in the US, *Chicago Tribune* had an article about Lithuania which began as follows: 'Vilnius. Lithuania – for most Americans, this newly admitted member of the European Union is *terra incognita*...' ¹ In fact, not only most Americans but also many Europeans know very little, if anything, about Lithuania – recently at FEET conference in Prague a dear sister from Germany was really surprised that Lithuania is already a member of the EU. What is far more disturbing to me, as a teaching pastor who for the past 16 years has been ministering in Lithuania, is the fact that for most missionaries coming from

different parts of the Western World my homeland remains *terra incognita* too. Yet, our country and people have a long and spectacular history, as well as rich and distinctive culture, understanding of which should certainly be helpful in reaching her with the gospel. In this paper, I would like to discuss the national character of Lithuanian people and then to consider some missiological implications that properly applied could make the ministry of missionaries as well as that of indigenous churches more effective.

I realize my limitations. Firstly, my research cannot escape my own cultural biases. Thus, I

understand that my analysis and proposed insights will be more of emic rather than etic nature. Secondly, there have been very few attempts on the part of Lithuanian academics as well as those from foreign countries to do serious anthropological research in this field. This is understandable – almost the whole half of the twentieth century we have been under the communistic regime, one purpose of which was to eradicate fully our national identity. Denationalization of occupied peoples was the primary goal of Stalin and his successors. Any anthropological attempt would be considered to have anti-ideological implications and thus was forbidden. The scarce publications that have been written on the subject come mostly from Lithuanian authors, who have fled the coming of communism and have been living outside the country, most distinguished of whom are A. Maceina, J. Girnius and V. M. Kavolis. I am heavily indebted to them and will turn to their observations time and again. Yet, before we turn to analysis of Lithuanian national character, a brief historic review will be in place.

History of Lithuania

Lithuanians, the Balts proper, live on the south-eastern shores of the Baltic Sea. The name Balts, derived from the Baltic Sea, has been a neologism from the middle of the nineteenth century. It has applied not only to Lithuanians and Latvians, but also to several nationalities now extinct, namely Prussians, Yotvingians, Semigallians, Curonians and Selonians. Along with the ancient Prussian language, which has not been spoken since the seventeenth century, Lithuanian and Latvian languages form a distinct Baltic branch of the Indo-European linguistic family. Yet, as J. Kudirka points out, 'of all the living Indo-European languages the Lithuanian language has retained the ancient phonetic and morphological characteristics best of all. It has a complicated system of flexions and word derivation. Therefore, as part of general linguistics, it is taught at a number of foreign universities (in the USA, Italy, France, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Japan and other countries).'²

From all the Baltic tribes Lithuanians were the first ones to create a state entity in the mid-13th century. Lithuania's first king, Mindaugas, was crowned on July 6, 1253, yet some historians argue that the establishment of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (GDL) reaches back even farther, perhaps around 1183. Though there is little documen-

tation for this period, it is generally accepted that for one to two hundred years prior to Mindaugas' rule, Lithuanian tribes had already begun the process of unifying themselves. Castles, manors and systems of defense were established during this period. Under the rule of Mindaugas, Lithuania was able to repel the attacks of Teutonic knights on the Western front, and also to succeed expanding its territory into the lands of Russia in the East. According to historian Zigmantas Kiaupa, a very strong regional leader, Mindaugas, attempted to unite three worlds under his rule: pagan Lithuania, Catholic Western Europe and Orthodox Russia.³

The Grand Duchy of Lithuania lasted until the 18th century. However, she reached her apogee during the rule of Duke Vytautas, called the Great (died in 1430). Under his rule the realm of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania extended from the Baltic Sea south to the shores of the Black Sea and east almost to the city of Moscow. In the century following Vytautas' reign, the power of the GDL began to decline. By the mid-16th century, Lithuanians made up only around one-third of the total population of an estimated 3 million people while Slavs, Germans, Jews, Poles, Tatars and Karaites composed the remaining two-thirds.⁴ In 1569, in the Union of Lublin, the Kingdom of Poland and the GDL became a commonwealth or *Rzeczpospolita* and had common currency, governance and policy. Nobles from both states had the right to own land and to sell goods without paying taxes in either part of the commonwealth. The two states did retain their own borders, names, armies and administrative powers. During the 18th century, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth also declined as a political power. Three partitions of the Commonwealth reduced significantly its size. One bulk went to Russia, another was annexed by the Kingdom of Prussia, which in 1815, at the Congress of Vienna, became the Kingdom of Poland. Finally, Lithuania was placed under Russian rule, although as a separate political entity. Lithuanian uprisings of 1830-31 and 1863 were harshly suppressed and followed by waves of Russification. Liberalization occurred after the Russian Revolution of 1905. The press prohibition had been annulled in 1904, allowing the appearance of the first Lithuanian daily newspaper *Vilnius News*. However, Lithuania had to suffer one more occupation before she would be able to declare its independence, namely military rule of Germany during the World War I. It was on February 16, 1918 that the independent Lithuanian state was declared by the council of 20 mem-

bers, who had been elected several months before at the congress in Vilnius. The independence was short-lived and not without fights regarding the demarcation of borders. The constitution adopted in 1922 set up a parliamentary democracy. Yet, a coup d'état by a group of army officers in December 1926 introduced an authoritarian presidential system with restricted democracy that lasted until the Soviet occupation of 1940. The Second World War brought Lithuania from Soviet rule to that of German Nazism. Yet, by the end of 1944, most of Lithuania had been reoccupied by the Red Army, and incorporated back into the Soviet Union. Lithuanians fought back for their independence: an organized guerrilla resistance, at times involving up to 40,000 fighters, lasted into the early 1950s. However, it was crushed down, and harsh repression as well as deportations – 220,000 Lithuanians were deported to Siberia – followed. Lithuanian people have never given up their hopes to be independent again. Resistant attitudes towards communistic regime were cherished almost in every family and ripened by the late 1980s. It was by that time that *Sąjūdis* – ‘The Movement’ for independence – consolidated the whole nation, and on March 11, 1990 the Parliament issued the declaration of independence stating that Lithuania had been annexed by the Soviet Union against her will. In March 2004 Lithuania was admitted to NATO, and one month later joined the European Union.

Ethnological Structure of Lithuanian People

Evidently, knowing the vicissitudes of Lithuania's history helps enormously in trying to understand Lithuanian people. Yet, it is but one of several factors forming national character. As A. Maceina has pointed out in his dissertation *National Character*, the formation of a nation is predicated on race, landscape, historical destiny and ethnological structure. According to him, the national culture is the objectification of national individuality. In other words, identity is something deeper, related to the spirit, and thus it is not only shaped by history, but it reveals itself in history and even makes history. Another observation to keep in mind, as we do the analysis of national character, is that it is not static but at flux as German geographer and ethnographer Friedrich Ratzel observed, ‘A nation is the body in constant change.’²⁵

In broad strokes, Lithuanians, as more or less all Indo-European peoples could be characterized

firstly as Nomads or cattle-breeders, and secondly as Matriarchs.⁶ Both elements have been expressed in our history and culture. The former prevails much more in the earlier phase of Lithuania's history, while the latter comes to the foreground during the subsequent phases.

It is said that Nomadic aspect manifests itself in social life by a desire for expansion. In the case of Lithuanian people, anthropologists argue, this has been most seen in war-expeditions of king Mindaugas to the Slavic territories, as well as the conquest of king Vytautas during whose reign Lithuania's borders have reached the Black Sea. It is noteworthy that German and Russian annals from 13th and 14th centuries depict a Lithuanian as an aggressive and ruthless warrior gifted with political talent. Especially the valor of Lithuanians manifests against crusades of Teutonic knights. For 200 years Lithuania was capable of defending herself against crusaders. She was the last pagan nation in Europe to accept Christianity: Aukstaiciai (marked by a dialect spoken in central-east part) accepted it in 1387, Zemaiciai (marked by a dialect spoken in the northwestern part) only in 1418. In comparison, Lithuanian neighbors, Germans and Slavs, accepted it four centuries earlier.

The same determination with which Lithuanians were fighting invaders could be observed in later history too, for instance, organized guerilla resistance against Soviet Russia in 1950s. J. Girnius argues that Lithuania's warlike attitude springs from the love of freedom. Lithuanians honor and cherish freedom. Therefore, even when the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was at her zenith, her policy was very democratic in terms of religion and culture. This explains why Jews persecuted in Christian Europe had found a safe haven under the wings of pagan kings of Lithuania. It is remarkable to read the letter written by the king Gediminas to Pope John XXII, in which he explains why Lithuanians resist Teutonic knights, ‘Holy and honorable Father! We are fighting with the Christians not so that we could destroy the Catholic faith, but in order to resist the harm done to us...this could be seen from the fact that we have brothers from Franciscan and Dominican orders, who have full freedom to baptize, preach and to administer sacraments.’ In the same letter, he gives an example of how his predecessor, king Vytenis, invited Franciscans to Lithuania and even built the church for them; yet, Teutonic Knights upon getting hold of this invitation came from Prussia and burned it! Thus, bravery needed for expansion as

well as to defend themselves from invaders, was balanced with tolerance and appreciation of freedom. According to Kavolis, because Lithuanians did not oppress the people of conquered nations, when oppressed themselves, they kept the independent spirit and would not allow to be enslaved by others.⁷ Lithuanian folklore and especially lyrics of songs are far from being militant. Lithuanians do not glorify militancy; on the contrary, a Lithuanian maiden sings, 'I do not need a warrior, I need a ploughman.'

Another characteristic feature in the ethnological portrait of Lithuanians is supposedly matriarchic in nature. It is suggested that Europe was inhabited by matriarchic peoples before the Indo-European immigration to Europe. The European cultural progress was made possible by the fact that the Nomads had to settle down as agriculturists. Tilling of the ground is said to be the characteristic of only matriarchic peoples – neither Nomads nor Totemic people cultivate the land. The agriculturist is deeply rooted in the soil he tills. He loves his fields and meadows. His patriotism shows itself in the love of his native-place. Speaking about Lithuanians, that is definitely true – Lithuanians have been agriculturists from time immemorial and they have a very deep affection for their motherland.

A farm in Matriarchic society is the property of a family, not of a clan. The family life is characterized by the superiority of woman and strict monogamy. The most salient figure in Lithuanian consciousness is mother. Kavolis points out that a white-headed mother has deep and subtle sentiments of Lithuanians.⁸ She has become a pivot of emotional life. In Lithuanian folk songs only a bride gets as much attention, and only until her marriage. Then, she is in the background again. A portrait of the mother, however, is always charming. There is no relationship deeper than that of a son or a daughter with their mother in Lithuanian folklore. A father is a provider of bread, somewhat incidental and in most cases almost obscure. The bond of a child with his father is never intense, and serves as a means to underline the significance of a mother in the shaping of individuality of her child. It is love of the mother that inspires and nurtures a child. Other family relations are much more negative. A husband, as a rule, is frequently a drunkard and becomes disappointed with his wife, even to the point of becoming aggressive towards her. She is quite frequently referred to as 'a bitch' in Lithuanian folklore. Yet, when she grows older, aggression subsides, and she again, as in the child-

hood, becomes an object of love and veneration. No doubt, that the rise of Mariology has deep roots in this divinization of a woman. Mary, the mother of Jesus, is a common object in Lithuanian religious art, and nominal Catholics pray to her, not Jesus, because supposedly, as a woman she is a better mediator between the angry God and a sinner. To this day Catholics call Lithuania the land of Mary or Maryland.

Finally, we should mention that the role of a brother has some significance in Lithuanian folk songs. For instance, a maiden always seeks her brother's protection instead of turning to her lover. A brother is his sister's honor and she turns to him with confidence. No sacrifice is too great to help a sister in need.

Thus, according to cultural anthropologists, these two ethnological elements, namely nomadic and matriarchic, lay at the heart of Lithuanian individuality. Other characteristics that express Lithuanian outlook in a more practical way stem from them. To this examination we now turn.

National Character of Lithuanian People

Eduard Spranger, a student of Wilhelm Dilthey, discerned six distinct types of humans, depending on what values are given the priority, namely political, economical, theoretical, esthetical, religious and social. J. Girnius applied his theory to different nations and concludes that Lithuanians should be classified as the 'social' type. According to him, the highest value for a Lithuanian is the living human being.⁹ Respect which Lithuanians show to a human is evident both in everyday life and in cultural trends. There is a Lithuanian saying, 'It is necessary for a human to see a human.' Therefore a village is as a big family. After work, one goes to rub shoulders with his neighbor. For Lithuanians, time spent in fellowship has the same meaning as entertainment for people from other nations. Lithuanians enjoy and value fellowship. From this springs another characteristic feature, namely Lithuanian hospitality. To treat another well is not an obligation, but an opportunity for a time of fellowship. Lithuanian guests are treated with abundance of food. Yet, Lithuanians would love to get something in return, namely sincere and guileless conversation. Shallow and superficial communication will not satisfy a Lithuanian who has spent hours in preparing table for his guest. However, it would be wrong to call a Lithuanian utilitarian or opportunist. Friendship he seeks is for the sake of

friendship, not gain.

Secondly, a Lithuanian is inclined to individualism. However, Lithuanian individualism is not as obvious, for instance, as that of Scandinavians or Germans. Kavolis names this feature 'a historical protective shell of Lithuanian individuality'.¹⁰ Outwardly, Lithuanians are rather social, yet inwardly, at the nucleus of Lithuanian individuality lies the yearning of personal connection. Therefore, anthropologists prefer another word, namely *personalist* to define this characteristic. For Lithuanians the concept of friendship has connotations of intimacy. Girnius rightly points out that Lithuanians are not open anonymously to everybody, but to each one individually.¹¹ Not humanity collectively, but this or that personality unlocks the heart of a Lithuanian. He cannot love faceless humanity; he needs a particular person to extend his love. This could vividly be demonstrated by the way Lithuanians participate in social charity. Anonymous benevolence does not work among Lithuanians as it does in other countries, for instance in Germany or the US. Lithuanian philanthropy reaches out not to humanity or a nation, but to a single individual.

Girnius is convinced that comparative approach helps to accentuate these two features of the national character. As humanist, who values friendship and fellowship, a Lithuanian differs from a German, his Western neighbor; and as personalist, he is definitely different from a Russian, his Eastern neighbor.¹² The latter loves humanity collectively. Confession from a character in Dostoyevsky's novel vividly illustrates this feature: 'I love humanity so much that I could die for it, yet I find it difficult to bear with a person in my living room for a day.' Conversely, a Lithuanian seeks a person to whom he could open his heart, and who would be willing to open his. A Russian could be open with everyone in a crowd. Not a Lithuanian. Communality is much more characteristic of Russians than of Lithuanians. Some argue that precisely because of this national feature, Communist ideology was able to take deep roots in Russia. A Lithuanian perceives community as the sum of genuine interrelationships that take place among different persons. Thus for a Lithuanian, just obeying orders means the devaluation of the benevolent action per se. Charity should proceed from a heart. Yet, unlike a Russian, he cannot open his heart to everybody unless he develops personal relationships with another person. He needs some personal connection, some inward clicking before he is able to happily volunteer for some social action. For this

reason, he seeks a person to whom he would be able to relate to, extend his own humanity and share in that of the other. Lithuanian outlook could be defined as *personal humanism*.

J. Brazaitis assumes that Lithuanians are not intellectual theoreticians as Germans, who are concerned with and always looking for 'das Wesen' ('the nature'); neither are they rational practitioners as French, known for clarity and elegance of thought, as expressed in 'l'esprit' ('the spirit'). Lithuanians retain balance between mind and sense, intellect and emotions.¹³ Maceina is of the same mind, stating that Lithuanians are inclined to keep the synthesis of balance. Yet, both authors agree that emotional side is more expressed than the intellectual. Lithuanian sensibility is passive. It is not dramatic, not born out of the conflicts or dualities of life. Danish anthropologist, Age M. Benedictsen, one of the few foreigners to explore Lithuanian folklore, writes:

Lithuania hardly possesses a trace of epic poetry, no historic deed, not a single man is mentioned by name, lauded or condemned. It possesses like other countries its festive lays, together with multitude of everyday poetry, that poetry which springs from the craving of the poetic mind itself, without outer causes, a song, where children of another nation would only say alas, a song, where another would only laugh, a song for every pretty maiden, for every beautiful summer morning, for a field blue with flowering flax, for a sleek and glossy horse. There are songs for a dead brother, a lost sweetheart, the child's love for its parent is transposed into song; wonder and joy, sorrow and fear, all the emotions of the soul, lasting long enough for the tone to form itself into melody. All this distinguished the poetry of Lithuania even from that of its nearest sisters, the Slavic peoples, it is a poetry of the moment and the mood – often simple and monotonous, as it is bound to be when emanating from simple little-experienced people, but never without truth, rarely without beauty.¹⁴

Lithuanian sensibilities are elegiac and deeply poetic. A Lithuanian writer, Vaizgantas, depicts an old trunk of the tree naming it *Mould* in the following way: 'Mould, a thousand year giant, the king of growth, the tree of gods, has piled a mound for himself... The nature of Lithuania – the spirit of Mould, slow, harming no one at night – will mourn and will murmur for thousands of years in secret

voices, awakening yearning of poetry, directing to the path on which a traveler will not be lost.' Such elegy dominates Lithuanian literature. Perhaps for this reason Lithuanians have many more brilliant and creative poets than prose writers. Even our novels are lyric and usually melancholic. One will not find intriguing plot or even many adventures. Lithuanian novels contain many vivid and detailed narrations of nature as well as deep reflections on human characters.

A Lithuanian is a contemplative beholder. He gently processes the outside world, avoiding square expressions. It is almost impossible to translate lyrics of a Lithuanian poem into English because of frequent use of diminutives and diminutive suffixes. Lithuanian outlook may be felt in the following verse of a song, 'I had a small horse, although small, yet comely.' Brazaitis observes the differences of the same fairy-tales as told by Russians and Lithuanians. The style of the latter is sublime and much more moderate. Lithuanians value meekness and even the horrible realities of life express gently. Evil must be lamented over, not fought with. Perhaps, the best illustration of how this melancholy finds its place in Lithuanian art is *Rupintojėlis*, a wooden sculpture or carving of *Worring* or *Pensive Christ*.

Derived from the Lithuanian word *rupestis* 'concern', it can be translated as concern, anxiety and solicitude. The image of *Rupintojėlis* is seen in a variety of settings, ranging from forest chapels to tree trunks. While each statue is unique, all portray the same figure: Christ sitting on a rock or stool, bent over, supporting his head with his right hand, the left hand on his knee; sometimes a crown of thorns on his head showing drops of blood, but always his face is full of worry, looking pensively and sadly at passers-by. All emphasis is placed on the facial expression of deep thought and infinite sorrow. Although the *Pensive Christ* is not an authentic piece of Lithuanian art – the image was known in other European countries and originated in the 15th century – yet it has become the personification and the mirror of Lithuanian character. I would call it the *Passion of the Christ* according to Lithuanians. Of course, it is not a depiction of historical Jesus, but of the one Lithuanians can most relate to – Christ the Man of Sorrows pondering all the ills of humanity. Finally, the form of the sculpture reveals a lot about Lithuanian art in general. *Rupintojėlis* is very simple, even simplistic because Lithuanians value idea more than form. Lithuanian culture does not attract by outward forms. In fact,



Pensive Christ (*Rupintojėlis*)

Lithuanian traditional folk dresses are less colorful than those of our neighbors. The same is true about Lithuanian literature, and even, as Brazaitis points out, about Lithuanian cemeteries.¹⁵ They are much more formless than those in Scandinavia or Germany. Lithuanians do not give prominence to form. The value is found deeper, in one's heart and humanity.

Missiological implications

I would like to conclude these reflections on the national character of Lithuanian people by considering some missiological/evangelistic implications.

First of all, I believe that the above-analyzed characteristics should not be neglected or undermined when planning to reach Lithuanians with the gospel of Jesus Christ. On the contrary, the anthropological insights, when properly applied, will make missiological and evangelistic endeavors more fruitful. The attitude of the apostle Paul expressed in 1 Corinthians 9:19-22 should be ours too: 'Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the

law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some.⁹ The Apostle Paul was aware of national and cultural differences that exist among diverse nations. It is clear from this passage that these national identities could prevent the people from hearing the gospel preached. To eliminate these hindrances, the apostle Paul would put all his efforts to identify with the culture in which he was ministering. One missiological strategy did not fit all. For this reason, when preaching to the Greeks, he would become like a Greek; when preaching to the Jews, he was again a Jew. How does the process of 'becoming' look like? Practically it meant that the apostle was sensitive to the beliefs and value systems, manners, customs and worldviews of different cultures and was ready to sacrifice those of his own. In modern missiological terms he believed in contextualization of the gospel. Thus, the missiological paradigm of the apostle Paul is that of incarnational ministry. We will be wise to follow his example.

Now, engaging Lithuanians with the gospel has not been an easy task for missionaries. As already said, Lithuania was the last European nation to accept Roman Catholicism. Yet this, in my opinion, was not a flaw, but rather a merit of our forefathers. Pagans, as they were, understood that religion that comes with a sword is false, and therefore they resisted. As king Gediminas explains to the pope, 'We are fighting with the Christians not so that we could destroy the Catholic faith, but in order to resist the harm done to us.' These words, in my opinion, have very strong implications for modern missionary activities in Lithuania too. Lithuanians do resist any attempt to impose something from the outside. Historically, even when those attempts of the outsiders were successful, as in the case of Communistic ideology, that provoked both open and hidden resistance. Therefore, a minister of the gospel should come not as a crusader but as a friend. Lithuanians intuitively resist outward enforcements, yet if their hearts are won, they become earnest followers as in the case of Catholicism. There is no space here to analyze how Lithuanians from stiff-necked pagans have become ardent Catholics. Suffice it to say that Catholic mysticism has a strong appeal to a poetically introverted Lithuanian.

Secondly, most of the missionaries that came to Lithuania after the independence of 1990 did not have any intentions to learn Lithuanian language. Because in the past many attempts have been made to denationalize us by Germans, by Poles and by Russians, Lithuanians are very diligent to preserve their language. Lithuanians are conservatives in many respects, but especially in this one. Anyone who dares to learn our language earns the highest respect. I personally knew an Armenian who had learned Lithuanian and came to live here already knowing the language. He was highly esteemed among Lithuanian friends. Unfortunately, very few missionaries follow such an example.

Thirdly, the poetical inclination of Lithuanians requires that the gospel presented would have not only cognitive but affective elements too. One of the reasons why Catholicism was more appealing than Protestantism to simple folks could be the more cognitive approach of the latter. On the other hand, among the most outstanding Lithuanian poets, we have Catholic priests, such as Maironis (1862 – 1932) whose poems set the basic standards for modern Lithuanian poetry. As analyzed in this paper, the emotional side of Lithuanian people is more expressed than the intellectual. Therefore, the dogmatic approach to the spreading of the gospel has a lesser appeal to their consciousness. Lithuanians need more than just rational exposition of the gospel. Their hearts have to be warmed and their souls ignited. Perhaps, for this reason, the charismatic churches today have the highest rate of membership among evangelicals. I think that the worship ministry that seeks to be authentic, that builds on the rich heritage of Lithuanian song tradition and innovatively implements some of its elements will be a very effective tool in reaching Lithuanians with the gospel. I suggest that contemplative and inspirational dimensions of the gospel are to be practiced and developed in Lithuanian churches. This is not to suggest that cognitive and rational aspects are not important or should be abandoned all together. On the contrary, integration of both contemplative and cognitive dimensions of the gospel should be pursued.

Fourthly, because Lithuanians value fellowship more than entertainment, and friendly talk more than bombastic show, pastors and missionaries should be seeking to develop church structures that will have place for friendly interactions among believers. Home groups or specifically oriented clusters/clubs, such as 'Mothers of Preschoolers,' or 'Christian Family values' could become sought-

after and refreshing places for Christians as well as their unbelieving neighbors. Because Lithuanians value intimacy, even smaller units, such as mentor-student should be encouraged. There is some truth in the saying that a Lithuanian feels at home in the confessional! Some have suggested that precisely for this reason Lithuanians were not willing to accept Protestantism, which canceled the obligatory sacrament of penance. The place of intimacy where one can open the deepest corners of his heart is very important for the Lithuanians.

Finally, it must be mentioned that some features of the Lithuanian character will be challenged by the gospel and should not be held onto. Among them are passivity and nostalgia. Although these characteristics per se are not evil or sinful, yet they often become the hindrances for normal Christian growth. Passivity could very easily become an excuse for not obeying the explicit commands of Christ. Sometimes laziness tries to disguise itself as meekness, or cowardice as gentleness. Lithuanians are prone to these sins. Yet even more we should beware of nostalgia, which ends up in depression. At present the suicide rate in Lithuania is the one of the highest (if not the highest) in Europe. In this appalling sin we surpass all our neighbors. When confronted with diverse challenges and injustices of life, Lithuanians often turn to drink. Some become so nostalgic that they do not find strength to stand for themselves. Then, suicide seems the easiest way out. Personally I believe that even Lithuanian *Pensive Christ* has given the false portrait of Christ. He is not only too Lithuanian and too human, but this is most importantly in no way reflects the Jesus from the gospels. *Pensive Christ* can only lament over but not save from the oppression and sin. Therefore for many Lithuanians the gospel ends with crucifixion, not resurrection. This hopeless and powerless gospel fails to give regenerating and life-changing faith. This sad picture and false message should be challenged by the true, hope-giving, strength-empowering gospel of the One, who has all power in heaven and on earth. His kingdom is a matter of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom 14:17). In order not to be overcome by melancholy, Lithuanians especially need the latter!

Instead of Conclusion

The first trip to Lithuania has taught Karen T. Olson, the writer for *Chicago Tribune*, a lot about the land of her ancestry. She did not have enough

information to find her great-father's hometown, but she is convinced that she found the source of his spirit. Olson ends the article by describing a Lithuanian driver, 'On the surface, he was an unremarkable man, but his values clearly reflected determination to complete even the most menial tasks with dignity. Watching him, it occurred to me that this man epitomized the fabric of Lithuania's soul – proud, gallant, hard-working and independent.' As a first time visitor she came very close to getting the gist of Lithuanian spirit. In the subtitle Olson names Lithuania as *a small nation with a big soul*. And I think she is right...

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Notes

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Garnet H. Milne lives with his wife Carol in Wanganui, New Zealand. Before his retirement he served as pastor of two churches in Wainuiomata and Wanganui. For many years he was the editor of the denominational magazine *Faith in Focus*.

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Christianity in the Post-Marxist Context

Pavel Hanes

Univerzita Mateja Bela, Slovakia

SUMMARY

The Marxist ideology in former Eastern Europe is not so completely dead as some would us to believe. Marxist attitudes lurk under various disguises and they tend to

* * * *

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die marxistische Ideologie im früheren Osteuropa ist nicht so vollständig tot wie einige uns glauben machen wollen. Marxistische Haltungen lauern hinter verschiedenen Verkleidungen und sie tendieren dazu, besonders

* * * *

RÉSUMÉ

Contrairement à ce que certains voudraient nous faire croire, l'idéologie marxiste n'a pas totalement disparu dans l'ancienne Europe de l'Est. Des attitudes marxistes se cachent sous diverses apparences et tendent à refaire

* * * *

surface especially in discussions with Christian missionaries from the West. The argument of this article is that a Christian worker in Eastern Europe still needs to know the basic philosophical theses of Marxism if he/she is to get the message across to the hearers.

* * * *

in Diskussionen mit Missionaren aus dem Westen ans Tageslicht zu kommen. Der Artikel argumentiert, dass jemand im christlichen Dienst in Osteuropa immer noch die grundlegenden Thesen des Marxismus kennen muss, wenn er oder sie die Botschaft den Hörern erfolgreich kommunizieren will.

* * * *

surface, tout particulièrement dans le cadre de discussions avec les missionnaires chrétiens de l'Occident. L'auteur souligne la nécessité, pour les chrétiens à l'œuvre en Europe de l'Est, d'une bonne connaissance des thèses philosophiques de base du marxisme, comme préalable à la communication du message de l'Évangile.

* * * *

Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.¹

Introduction

It is nearly two decades now since revolutions occurred in what was formerly known as 'the Eastern Bloc' or 'Eastern Europe'. It may seem strange after such a long time to talk about the impact of Marxism in these countries but in the experience of this author many of the problems Christian workers and especially western missionaries encounter are caused by the unstudied interaction between Christian presuppositions² and 'residual Marxism', the (often implicit) opinions and attitudes that are the remains of many years of Marxist propaganda from the times before revolution.

There is no question that Christian workers in these countries rightly concentrate on the new

threats that the open society has brought with itself – unemployment, poverty, drug abuse, exotic religions, the occult, nationalism etc. But to forget that for more than 40 years (and in the case of some of the former Soviet countries more than 70 years) these people were subjected to the powerful Marxist propaganda, of which residues still survive in people's minds means 'to ignore the elephant in the living room'.

Of course, the problem of 'residual Marxism' could be overstated – the young people of the new generation have never heard even one Marxist lecture or read a newspaper article written with Marxist terminology. No one (except, maybe, the Communists party members) is using orthodox

Marxist notions to explain the political or economic situation anymore. Even the leftist parties generally are not proclaiming full-scale return to the pre-revolutionary political and economic conditions.

But to understate or to overlook the problem is probably as much a danger as to overstate it. It is important to realize, that even if the young generation has had no experience of the propaganda, they unconsciously imbibe the results of it through the attitudes of those whose minds had been influenced by it – usually their parents. That *attitudes are deeper than words* is the first important truth to keep in mind when dealing with residual Marxism in post-communist Europe. Also it is important to remember that *society has a longer memory than individuals*. The structures, institutions and relationships may be rebuilt and renamed but lurking in disguise under the new words are the old ways of doing things. Another crucial fact to keep in mind is that *Marxism was/is much more than just an economic and political theory*. It was (and is) a comprehensive, all-encompassing worldview which could not be discarded just with an exchange of the government. It is a philosophical system answering every question under (and above) the sun. Marx was one of the last philosophers who attempted to show how all things in the universe relate to each other. Of this complicated system only Marxist totalitarian politics and centrally planned economy have fallen into disrepute but many of its parts resonate with ideas still in vogue in western democracies (philosophical naturalism, Darwinism or even Maslow's hierarchy of psychological needs...)

The hidden attitudes of residual Marxism complicate not only Christian work but also the overall transition of these countries. The new science of transitions – transitology³ – studies such subjects as *democratisation*, *marketisation*, *state-ness* or *nation building*,⁴ and some authors rightly complain that insufficient attention is paid to the values and beliefs, that make up the foundations of political culture.⁵ If one were to draw a *plausibility pie-diagram* of beliefs and values for a post-communist country – what would it contain? Certainly it would contain values such as national culture and traditions, freedom (political and individual), humanism, democracy, Christianity, secularism etc. One might then ask how many of these values and beliefs would be informed by 'residual Marxism'? This author does not purport to know or even to say that it is possible to determine an approximate percentage of it. However, ignoring it creates a

serious obstacle to communication.

Without downplaying the other problems, the present article contends that *demarxisation* should be an integral part of transitology, if the transition is to be really successful and lasting.

What is Residual Marxism?

Before one can talk of residual Marxism, it is useful to review Marxism, at least in its basic outlines, as the worldview (*Weltanschauung*) that was 'preached' and taught in Eastern Europe under Communism. When engaging in dialogue on this subject, a summary review of the Marxist worldview may meet with a negative reaction that is understandable if the participants consider Marxism to be outdated and dead.

In taking into account this objection, it is useful to remember that 'Marxism as a concept and a creed has flourished for nearly 150 years, during which its death has been continuously announced. Yet, like Antaeus, the giant wrestler of Greek mythology, Marxism has appeared until now to spring up mightier each time it was cast to the ground.'⁶

Another reservation is caused by a deep resentment toward considering the hated atheistic system that for so long was being force-fed into people's minds without giving them liberty to think for themselves. This objection can be answered by a reminder that the attraction/appeal of Marxist theory grows in direct proportion to the (time or geographic) distance of its practice. Also it is good to remember that Marxism includes in its doctrines ideas of other philosophers, notably Feuerbach and Hegel. Feuerbach's critique of religion '...continues to excite interest among seekers after a universal humanistic formula, and even among theologians'.⁷ These resentments have to be overcome.

For the purposes of this article, the author has chosen to include only those areas that in his experience and opinion most powerfully influence people's attitudes.

Marxist Critiques

1. Marxist Critique of Religion

Residual Marxism is in great measure responsible for the division between religion and social engagement, between faith and political involvement. Marxist propaganda taught that religion was the 'opium of the people',⁸ a tool to subjugate working

masses by the ruling class and an unscientific explanation of unexplained physical phenomena.

A basic response to religion is either negative (people think immediately of the Inquisition, abuse of wealth or an unjust God) or divisive (tending to separatism or controversy).

To preach 'God loves you' is irrelevant, to say the least, if God is either unjust, or unable to rule the world justly. At the same time, although Marxism may be atheistic, it still has its god: 'Man is the highest being for men (*das höchste Wesen für den Menschen*)'⁹ wrote Marx and this still holds true and agrees very well with modern anthropocentric humanism.

2. Marxist Critique of the Human Condition

Marx and Engels used very explosive words when they spoke about the conditions of workers under capitalism. Words such as *dehumanization*, *alienation*, *exploitation*, and *unearned income* are loaded with emotions of resentment and hatred. Consider the emotional force of this passage:

External labour, labour in which man alienates himself (*sich entäußert*), is a labour of self-sacrifice, of mortification (*Kasteiung*). Finally, the external character of labour for the worker is demonstrated by the fact that it belongs not to him but to another, and that in it he belongs not to himself but to another.¹⁰

If one studies the Marxist critique of the human condition more closely, one inevitably comes to the conclusion, that it is not only capitalism that is criticized here, but the very idea that man was created as a dependent being. The Marxist aim is not just economic or social improvement – the aim is to achieve the final fulfillment of human destiny

3. Marxist Critique of the Notion of Truth

Discussion with persons having a residual Marxist mentality is especially hampered by the Marxist understanding of truth, an understanding that is actually very fashionable in today's post-modern world-view.

(1) There is no absolute truth. The question of whether a statement is true or false simply cannot be answered under monistic presuppositions. (2) Truth is practice in accordance with the historical process of revolutionary progress towards the ideal communist society. (3) Dialectical understanding of truth means that contradicting statements can be equally valid expressions of reality.

Residual Marxist understanding of truth finds

very fertile soil in philosophical pluralism, where 'truth' is actually just an expression of more or less hidden interests – either in money and wealth (Marx), power and control (Nietzsche) or sex (Freud). To believe in truth that comes from revelation is impossible and only leads to ridicule and scorn.

Marxist Philosophical System

It was complete, simple and authoritative.

If you teach a residual Marxist about God he may ask you to explain your teaching about something seemingly totally irrelevant, but his point is actually to check your system for its completeness. With all probability this will be a residuum from the Marxist past, when every imaginable thought had to be explained from the Marxist point of view. Everything was lumped together in one grand all-explaining system. The former Czechoslovak chess grand master L. Pachmann wrote:

In the year 1938 under the name of J.V.Stalin a small booklet was published with the title *On Dialectical and Historical Materialism*. The issue I had in hand was the all-encompassing wisdom of Marxist philosophy printed on twenty five pages. The principles of dialectics were explained just on eleven pages out of those twenty five. The rest of the book was 'an expansion of the formulas of dialectical materialism on the research of social life and an application on the phenomena of social life, research of society and study of the history of society...' ...this system is summed up in a few dogmas, it is closed, all-explaining and unchanging.¹¹

It is really difficult, if not impossible, to combat this mindset. If one does not cheat (or does not deceive himself!) at every step one has to admit there are things one does not understand even in matters about which he is conversing. But for residual Marxism this is a proof that one's system has gaps in it and therefore it cannot claim to be 'true'.

The authority of Marxism was derived from its identification with science and making it look fully rational. After the revolution when 'the age of spirituality has dawned' rationality may no longer be in vogue but adjectives like 'scientific' or 'mind enhancing' are still selling the ideas that are labeled by them. Behind this is the old statement of Hegel who said (referring to Plato): *What is rational is real; what is real is rational* (*Was vernünftig ist, das ist*

wirklich; und was wirklich ist, das ist vernünftig.)¹² 'Logic' for residual Marxism may be very different from the 'real' (mathematical) logic or even from the logic used by Hegel or Marx. The point is that for a thing to be accepted and believed it has to be plausible for the human mind and things that are beyond its comprehension are by that very fact considered untrue. (Of course, plausibility always depends on more than logic and rationality, but to show this requires some hard thinking, and this is what we all need to do.)

This Marxist scientism is a peculiar kind of determinism. Although human consciousness, (culture, values, beliefs etc.) is determined by the economic structure of society,¹³ this does not mean that man is just a passive victim of circumstances. On the contrary, he/she should understand the historical process and actively take part in helping it to progress in the right direction. So man is both part of the process and above the process. A contradiction? Remember Hegelian dialectics!

Marxist Social Practice

Maybe the most problematic part of residual Marxism is the remembrance of the Marxist practice. Understandably, there is strong aversion to any infringement of freedom – censorship, closed borders, secret police, centrally planned economy, etc.

But resenting these attributes of the Marxist system does not mean that the *ideas* that lie behind it have been consciously discarded and replaced by their (democratic) alternatives. For example:

- People with residual Marxist attitudes may resent censorship but still expect journalists to be 'obedient' to the official (government) line.
- Residual Marxism would hardly be nostalgic about the Iron Curtain, but still may be negative and xenophobic towards the West.
- Who would want the secret police back to spy on citizens? However, suggestions to punish ideas by law abound.
- Free market and free enterprise is the very essence of capitalist reality. But there should be no wealthy capitalists to provoke residual Marxist to envy and class hatred!

Behind these contradictory attitudes are important Hegelian/Marxist beliefs: belief in the proletarian revolution and belief in the state.¹⁴

The communist revolution was nothing if it was not radical.¹⁵ Under the influence of residual Marxism, although people may no longer talk of

the proletarian revolution and about killing the class enemy, they may still prefer radical action to discussion and persuasion. And because, according to Marxism, it was always the state that brought about social progress and guaranteed the dignity of an individual, the state is expected to bear down radically (usually issuing new laws) on those who stand in the way. Although the state is defined as '...an organ of class rule, an organ for the oppression of one class by another',¹⁶ nevertheless it is the only hope of improving the human condition. Consequently, great importance is attached to *who* (what party) rules.

All of this creates confusing and contradictory attitudes of passive expectations (the state should take care of my social situation) and deeply entrenched suspicions (politics is a dirty game; laws are there to oppress me; to cheat the state is an expression of freedom). In this relationship to the state and political culture in general, Marxist class struggle continues...

Interaction between Christianity and Residual Marxism

What happens when Christian presuppositions encounter residual Marxism? Before we discuss the interaction between the remains of the pre-revolution propaganda and Christian presuppositions, we need to realize some complications.

One is that westernisation (democratisation, marketisation, consumerism etc.) in many ways helps grow what Marxism had been sowing. Naturalism, evolutionism, scientism are understood as just different words for what Marxism taught under the title of 'scientific atheism'. Western consumerism is too close to the Marxist ideal of fulfilment through material possessions and the idea of welfare state continues to build up highly passive expectations from the state and bureaucracy. Democracy and humanism that historically developed from the Christian doctrine of the dignity man (man as the image of God) is easily reinterpreted according to the Marxist 'man is the highest being for man' principle and Marxist class antagonism merges quite smoothly with western Nietzschean *ressentiment* against the more successful and wealthy.¹⁷

Another complication is that Christian workers (even western missionaries) too often are not aware of the Christian foundations of many of their 'natural' views and attitudes. The *grace* of God towards the undeserving sinner is very differ-

ent from 'grace' to the highest being that is entitled to all imaginable privileges. *Faith* in God who, after all apologetic efforts of explanation, cannot be rationally comprehended, has different effects from faith that takes for real only what is rational. *Submission* to worldly authorities (the state, the laws etc.) looks differently if those authorities are there 'for my good' (Rom 13:4), or in reality they are my 'class enemy' or they represent a new form of persecution. *Servanthood* is a great word in Christianity (are we not 'saved to serve?'), but not so if your attitude was modelled by the teaching of residual Marxism asserting that alienation and degradation is an inevitable result of every employer-employee relationship. *Salvation* from sin and God's wrath cannot fulfil residual Marxist hopes to be delivered from the limitations of createdness. *Justice* derived from equality of men before God (all men are sinners) differs radically from justice understood as egalitarianism (all are entitled to equal wealth).

As if this were not enough, a further complication is caused by *residual Christianity*. By this term we can describe the opinions and attitudes that have Christian origin but are detached from their spiritual and doctrinal ancestry. The western ideals of freedom, fairness and equality that are prerequisites of real democracy can be given as a few examples of residual Christianity remaining from the Christian past. But Christians from the West and the East often implicitly and deeply differ on the level of their different presuppositions but they cannot solve the puzzle because, too often, neither have made the effort to study and understand them. One example is the notion of *truth*.

'Natural' (residual) Christian understanding of truth is that 'truth is a testimony confirmed by trustworthy witnesses'. But for residual Marxism the proof of truth depends much more on logical reasoning (Hegelian!) than on eyewitnesses. This often leads to endless discussions and deep disappointments because each side presents 'proofs' that are simply not accepted by the opposite party. Where a Christian from the West will believe in the power of the Word and education, his eastern counterpart will probably believe in the determining power of social and economic relations. So for one social aid is a tool to preach the Word while for the other it is the other way round: preaching the Word is a tool to improve social conditions. Freedom in Christianity is a reason for gratitude and responsible behaviour but in residual Marxism it is an opportunity to escape responsibility and finally release pent-up rebellion against unfavourable circumstances. Hence may come some of the disappointments in Christian workers employed by western missionaries.

In this situation Christian preaching and teaching often leads to confusion. Trying to build Christian understanding of the notions like e.g. love, grace, justice, freedom, salvation etc. on the foundations made of residual Marxism cannot lead to lasting results and especially western missionaries are often estranged from easterners by their suspicions (they are part of western imperialism)

The following table gives a summary of what I have described above. As always, simplifications are dangerous but I think they do not completely caricature reality.

Christian Presuppositions or/ and Residual Christianity	Marxist Principles	Sentiments and Attitudes of Residual Marxism
Knowledge and Truth:		
Thought is a product of immaterial mind (not predetermined).	Thought is a product of material conditions (determined).	Distrust of anyone with different social background and xenophobia.
Truth is attained by analysis and experience.	Truth is attained by social practice of the oppressed.	'Truth' is always an ideological tool of a party. (populism)
The basic method of science is experiment and observation.	The basic method of science is logic and speculation.	What is considered as scientific is what looks logical and free of contradictions.
Privatisation of faith is an expression of pluralism (freedom).	Privatisation of faith is an expression of weakness (fear).	Escapism and ghetto religious mentality.
Man:		
Humanism is an expression of love and care.	Humanism is an expression of man-worship.	Anthropocentrism.

Human nature can be changed by education.	Human nature is determined by economic relations.	Education and Christian teaching put behind economic interests.
Individualism is an expression of the dignity of an individual and freedom (basically positive).	Individualism is an expression of distrust and separation (basically negative).	Self-centred, little interest in helping others.
Charity is an expression of grace and mercy.	Charity is humiliating. The poor are entitled to be helped by the rich.	No gratitude. Resentment (<i>ressentiment</i>).
History:		
Progress comes by development.	Progress comes by revolutions.	Violence is inevitable.
History will find meaning in the coming Kingdom of God.	History has meaning in itself (historicism).	Great expectations and fatal disappointments in political programs.
Work:		
Work is a creative occupation and a necessity to make a living.	Work is the creator of man and the highest expression of humanity.	Implacable dissatisfaction with working conditions.
Division of labour is an efficient means of producing goods.	Division of labour means alienation and dehumanisation.	Unwillingness to carry out partial or menial tasks.
Society:		
Lex, Rex ¹⁸	'Right' depends on history.	Might is right.
An individual derives his/her dignity from God.	An individual derives his/her dignity from society (collective).	Initiatives or efforts by individuals or small groups are not valued.
Democracy means freedom and responsibility.	Democracy means freedom and opportunity to achieve personal ends.	Unethical practices in politics, business etc.
The state is there for the common good (protection, justice).	The state is there to rule the oppressed class.	To cheat the state and bypass the law is normal.
Political authority (critically) accepted as 'administration'.	Political authority rejected as 'the oppressors' or uncritically followed as 'our leaders'.	Abuse of politics.
Justice is the rule of the law.	Justice is equality.	Egalitarianism.

Some of the attitudes in the third column are not purely Marxist and can be traced to other influences. I can only repeat that Marxism is just one of several mind-modelling forces that is fast becoming subconscious. Also, Marxism was in some measure an eclectic system that combined views of other philosophers. So some of the opinions/attitudes described above can be traced to Feuerbach, Hegel, Darwin or Rousseau, but it was through Marxist propaganda that they got into the public consciousness. At the same time, the Marxist doctrines have given philosophical and ethical dignity and supposedly scientific validity to the vices and attitudes present in some measure in every human being. Whatever the cause, it is advisable not to ignore the possible Marxist theoretical fortification around these attitudes.

Suggestions for Christian Action

In Czechoslovakia (or later in Slovakia, from which the author comes) there has been no general attempt to 'de-marxise' the minds of the public, and to my knowledge the same is the case in the other post-communist countries. The Marxist economic theories proved to be mistaken, no one needed to teach about it, and the Marxist political system of totalitarian control was disgusting enough, certainly no one needed to be told why. But I think it is a mistake to ignore the 'residual Marxism' in the minds of the people and indeed it is still necessary to combat it and to 'de-marxise' the minds and attitudes of those who are willing to listen.

But how? Surely it will require an open mind and a continual and concentrated thinking effort. Before any action is taken a careful analysis must

be done because to suspect and accuse someone of being under the influence of Marxism may only exacerbate the problem. If not done carefully this approach may smack of amateur and unsubstantiated psychoanalysis.

These dangers notwithstanding I think it is necessary to deal with this problem. Especially Christian workers – national or foreign – should make the effort to understand it and find ways how to overcome it. Christian workers (especially evangelical) are often so focused on the practical problems of life and faith that they have but little time to study difficult philosophical problems of epistemology, ethics or ontology. But exactly this, in its simplified form, was fed to the population of each communist country. Again, it is important to remember the fact that residual Marxism mostly does not use and think in the explicitly Marxist *categories* (terms and notions) but goes deeper to the *sentiments, attitudes and feelings*. So, although it is crucial to know where these tendencies come from, at the same time, it is certainly not wise to indiscriminately use the Marxist terms in an attempt to uncover and explain them. This would probably only lead to confusion and resentment.

Know the Basics of Marxist Philosophy and Practice

To acquaint oneself with the basics of the Marxist system it is advisable to read books both by Christian and non-Christian authors. The non-Christian expositions can be found in textbooks of philosophy and history. A very thorough treatment of Marxist philosophy and history of its doctrines is the work of Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism* (although it may be intimidating because of its lengths – about 1400 pages). An example of a shorter work (about 180 pages) could be Robert Freedman's *The Marxist System* published by Chatham House Publishers, New Jersey.

There was quite a number of Christian apologetic works from the times before the 1989 revolution. My recommendation would be the book of Klaus Bockmuehl: *The Challenge of Marxism* published by Inter-Varsity Press. The Marxist practice was different from country to country, one can almost say there were as many Marxisms as there were Soviet-bloc states, so it is important to read some of the books by Christian and non-Christian dissidents from before the revolution (e.g. Solzhenitsyn for Russia or Tson for Romania).

Finally, it is also important to be acquainted with some of the foundational texts by the founders

and important Marxist leaders. They can be found on the Internet at www.marxists.org (English) or www.mlwerke.de (German).

Know Basic Christian Presuppositions

Christian apologetics requires lifelong study and philosophical presuppositions of the Christian message are certainly not easy to articulate. Moreover, theologians are far from agreed on what is 'the Christian philosophy' some question whether it exists at all! Therefore I have to leave it to the reader to decide what depth and what direction his/her study will take. I will only mention areas on which it is important to focus in order to be prepared to detect sources of misunderstanding and causes of 'communication disturbance' in communicating the Christian message in a post-communist country. The examples in the table above touch only on the things that I consider to be typical for Marxism. They do not mention e.g. atheism, naturalism, monism or evolutionism because these views are very common outside of the Marxist philosophy. But because they are also part of it, the Christian worker has to be prepared to answer these views as well. Of course, these will not be hidden as they are enhanced by westernisation.

The logic of the residual Marxist attitudes in the right column of the table may not be immediately clear but I think they will be understood after a deeper study. Clearly, trying to answer the questions of truth, existence and values is like attempting to solve the riddle of the Universe. But although we cannot know all the answers we can at least give reasons for our faith. A classic evangelical treatment of the problem of truth, meaning and language about God is in F. Schaeffer's work *The God Who Is There*. The book was written to answer the prevalent existentialism of the day but in my personal experience it can answer post-Marxist views as well. Similar problems are addressed in C. F. H. Henry's *God, Authority and Scriptures* or D.A. Carson's *The Gagging of God*. Whatever the choice, the point is to understand the problems of secular attitudes to truth, knowledge and language (post-Marxist, postmodernist and others) and Christian alternatives to them. Without this preparation it is really difficult if not impossible to find deep misunderstandings behind deceptively similar or even identical words.

In the area of ontology to understand differences between monism, dualism and Christian dualism; idealism materialism and Christian realism is a prerequisite for tracking down the residual Marxism.

The whole area of values cannot be studied in isolation from Marxist anthropology, philosophy of history and economics. Here are firmly embedded post-Marxist attitudes to the human rights, working ethics and hopes for the future.

It is wise for a Christian worker to know those parts of Marxism especially well that correspond with the biblical critique of exploitation, oppression and greed and the differences between solutions proposed by Marxism and Christianity.

Address the Issue in a Non-threatening Manner (Practice Christian Love)

As I said above it is essential not to offend, threaten or label people with the 'residual Marxist' marker. Not only may there be some not-so-nice residual things in us but also this usually does not help to solve the problem, but only aggravates it by creating resentment.

- Know *both* the positive (if possible) and negative sides of the Marxist position on the issue in question.
- Be humble enough to accept Marxist criticism of Christianity or capitalism where it was/is valid.
- Know the deeper connections between Marxist views as they are related in one coherent worldview.
- When you criticise residual Marxism be sure you are able to present a Christian alternative to what you attack.
- Rely more on the power of God in his word than on strong words and precise definitions. Remember, it is the goodness of God, that leads to repentance.

Questions to Ponder

The following questions may help those who are engaged in the process of transformation of a post-communist Eastern European country.

- Where do I see concrete residues of the Communist past in Eastern Europe?
- Do I understand the attractiveness of the Marxist system?
- What is the best course of action to uncover implicit Marxist attitudes?
- What can I offer as a better alternative to a post-Marxist mindset?

Vocabulary

Marxism in this article is defined as the sum of

Marxism and Leninism and Stalinism plus its application in a former communist country.

Using the expression *Residual Marxism* we mean what has been left in the minds, attitudes, feelings, implicit reactions, and word connotations of the societies formerly subjected to Marxist indoctrination by propaganda.

The term *Demarxisation* (like 'denazification') is used for the process of removing the results of Marxist propaganda; the opposite of Marxist indoctrination

Notes

- 1 Often repeated but seldom heeded quotation. (Santayana, G. *Life of Reason* I/12. <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/15000>, Accessed: 13th Feb. 2005.)
- 2 By using the word 'presuppositions' I do not take stand for the so called 'Presuppositional Apologetics' against 'Evidentialism' (or, for that matter, the other way round). Presuppositions in this article are simply 'things presupposed in the communication of Christian message'.
- 3 In political science, transitology is the name for the area that studies the process of change from a political regime to another, mainly from authoritarian regimes to democracies.
- 4 Kuzio, T. *Transition in Post-Communist States: Triple or Quadruple?* *Politics* 21 (3), 2001, 168-177.
- 5 The relationship between values and democracy is one of the themes of the following Internet site: <http://www.worldvaluesurvey.org>
- 6 Freedman, R. *The Marxist System*, New Jersey: Chatham House Publishers, 1989, 2.
- 7 Kolakowski, L. *Main Currents of Marxism I*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981, 119.
- 8 This expression comes not from MARX but the German poet Heine ('Für Menschen, denen die Erde nichts mehr bietet, ward der Himmel erfunden... Heil dieser Erfindung! Heil einer Religion, die dem leidenden Menschengeschlecht in den bitteren Kelch einige süße, einschläfernde Tropfen goß, geistiges Opium, einige Tropfen Liebe, Hoffnung und Glauben!') Heine, H. Ludwig Börne. Eine Denkschrift. www.heinrich-heine.net/boerne/boerned4.htm, Accessed: 29th Sept. 2002.)
- 9 Marx, K. *Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophie. Einleitung*. www.mlwerke.de/me/me01/me01_378.htm. Accessed: 16th June 2007.
- 10 Marx, K. *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844 – Estranged Labour*. www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/manuscripts/labour.htm, Accessed: 10th Nov. 2002.
- 11 Pachman, L. *Boha nelze vyhnat. (It is impossible to expel God, subtitled: From Marxism back to Christianity.)*, Praha: Vyšehrad, 1990, 19-20.
- 12 Hegel, G.W.F. *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*,

- www.hegel-system.de/de/recht1.htm. Accessed: 16th Aug. 2007
- 13 eg. "...consciousness must be explained from the contradictions of material life..." MARX, K. Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-pol-economy/preface.htm, Accessed: 10th Nov. 2002.
 - 14 Hegel said: '*The state is the march of God in the world*' (...es ist der Gang Gottes in der Welt, daß der Staat ist. Hegel, G.W.F. *Philosophy of Right*, http://www.hegel-system.de/de/recht5.htm § 258 Accessed: 16th Aug. 2007). Here are the roots of the Marxist understanding of the state.
 - 15 'The communist revolution is the most radical rupture with traditional property relations; no wonder that its development involves the most radical rupture with traditional ideas.' (Marx, K. & Engels, F. *The Communist Manifesto*. New York: Pathfinder Press, 1985, 33.)
 - 16 Lenin, V. I. *The State and Revolution*, ch. 1. www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1917/staterev/ch01.htm, Accessed: 25th March 2006.
 - 17 Nietzsche *Zur Genealogie der Moral* 10. www.mala.bc.ca/~johnstoi/Nietzsche/zurgenealogie1.htm, Accessed: 28th Nov. 2002.
 - 18 *The Law, the King* by Samuel Rutherford (1644). He argued that even monarchs, are subject to the rule of law.

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Paul J. DeHart, *The Trial of the Witnesses: The Rise and Decline of Postliberal Theology*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006. Pp. 296 + xvi.

Chad C. Pecknold, *Transforming Postliberal Theology: George Lindbeck, Pragmatism and Scripture*. London: T&T Clark/Continuum, 2005. Pp. 166 + xiii.

Adonis Vidu, *Postliberal Theological Method: A Critical Study*. Carlisle: Paternoster, 2005. Pp. 269 + xiv.

Philip Ziegler
Aberdeen University

SUMMARY

These three studies critically appraise various aspects of postliberal theology and each argues that a fruitful future lies ahead for this contemporary theological agenda only if it is subject to certain corrections and moves forward in this or that particular direction. The aims of the three authors differ significantly, as do the sources of their criti-

cisms and the range of figures considered as representatives of postliberalism. Each text in its own way makes a notable contribution to the contemporary debate about the nature of Christian theology, its methods and proper audiences. Together they indicate that we are far from finished harvesting and discerning the fruit of postliberal theology.

* * * *

RÉSUMÉ

Ces trois études font une évaluation critique de divers aspects de la théologie post-libérale. Chacun des auteurs tente de montrer que ce projet théologique contemporain n'aura de futur fructueux que s'il reçoit certaines corrections et est engagé plus avant dans telle ou telle direction. Les trois auteurs poursuivent des buts différents. Leurs critiques ne sont pas non plus motivées par

les mêmes raisons et leur appréciation diffère quant aux théologiens qu'on peut considérer comme représentatifs du post-libéralisme. Chacun apporte à sa manière une contribution importante au débat contemporain sur la nature de la théologie chrétienne, sur ses méthodes et ses destinataires. Cet ensemble d'ouvrages montre que nous n'avons pas fini de moissonner ou de discerner les fruits de la théologie postlibérale.

* * * *

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Diese drei Studien werten kritisch verschiedene Aspekte postliberaler Theologie aus. Jede Studie argumentiert, dass nur dann eine fruchtbare Zukunft vor diesem gegenwärtigen theologischen Programm liegt, wenn sie sich bestimmten Korrekturen unterzieht und sich in bestimmte Richtungen entwickelt. Die Absichten der drei Autoren unterscheiden sich erheblich, ebenso wie die

Quellen ihrer Kritiken und das Spektrum von Personen, die als Repräsentanten des Postliberalismus' angesehen werden. Jeder Text trägt auf seine Weise bemerkenswert zur gegenwärtigen Debatte über das Wesen christlicher Theologie, ihre Methoden und angemessene Zuhörerkreise bei. Zusammen zeigen sie an, dass wir weit davon entfernt sind, die Früchte postliberaler Theologie abschließend geerntet und sortiert zu haben.

* * * *

Pecknold's offering focuses upon the contribution of one leading postliberal figure, namely George Lindbeck. It argues that the character and enduring merit of Lindbeck's project – programmatically set forth in *The Nature of Doctrine* (1984) – are best appreciated when understood as a particular kind of theological pragmatism. His demonstration of this takes several steps. The opening chapter offers an extended commentary on *The Nature of Doctrine*, drawing attention to those aspects of its argument which are particularly pragmatic, and which hitherto have not always been emphasised. Indeed, Lindbeck is said to propose a '*practical soteriology of language*, where language is redeemed and made whole *through* the good performance of that discourse' (26). Lindbeck's work along these lines, with its strong debts to Wittgenstein and problematically dyadic character is not thought to be entirely viable as it stands, and the subsequent two chapters go on to 'supplement' and 'repair' it. In chapter two, Pecknold argues that Augustine's famous account of 'things and signs' and his prescription of the interpretive 'rule of charity' in *De Doctrina Christiana*, together with his autobiographical telling of the impact of reading given in his *Confessions*, provides a substantive theological warrant for pursuing a kind of 'scriptural pragmatism.' The meaning and import of what is read of the Bible in the church and its effect upon those who read it is best grasped by a thinking theologically about the complex *practices* of reading. But grasping this requires a move from dyadic to triadic modes of thought, something accomplished by taking up the Augustinian logic of mediation, reconciliation of redemption into the self-understanding of theology. This ancient impulse from Augustine then finds its contemporary theorist in the work of Peter Ochs, a leading contemporary Jewish philosopher, whose work is the focus of chapter three. This chapter is the most technical and demanding to read, as it examines the peculiar way in which Ochs brings to bear the pragmatic philosophy of C.S. Pierce upon the question of the reading and interpretation of the scripture along the triadic Augustinian lines already advocated. Ochs himself sees Lindbeck as a fellow traveler, and Pecknold here aims to demonstrate why this should be so. That this *should* be so, that Christian theologians and Rabbis (and others) should be brought together into fruitful exchange on the basis of a shared understanding of the pragmatics of reading – and the reading of scripture in particular – is Pecknold's conviction, as the book's con-

clusion makes clear. Far from being a dangerously sectarian enterprise (pace Gustafson and others), Lindbeck's vision of postliberal theology, when read in this pragmatic direction, opens out faithfully towards the world: along the trajectory from Lindbeck's own pragmatism, through Augustine's 'theosemiotics' to the scriptural pragmatism or 'scriptural reasoning' advocated by Ochs, the postliberal slogan that the Bible and Christian discourse must 'absorb the world' modulates into the imperative that the practice of Christian life with and from the scriptures must lead to '*conversation*' with the world for the sake of its 'repair' and 'transformation'. Thus, when Pecknold describes postliberals as 'the ones who remember, and also discover anew, the wisdom and logic of the scriptures as they face the material problems of the day in conversation with their religious and secular neighbours,' his claim is that theology done in this vein can and ought to engender and sustain a kind of orthodox Christian humanism, as was true of Lindbeck himself (111).

Given the focus and relative brevity of Pecknold's book it is hard, in particular, to adjudge the ultimate propriety of recourse to C.S. Peirce's pragmatic philosophy within Christian theology. Those who are sufficiently worried or tantalised (or both, as I am) by this prospect will want to take up Och's technical study, *Pierce, Pragmatism and the Logic of Scripture* (Cambridge, 1998) to pursue the matter further. Reading that work, one might be able to decide whether the claim that Pierce 'maintains a commitment to scriptural realism in his pragmatism' (34) is more than just a playful exploitation of Peirce's description of the work of logic as a series of 'graphings,' 'engravings' and, yes, 'scriptures' (see note 264, 141). Reading Och's work would also allow one to scrutinise the seemingly audacious claim that 'Peircian pragmatism derives its logic from scripture' (64) and represents nothing less than 'the Gospel's law of love adopted as a rule of logic' (63). Peirce's once remarked that his pragmatic maxim – that our conception of the effects of something is 'the whole of our conception of the object' (63) – could be taken as a restatement of the adage, 'by their fruits you shall know them' (Matt 7:16). Can the case for the 'fit' between a Christian theological account of scripture and contemporary pragmatism be hung upon so tenuous a thread? Perhaps from further reading in Ochs, one could substantiate the precise meaning of the concepts of 'repair' and 'reparative thinking,' notions which are clearly crucial to this

endeavour, but whose meaning remains problematically elusive throughout Pecknold's book.

In contrast with Pecknold's tight focus on Lindbeck as an exemplar of postliberal theology, Adonis Vidu's study takes 'postliberal theology' as a rather broad church, embracing the so-called 'Yale school' (Frei, Lindbeck, Holmer), members of its 'next generation' (Tanner, Placher, Marshall, Thiemann) but also figures like Milbank, Hauerwas, McClenodon and others. Moreover, its focus on theological method demands engagement with a wide ranging body of philosophical and hermeneutical issues and authors, chief among the latter Davidson, Gadamer, and McIntyre. Vidu nurses one fundamental worry about postliberal theology: namely, that its methodological commitments contradict what 'the material requirements of Christian religion.' For how can a theology committed to 'the pragmatist doctrine of the *epistemic priority* of the social forms of life' finally do justice to the '*ontological priority* of God' which Vidu takes to be axiomatic to Christian faith and life (xiii)? As he asks directly at one point: '*how may the prevenient action of God become significant for theology within a cultural linguistic*' approach to Christian thought (95)?

Vidu's study diagnoses several symptoms of this basic contradiction. The analytical pace is brisk across the six chapters which analyse in turn postliberal 'textual habitats,' hermeneutics, ontology, epistemic justification, doctrine and christology respectively. The opening chapters argue that, in the thrall of spatial or territorial metaphors (in/out, intra-/extra-), postliberal theology illegitimately reifies the actual setting of Christian faith, taking it as 'given' in a strong sense. This hardened view of church, texts and incommensurable tradition not only fails to do justice to the 'complexity of their inner dynamic' (243), it also conspires to insulate Christian religion against criticism, eschewing the need to justify itself at any bar, as *it* is the only relevant bar since '*this* is what we do' (83). Vidu rejects such an insulation of faith and life against critique. He argues that the very existence of 'typological' exegesis of scripture in Christian tradition itself shows that such closure is impossible, since 'figuration, which enforces the Christian claim to absorb the world, at the same time subjects the Christian discourse to external dialogue by preserving the identity of what was absorbed'. The upshot is to admit the necessity 'to open up the Christian world to external discourses in an *ad hoc* process of legitimation' (87).

But Christianity is not only criticised and dis-

rupted by external *discourses*, but also by the world 'out there,' which, while never available to us apart from language and practice, is nevertheless available. Theological knowledge is not simply the product of our making (*poesis*) but more fundamentally, also of our suffering (*pathos*) the incursion of both world and God. We may not finally, like Lindbeck, take language 'too seriously' (116) because our 'schemes' (of language, practice etc.) cannot be played off against, and finally constrain their 'content'. With this also falls any notion of incommensurability, i.e., the view that no justifying reasons may be given for the meaning of Christian claims apart from their coherence with one another within Christian discourse itself. Bruce Marshall's appropriation of Davidson's work in *Trinity and Truth* (Cambridge, 2000) offers a way forward in Vidu's view, providing a 'good reasons approach' to the question of epistemic justification which ensures that 'argument and rational dispute are still important, criticism still a possibility' (156).

In the interest of getting the nature of doctrine right, the final chapters take apart a key postliberal distinction, namely that drawn between 'first' and 'second order' discourse. Typically, this distinction places actual performance of religious life including its various discursive elements (prayer, proclamation, scriptural reading etc.) in the first order, and casts theology as descriptive reflection upon all that, i.e., as 'second order.' Vidu sees here a 'symptom of the reification of religion' which takes first order practices to be 'alright as they are' and which constrains theology to speaking about the 'actual features of religion' (163) rather than about God. This in turn makes it impossible to distinguish theology from sociology or anthropology (176). Vidu's rejects what he considers the false dichotomy between first and second order discourse on the basis that there must always be a 'normative ontological context' or (at least?) 'a propositional imagination of an ideal practice' within which we may ask whether any given aspect of Christian faith and life is *correct* or not (176-7). Only an injection realism at this point can make sense of the classical view and function of doctrines, and hold open the possibility of reflective criticism of Christian faith and life. All this comports with Vidu's overriding conviction, declared late in the book, that 'to be a Christian is not a matter of performance but precisely of ontology: of some state of affairs which obtains between God and the human person' (188).

Vidu's study is highly compressed, and will

prove difficult reading for those unfamiliar with the authors and issues he examines. Even those who know this territory may find the movement of the argument difficult to track at times. But those who tackle it will win a compelling entry into some of the most interesting debate in contemporary theological method and philosophy of religion.

DeHart's book is a *tour de force*. It unfolds in four parts. The opening chapter tells the story of how 'postliberal' theology came to be, giving a crisp intellectual biography of the so-called 'Yale School' and the peculiar contours it acquired in the subsequent polemical debates that took place in English language theology. The point of this is not chiefly to introduce the main figures but to indicate the essential problem that stirs DeHart. For he considers Lindbeck and Frei ill served by the outworking of the debates surrounding their work during the 1980s and 90s. These debates focussed excessively on methodological questions to the exclusion of others, and also tended to orbit around a single text – Lindbeck's *The Nature of Doctrine* – to the detriment of Lindbeck's other work, and even more so to Frei's own distinctive concerns and contributions. In effect, DeHart contends, the initial heat of these debates saw to it that the distinctive projects of Frei and Lindbeck were fused into an unhelpful amalgam that came to be called 'postliberalism'. As things have cooled off, postliberalism has variously *disappeared* (i.e., the amalgam disintegrated), *dispersed* into 'several parallel or divergent avenues of exploration' like a 'river delta,' and been *displaced* by new currents like 'Radical Orthodoxy' (45-51). DeHart's detailed account of all these developments is incisive and instructive in itself, but his own aim is to clear the air of the 'fog' of postliberalism (55) in order to afford fresh access to the profiles of Frei and Lindbeck and to reconsider the central question at the heart of their endeavours, namely that of Christian theology's nature and tasks.

The second section of the work treats Lindbeck and Frei in turn, examining in each case the particular *dogmatic* issue which motivated their respective work. DeHart argues convincingly that Lindbeck's theological vision is driven by *ecclesiology*, and all of the various elements of his programme arise from 'an ecclesiological matrix' (61-2) often developed 'on purely theological terms' (64) in the 1970s even before his acquisition of the linguistic and philosophical concepts from Geertz and Wittgenstein. A very nuanced reading of *The Nature of Doctrine* follows, which dwells upon the details

of Lindbeck's 'regulative theory of doctrine' and the nature of theological truth as aspects of the life of the community of Christian witnesses. DeHart rightly stresses that the whole argument here is *analogical* – cultures, and indeed religions are said to be *like* languages with semiotic systems; doctrines are *like* grammar; the Scriptures are a *kind* of exemplary instantiation of the patterns of Christian faith, becoming a Christian is *akin* to being formed in particular cultural-linguistic group. The theological proposal itself is compelling to the extent that such analogies compel. In the midst of this *explicitation de texte*, what particularly interests DeHart is Lindbeck's claim that, together with applicability and intelligibility, faithfulness understood as *intratextuality* serves as the decisive criterion for adjudging the adequacy of theological proposals. This intratextuality has three aspects. First, it is semiotic, i.e., theology grants semantic priority to the Christian religion itself as the 'text' which is the source of 'normative descriptions'. Second, it is 'world encompassing' or absorbing, which means that Christianity is taken to be a 'symbol system rich, variegated and reflexive enough to organize "totalizing" understandings of the whole of reality' (94); third, it is scriptural, for the Scriptures provide the 'publicly accessible exemplar of the originating or generative use of the semiotic code' (95). In all its aspects, the notion of intratextuality turns on the claim that there is a 'fixed structure of meanings embedded in Christian practice' (95), a claim which DeHart severely criticises later in the work.

In the case of Hans Frei it is *christology* which is the central focus of theological vision around which turned a lifetime's work on the narrative interpretation of the gospels and the nature of theology. As with Lindbeck, DeHart offers an impressive and highly instructive reading of Frei's whole body of work, from his christological and hermeneutical studies (*The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative* and *The Identity of Jesus Christ*) through to the worked fragments of his typology of modern theology in *Types of Christian Theology*. DeHart's aims in this section are twofold: first, to examine Frei's programme in its own right, and second to show that the Frei we discover *en route* does not stand in such a 'straight-forward' relation to the project of postliberalism 'as has been typically assumed' (143). DeHart argues throughout that both the substance and tone of Frei's work is best understood as a further development of the programme of his own teacher, H. Richard Niebuhr, the pursuit of a 'generous, liberal orthodoxy,' liberal here denoting 'the peren-

nial impulse within theology for the systematically critical rearticulation of doctrine' (144).

DeHart draws helpful attention in particular to how the questions and concerns that shape the latter studies of theological methodology arise from and are harnessed to Frei's relentless 'dogmatic concentration on the unique, personally concrete and scripturally rendered object of Christian witness: Jesus Christ' (142). Hence, a key organising questions of Frei's typology concerns which ways of doing theology can do justice to the literal sense of scripture and thereby 'accord the correct status to the figure of Jesus as the common center of Christian continuity, of communal self-description' (139). In the end it is the place of the literal sense of Scripture in theology which proves decisive for Frei, DeHart contends. The types of theology which fare best on this score are represented by Schleiermacher and Barth, and do so not because they are most best at intratextuality (i.e., Lindbeck's 'absorbing the world') but rather at *inter-textuality*, i.e., at negotiating the proper use of external discourses within theology. Frei understood that theology is imperiled on both sides: one the one hand, from systematically subordinating and 'translating' Christian discourse into philosophy or history without remainder, and on the other from having Christian discourse become 'Pickwickian' by forfeiting any and all 'ground rules for mutual discourse' among discourses (138). Frei contends that the kind of theology practiced in the space between Barth and Schleiermacher best succeeds in 'cutting one's philosophical losses' (quoting Frei, 138) sufficiently by properly ordering its engagements with the discourses of philosophy, history etc. and keeping them strictly *ad hoc*.

In the third section of the book DeHart moves to examine the oppositions Frei and Lindbeck set up in their respective self-understandings, i.e., he attends to how each characterises that 'liberal' theology which is to be surpassed by his own. He summarises things in this way:

Frei recommends a theology centered on *dogmatic* description rather than *apologetic* explanation, and one in which the relations between internal and external discourses are *ad hoc* rather than *systematic*. Lindbeck urges theologians to abandon *experiential-expressivism* in favor of a *cultural-linguistic* approach, and makes *intratextuality* the very hallmark of theological faithfulness in opposition to *extratextual* 'translation' (151-2).

The pages that follow argue in great detail that neither of Lindbeck's dichotomies finally provides adequate terms in which to distinguish a 'liberal' from a 'postliberal' theology. In part, this is because they fail to capture the complexity of the 'liberal' theologians at issue, and in part because they 'skew the point' of Christian missionary engagement with culture (178). Most problematically, Lindbeck's dichotomies leave obscure what, DeHart contends, is the real issue at stake in the debate, namely 'competing definitions of communal faithfulness' (168). DeHart's own dissatisfaction with Lindbeck's programme becomes clear at this point: He charges that Lindbeck's 'directional imagery of "into" and "out of" and the accompanying notion that one must choose between them are such blunt instruments conceptually speaking' that they 'immediately send astray any more detailed account of the meaning of Christian faithfulness' (183). Further, in the thrall of this inside/outside scheme Lindbeck illegitimately transforms the 'logical priority of public semiotic elements' of Christian discourse in communities into 'an historically transcendent "Christian" semiotic system' (186) thereby asserting that the continuity of Christian faith and identity is 'something found, not made' (quoting Tilley, 189).

DeHart is also critical of Frei's attempt to draw a sharp disjunction between dogmatic and apologetic styles of theology as the key difference between 'liberal' and 'postliberal' theologies. An even more detailed explication of Frei's christology and *Types of Christian Theology* culminates in DeHart's judgment that Frei's interpretation of Schleiermacher is 'at the heart of the typology' and 'is one of the hidden but essential dynamic pressures' on the whole exercise: despite some serious material objections to his theology, Frei 'is determined to defend, with due caution, the legitimacy of Schleiermacher's basic theological intentions on the general level of method' (216). In so doing, Frei actually dissolves the viability of the sharp distinction between dogmatic and apologetic theology. This is because, as Frei's own reading of Schleiermacher shows, the vital overlap of internal and external discourses, and apologetic or correlational procedures can be exploited by a theologian for reasons that are 'internally heuristic rather than externally probative' in pursuit of properly 'dogmatic intentions' (220). If Frei is right about Schleiermacher, then dogmatic and apologetic styles of theology do not finally face off against each other in a 'zero-sum game' (224-5).

In DeHart's view, the only dichotomy which remains tenable under close scrutiny is Frei's distinction between theologies which pursue correlation with external discourses *systematically* (like those of Hegel and David Tracy) and those who pursue *ad hoc*, like Schleiermacher and Barth. DeHart believes that Frei thought this the 'more crucial' distinction between varieties of contemporary theology. The centre of Frei's methodological interest, DeHart argues, lies in the demarcation between these types of theology. Type three remains on the side of the angels, in Frei's view, because it honours the 'specific "irreducibility" of the Christian semantic network' and maintains that 'the basic elements semantically ordering the Christian symbolic network cannot be transposed without remainder into the terms of some other semantic order' (234-5) without sacrificing the primacy of the literal sense of Scripture and its unsubstitutable rendering of the identity of Jesus Christ. Frei cannot advocate for the validity of type two, because he believes it fails on all these scores.

On the back of all this detailed analysis and critique, DeHart concludes the volume with a methodological proposal of his own for theology under the image of the 'trial of the witnesses.' DeHart's impulses here are closest to the portrait of Hans Frei he has set forth in the study. The theologian's way with the world is less certain than the many either/or's of the postliberal scheme intimated. In the end the Bible proves to be less a 'map' than 'pole-star... the stable point in ever new triangulations with the horizon of one's situation' (261) and theological 'traffic in "external" meanings... is not simply a matter of (perhaps optional) apologetic ploys directed to the world beyond the church. It is very much a part of the way the witnesses themselves come to grasp the identity of the one they are witnessing to... the way he becomes present at just this site' (259).

As already noted, DeHart makes much of H.R. Niebuhr's ongoing influence on Frei, and considers him to be an exemplary practitioner of the kind of theology Frei himself finally recommends, a theology in which the church's language stands in an open and experimental interrelation with 'the rhetoric of its committed environment' as Rowan Williams has described it (*On Christian Theology* (Blackwell, 2000), xiv). Whereas Barth insisted that extra-scriptural concepts and categories had to undergo the fiery judgment of the gospel – to 'die and rise again' at the hands of God's salutary revelation in Christ – Niebuhr spoke of 'other mys-

terious forms of the *logos asarkos*, not only in the world's religions but *in its philosophies too*.' (cited on 257). One's orientation here and decisions about the nature and degree of theological traffic with the world come down to judgments about 'how to understand the provenience of grace in the sphere of the creation of meaning' (259). Following cues from Niebuhr himself, DeHart thinks developments in this direction must be pneumatological. He concludes that Frei himself 'seemed to glimpse in the methodological possibility of "ad hoc" correlations a genuine Trinitarian issue, the demand for a cautiously "hopeful" pneumatology of culture' (265). Indeed, Frei is said to have come to believe that good Christian theology must hold 'in balanced tension a Christology of incarnational mystery with a pneumatology of culture' (268) and in so doing admitted the validity and crucial importance of the tension at the heart of Niebuhr's own work, namely that between Troeltsch's radical historicism and Barth's radical theology of revelation (271).

Common to all three of these studies is a desire to strengthen the 'realist' elements of postliberal theology: Pecknold by way of a particular kind of Peircian pragmatism which itself has strong realist inclinations; Vidu in pushing for acknowledgement that all practice 'involves a normative ontological context' (177) apart from which narrative theology 'risks placing the particular in a purely imaginative universe, floating above the real world' (245); and DeHart by insisting theology admit that 'conversion is itself a *cultural* process' (271) and thus attend to the 'multiplying differentiated responses' to 'inaugural rupture' of revelation (276-7) within human social and cultural history. But beyond this, all three also contemplate the peculiarly theological character of the requisite realism. Significantly, each in its own way raises the question of *divine agency* in relation to the nature and methods of Christian theology. Pecknold argues that the promise of Lindbeck's work can only be made good upon by a more explicit account of the role of christology and the doctrine of trinity in relation to the reading of scriptures. DeHart contends that the trajectory of Frei's best insights demands a more developed pneumatological account of culture. And Vidu avers that if 'ontology returns in the discourse of theology' (189) it is because 'theology is a faith activity whose conditions of truth necessarily involve God's action' (182).

Together, these authors agree that the world of Christian narratives and practices, of rhetorical and

aesthetic performance, of traditions and texts and their embedded 'grammars' is never as stable, never as closed, never as sufficient for the orientation of the churches' life and witness as certain lines of argument advanced by postliberals imply. On one hand, what unsettles all this is the sheer humanity of it all: the vision of the a stable, internally coherent and self-perpetuating Christian community at work in postliberal theology often impossibly 'construes the continuity and unity of Christianity as something found, and not made' (DeHart, 189). Yet, in drawing attention to the question of divine agency in relation to the future of postliberal theology, these studies also admit – some forthrightly, some more tacitly – that theology is most fundamentally unsettled by the disruptive and creative reality of God's own action. Perhaps, what is most crucially at issue in contemporary debates about

theological method is discerning how it is that the continuity and unity of Christian faith is first and foremost neither found, nor made, but is rather always *given* anew by the One 'who gives life to the dead and calls into being those things which do not exist' (Rom 4:17). To keep sight of this, however, requires that contemporary theology – postliberal or otherwise – always keep in mind the permanently disturbing implications of Tertullian's adroit observation: 'Christ called himself truth, not custom.'¹

Notes

- 1 Tertullian, 'Dominus noster Christus veritatem se, non consuetudinem cognominavit.' *De virginibus velandis* I, i, CChr 2: 209, cited by Joseph Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005), p. 141.

Postliberal Theological Method A Critical Study

Adonis Vidu

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Adonis Vidu is Lecturer in Theology at Emmanuel University, Oradea, Romania.

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Review Article

Craig Bartholomew, Antony Thiselton (Gen Eds.), *Scripture and Hermeneutics Series, Vols IV–VIII (2003–2007)*

Mark W. Elliott

University of St Andrews, Scotland

SUMMARY

This ambitious project with major partners from Britain and North America has collected a vast and impressive range of scholars most of whom are committed to some

* * * *

RÉSUMÉ

Ce projet ambitieux fait appel aux contributions d'une grande et impressionnante diversité de spécialistes anglo-saxons qui, pour la plupart, adhèrent à l'idée que la Bible est un moyen par lequel la voix du Dieu qui transforme

* * * *

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieses ehrgeizige Projekt mit großen Partnern aus Großbritannien und Nordamerika hat eine enorme und beeindruckende Bandbreite von Gelehrten versammelt, von denen sich die meisten in irgendeiner Form einer Vision

* * * *

Having reviewed the first three volumes in 2003, as promised I review the five which have followed. I proceed by describing what I see to be the significant arguments of each volume and *in bold italics give my own thoughts on the matter*. This is, I hope less criticism for its own sake, as the expression of a desire to move the discussion onwards.

Vol IV: 'Behind' the Text. History and Biblical Interpretation (2003)

Here Alvin Plantinga takes on Robert Gordon; van Inwagen lines up against Colin Greene and Joel Green, and there is an essay by William Alston

vision of the bible as allowing God's transforming voice to be heard in the church and world today. The contents are sketched here, with some critical observation and a conclusion that the sum of the parts is greater than the whole, but is impressive nonetheless.

* * * *

se fait entendre dans l'Église et le monde d'aujourd'hui. La recension présente le contenu de ces ouvrages, et offre quelques observations critiques, pour conclure que la somme des bonnes choses qu'on peut y glaner vaut mieux que l'ensemble, mais que le résultat est toutefois impressionnant.

* * * *

von der Bibel verpflichtet fühlen, die erlaubt, dass in ihr Gottes transformierende Stimme heute in Kirche und Welt vernehmbar ist. Die Inhalte werden hier skizziert und mit einigen kritischen Beobachtungen ergänzt. Die Schlussfolgerung lautet, dass die Summe der Teile größer als das Ganze, aber dennoch beeindruckend ist.

* * * *

that seems appended to that phase of the book. There are two 'Catholic' contributions from Mary Healy and Peter Williamson. Re-thinking history is what goes on in the next six essays, while the last four-Möller, Seitz, Neil MacDonald and Stephen Wright seem a little more miscellaneous.

In the introduction Bartholomew claims that the bible tells us a story from creation to new creation. There is also a story of historical criticism from early modernity to today. M. Sternberg as the doyen of literary approaches to the bible nevertheless wanted to hold on to the historiographical intentionality of the bible writers. The postmodern turn is invoked: can history really represent the

past? Again a Jewish scholar, this time Jon Levenson is invoked. *However there is no mention of New historicism.*

Plantinga in a version of Ch12 of his *Warranted Christian Belief* argues that at a level of historical probability that the apostles wrote volumes of divine discourse is only 'fairly likely'. (22) 'HBC is fundamentally an enlightenment project; it is an effort to determine from the standpoint of reason alone what the Scriptural teachings are and whether they are true.' (27) This works both on the composition and on the historical background to the text. HBC is guided by the Troeltschian notions of methodological doubt, analogy and correlation, and maybe also, autonomy. These all combine to throw suspicion on any idea that God might intervene in the world. [There is a curious excursus on Victorian doubt and the Ethics of Belief (cf. W.K. Clifford).] On the one hand sceptical scholars conspire to form a consensus around the Troeltschian principles but disagree with each other and until they manage to agree there is no need to worry. These are good reasons, thinks Plantinga, for a believer to disregard HBC.

Plantinga rightly chides those who would exclude Christian scholarship on the grounds of pluralism. He is right to criticise many of the 'experts' for standing as priests and experts in the law. *But Troeltsch is not accepted by the majority of Christian exegetes.* Plantinga tells us we can perhaps build on what is acceptable to everybody, yet thinks that we can know things that nobody else knows because we were 'in the right place'. *Unfortunately I cannot share Plantinga's view that uneducated people are less deistic in their thinking than theological and biblical 'experts' and his account of biblical criticism is an unfortunate caricature.*

Bartholomew himself takes on Philip Davies, even if that is a bit like Richard Dawkins choosing Christian fundamentalists as dialogue partners. For Davies academic study of the bible must be etic and inclusive, not emic and confessional. Bartholomew agrees with Plantinga that 'a real live Scripture scholar is unlikely to have spent a great deal of thought on the epistemological foundations of the discipline.' (63) *This seems unfair to the likes of N.T. Wright.* With Plantinga belief can indeed be 'properly basic'. Bartholomew notes an alliance with Barthian anti-natural theological foundationalism. He seems quite taken with Plantinga and his philosophical big guns.

He senses a need for a theology of history (a note echoed elsewhere in this series.) Why needn't

a theist believe that God have spoken the commandments audibly? We can't found our belief in resurrection on hard evidence.

Robert Gordon wants to offer some defence of HBC: it helps explain why Genesis 1 has animals created before humans and Gen 2 has the reverse. HBC cannot prove the resurrection, but it might be able to show that the belief is present on all layers of the NT. (85) HBC rightly warns us off 'Chritomnism' in the treatment of the OT and, after all, 'some of the impetus for HBC comes from the bible itself.' These questions come from 'what Scripture does to Scripture' It is a non-Troeltschian historical investigation that Gordon proposes, something Calvin would have used. For Plantinga it is either TBC or HBC; there is no middle ground and to do HBC means to leave 'what you think you know by way of faith.' (94) Gordon adds that God's being the author of a prophecy fulfilled in the NT does not mean he is author of the bible. (99)

If a believer can see that critical studies do not undermine the reliability of the NT then one can ignore them. Yet, for Plantinga here is 'no reason for me to think that critical studies have established any important thesis about the New Testament.' (128) The same goes for philosophers – one does not need them to practice a religion. *But that is hardly the point. This series is about Scripture and Hermeneutics, not how to be a faithful Christian.*

Colin Greene writes that if it was good enough for the church through the ages that the gospels were reliable, then why not for us too. *There then follows a fairly wild interpretation of Heidegger as some eschatological prophet and the dubious assertion:* 'In reality the New Testament is a public proclamation of the *kyrios*, which was raised from the dead. Its authority is not located in the historicity of the events it describes but in the eschaton that has already been thrust upon me.' (13)

Thank goodness for Robert Gordon and especially Joel Green. Breytenbach's research establishes the verisimilitude but not the verity of Acts 13-14. Historical enquiry is needed to see and show how God has intervened. But narratives are those things which shape a people's identity, they are about 'assigning meaning to the events that have been fulfilled among us'. (149) Writing with some debt to Albert Cook's *History/Writing*, Green argues that Luke's screening of materials is not purely agenda-driven, if we can accept that he sought to be fair and honest. *Perhaps it is not adequate to focus on the integrity rather than the accuracy or intention of the writers.* William Alston's attack on the use of

the 'criterion of dissimilarity' is not without merit, but seems totally unaware of how this criterion has been developed and challenged beyond recognition, as discussed in Gerd Theissen's work. Mary Healy's essay is informative without being all that stimulating. Peter Williamson does a similar thing in more detail while telling the story about the Pontifical Biblical Commission, which seemed to be alive to methods such as that of Paul Ricoeur's *relecture*. Williamson thinks that historical criticism is to be valued *if* it is shorn of its concomitant presuppositions; the 'Jesus of history' and the 'Christ of faith' should not be separated as they were in Bultmann (Cardinal Ratzinger's chief bogeyman.) He then registers the important point that has become a rallying flag for orthodox of all persuasions in recent years: 'While Christian faith is open to considering and learning from new historical data, faith is governed by the presentation of Jesus and his message expressed in the canonical texts. Catholic exegesis grounds its knowledge of God's action in human history in Jesus Christ on the testimony of Scripture and tradition, which it has accepted, rather than on historical research. This is because, in the last analysis, Christian exegesis is a theological rather than a historical discipline, whose ultimate foundation is revelation and faith rather than historical research.' (208)

Williamson shows how the literal sense is 'that which has been expressed directly by the inspired human authors' (no mention of authorial intention) and that this 'literal sense of some texts possesses a *dynamic* aspect.' (215) There is a sense that PBC did not go far enough in condemning wrong presuppositions and wrong use of the method and the likes of John Collins go on believing that HC is neutral while a confessional approach is not. The passage from Rankean empiricism which still left room for divine causality, to a Comtean positivism, which did not, to the Droysen-Dilthey-Gadamer idea of history-writing as a conversation with the past in the light of a life-tradition – all this is well sketched by Iain Provan. 'Whatever the value of archaeology, then, in filling out our picture of the past, we repeat: history is *fundamentally* openness to acceptance of accounts of the past that enshrine other people's memories.' (249) He rejects Collingwood's model of the historian as a lone-ranger not wanting to rely on the testimony of others. There is a long and useful section on the OT histories of Thompson and Grabbe as privileging the ANE accounts over the bible, as though the former were more 'balanced' in their reporting, and concludes

by echoing Halpern's claim that history can only be based on testimony and not predictability: 'history is the telling and retelling of unverifiable stories'. (263)

Murray Rae observes the delight, common in both modern and postmodern historians, in disengagement. Spinoza despised the use of biblical narratives or any narratives in order to understand the eternal which is learned from reflection on self-evident axioms. Jewish and Christian faiths were thus historicised and seen as myths. With Vico history did not have a purpose, only an inner necessity. Lessing wrongly equated our distance from the past in terms of experience with that in terms of knowledge (274) and the latter might do especially if we follow Gadamer; Lessing was demanding too much certainty to take the step of commitment. Troeltsch did make history a means to an end, that of a 'dogma other than that of orthodox Christian faith'. (279) In the bible a fictionalizing tendency is subordinate to historical reference, as Francis Watson has said. Creation out of nothing means that creation is temporal. The purpose of history may also exceed our expectations, and a belief in history implies one in human accountability (so, Derrida). The history of Israel starts with Abraham who does not descend from heaven, like a mythical figure (*presumably it is also important that Jesus had a history in his early life, etc.*) But his was a particular life that had universal significance; and so too might ours. This is a masterly essay. *What I cannot quite understand is why Walter Sundberg is allowed to have another go at the same subject: Kierkegaard for him can be used as an antidote to Lessing. This is not a bad attempt but one feels it covers the same ground as Rae, only less well.*

One smiles when one reads the disarming comment of C. Stephen Evans (321): his full defence (*The Historical Christ and the Jesus of Faith* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996) of the church's classic way of reading the NT as history 'has not called for the critical notice of any kind: it has simply been ignored.' (321) His point is to argue that a common starting point for reading Scripture can be discerned, even where the ensuing interpreters differ in their results. He speaks of the Rule of faith as the content of the main creeds as defined by the 'early' ecumenical councils or (cutely) CS Lewis's 'mere Christianity' which is 'more like a hallway or common room that various churches share.' (324) Quoting from his earlier monograph mentioned just above: 'The history of New Testament interpretation strongly sug-

gests that the New Testament under-determines its own interpretation.' (325) With a nod to Stephen Davis, the creedal lenses are provided by the Scriptures themselves; they are not alien to the Christian faith. And we certainly don't have to approach the evidence to establish faith without faith, as Swinburne would do. The Scriptures for the non-evidentialist account do not provide evidence for faith to rest on but 'are part of the means whereby God creates faith in those who come to know "the great things of the gospel".' (333) In Plantingan terms, if there is a 'ground' then it is the circumstances in which God creates faith, and that includes the Church

For Greg Laughery, in a fine, well-researched article, Ricoeur in a postmodern climate can be feted as a hero for his insistence on the historical in the bible – it is a public truth touching the real world. Trace, testimony and *représentance* matter to him. There is a useful deployment of Ricoeur's late work *La Memoire, L'Histoire, L'Oubli*, especially in his tussle with the 'postmodernist' Hayden White.

David Lyle Jeffrey shows how the Aeneid's metanarrative was linear in a way that the Odyssey was circular; it was more about destiny than self-discovery. He likes Tom Wright's notion that the Christians metanarrative is public truth and not about a God rescuing people *out* of the world, and heartily agrees with most of the project, but wants to issue a caveat.

I am less sure than he is that the pilgrim journey to which Galatians and Hebrews invited its Christian readers is not, after all, toward a celestial, rather than a restored earthly Jerusalem... There is a strong hermeneutical sense in which Hebrews is a recapitulation of Galatians.' (378) The two letters get slight treatment by Wright. One should not allow to think that our destination is not beyond history.

(One wonders just why Tom Wright was not invited to receive the treatment O'Donovan got in Volume III., although the essay by Bartholomew and Goheen in Volume 5 goes a long way) Lyle Jeffrey is rarely anything but stimulating and here he does not disappoint as he tells us: Don't be bewitched by history!

Möller's article is deep and technical but there is just a sense that it is just too much an introduction into recent scholarship on the 12 prophets without really that much hermeneutical considerations – these are more anecdotal – e.g. Lohfink's attack on 'pan-deuteronism'. How different is the concept '*Fortschreibung*' from the Childsian 'aggiorna-

mento'?

Seitz comments on Von Rad's inability to go beyond P and J to the final form. Rosenzweig's Rabbenu-Redactor could have been fitted in with the collation of the witnesses by Christ. The canonical approach can now be taken beyond Childs' final form of each book – approach to consider the history and the theology of how sections of the Tanakh came together. 'Jonah' is viewed by Seitz as taking a special place in the Twelve, but a place that is on the way to Nahum. Exegetical insights jump out at many corners and the sense one has is of something fresh and alive. Neil MacDonald stresses, what he part-learned from Childs, the 'ontic priority' of the early chapters of Genesis. God created and acted in the world 'by respectively determining himself to be the creator of and actor in it' (489)

Volume V is titled *Out of Egypt* (2006). This title comes from one of the trickier verses for biblical theology, that of Hosea 1:11 which gets 'misquoted' in Matthew 2:15.

Bartholomew asks: What about Childs' seeming indifference to matters of historicity: is this anti-foundationalist? Perhaps, he thinks. Gerald Bray then makes the point that the fathers produced an account of biblical ontology since creation was central. *However the necessity for this seems denied by many of the articles which follow!*

The account of Charles Scobie's *Biblical Theology* by Karl Möller (who writes marvellous English) is largely positive except for a suspicion that the categories of organisation might not always come from the bible itself. The fact remains that much of what Scobie does is intellectually underpowered in a way that gives Biblical theology a bad name. But Möller thinks that to be true to the bible, theology should have a narrational rather than a theoretical character, as McGrath and Goldingay concur. *But first, is the bible fundamentally narrative anyway and second, is it really the case that theology is too often guilty of describing 'states of affairs'? There is a footnote on p59 referencing Oswald Bayer but it is not clear that Bayer is not actually contradicting Möller's case by looking for a poetological ontology. By the way, why does Scobie in quoting George Herbert put [sic] after 'the constellation of the storie [sic]'? Does he think that Herbert didn't know to spell?*

Möller is anxious lest biblical theology, forgetting its 'second-order role' take the place of the bible in the church and try to be too ordered, and it should be more like a map for navigating the biblical landscape. *I'm not sure about this metaphor.*

Just what is the landscape to which the bible is the map? In any case the preaching of the church need not tame the bible.

Francis Martin does well to point to Romans 12:3 for the origins of the idea of 'the Rule of Faith' and the 'analogy of faith' in 12:6. It is slightly confusing when he invokes the writer François Martin (no relation!) *The Husserlian approach's benefits (learned from Robert Sokolowski) are not very adequately brought out. Indeed I am not sure this essay fits well into this particular volume, as it is more about hermeneutics than biblical theology.* It is great to have an introduction to Marco Nobile's Italian OT theology and the controversial Bonhoefferian *bon mot*: 'whoever wants to be and to feel too soon and too directly in a New Testament way, for me is not a Christian' (92), a text introduced by Erich Zenger (the essay 'Zum Versuch einer neuen jüdisch-christlichen Bibelhermeneutik', in *ThRev* 90 (1994), 274-78 is significant.) Institutions are founded by theophany and struggle – this is interesting but it seems to serve some parts of Genesis and Ezekiel better than other. Nobile appears to have laid out the two different hermeneutics to the same bible and concluded that the Christian one is fuller, better – always a difficulty with a 'Rahnerian' approach', while we are called now to hear the Logos in the OT together as Christians and Jews. (98)

Chris Wright joins in a theme which has been serving almost as a biblical theology for the likes of E.. Schnabel and C.Stenschke; moving Christians from grasping 'the biblical basis of mission' on to 'the missional basis of the bible' (103). Mission, perhaps even more than 'God' is what the bible is all about. One might also call it recovering an eschatological reading, based on the reality of God as 'missionary as implying his authority to the ends of the earth and what he wants do with the church, moving on from messianic to missional hermeneutic. *Wright's essay is a fine piece, inspired by the idea of God's self-sending into which the church must step.* He concludes by observing that any hermeneutical framework will always distort the ground of Scripture and not include everything.

James Dunn has re-issued the English original of the 1995 contribution to the Dohmen/Söding book (which does not get listed in the biography, but presumably is *Eine Bibel-Zwei Testamente*. There is a lot of sense and the asking of good questions, but it seems a bit dated and does not advance things much. Richard Bauckham's searching critique of St Andrews colleague Nathan Mac-

Donald's dissertation, with help from Gnuse, De Moor and Sawyer and the a number of pages on Monotheism in the NT is all interesting if a bit overdone. MacDonald's wish to preserve Deuteronomy from the covering of an 'enlightenment construct' is admired yet challenged in its key claim that 'Deuteronomy does not deny the existence of other gods. I have heard W.Moberly (MacDonald's *Doktorvater*) interpret the *shema* in a similar way, as to do with YHWH's uniqueness. The point seems to be that YHWH means business in a unique way. Bauckham thinks this underestimates his objective uniqueness, 'even independently of Israel'. (193). This comes after some exegesis which would suggest that ontologically YHWH is in a class of his own. Having shown the need for biblical scholars to take more time on theological conceptual analysis, Bauckham goes on to demand a biblical-theological account of these texts in the light of other OT texts (canonical context) and these texts as informed by a history of religions account. 'As in the case of the historical Jesus, I would be reluctant simply to let history and theology go their separate ways...'(198). De Moor's more conservative proposal (exclusive *El* worship among proto-Israelites as the origin of monotheism) is preferred.

Stephen Barton writes that the belief in the unity of humankind is predicated on that in the unity of God: 'the unity of humankind is, theologically speaking, a matter of revelation: it comes to us as gift. It is an invitation to share in the life of the God who is One.' (256) Peace for the nations requires communion in the church as a link between Christ and the Spirit and the world, while being self-aware about tendencies. I warm to the sensibility of Barton here, but wish for a bit more clarity.

The less clarity, the more need for hermeneutics to stretch to show how, in this case Zechariah 14 ('*obscurissimus liber*' – Jerome) can be made to relate to the rest of Scripture, or, to be precise, as Al Wolters puts it, 'its relationship to the grand narrative of Scripture as a whole.' (263) To aid this we get Theodore (grammar and non-Christological typology) setting up Zerubbabel vs Gog, and the Maccabees vs Antiochus; then there is Didymus (spiritual interpretation which takes words and finds other passages where they can speak of impeccably orthodox theological truths); and finally Jerome who sees the purpose of prophecies to be Christ and the Church. *Wolters judgment that Jerome too fails to see the historical reference of this prophecy fully enough and resorts to allegory, seems a*

bit unfair. Then there are modern commentators who are nevertheless open to Zechariah's fulfilment beyond OT times (Unger the premillennial dispensationalist, van der Woude's general pastoral application of the principles Zechariah is expounding, E. Achtemeier's emphasis on an eschatology inaugurated with Christ's resurrection). There is a wise point learned from Theodore 'that the use of figurative language does not somehow compromise the ability to tell the truth about historical states of affairs.' (284) There is also the possibility of multiple fulfilments of prophecy. *This is a nice study in the history of exegesis.*

William Dumbrell's essay is long and painstakingly exegetical but not especially ground-breaking research. It all serves a conclusion, arrived at by other authors here, that Christians are no longer under the law of Moses and that while biblical exegesis needs to know biblical theology, 'this latter is itself an understanding of the progressive implementation of God's purposes through history.' (310)

Andrew Lincoln observes how the new sense of the use of the bible in the church and the general interest in reception and interpretation in literary theory has encouraged theological readings of the bible. He then moves immediately to Hebrews. This author saw his task as primarily pastoral application of the OT in his communication of scriptural truth to his audience. The writing of Hebrews as creative is informed also by a philosophy of Jewish temporal and Greek vertical eschatologies. It recognises that the new in Christ remodels what OT Scripture means, while of course the OT gives us an authoritative interpretation of this new thing. Preachers should preach OT and NT texts together more than they do. *So far, so good, although we might hear warning bells ringing in the stress on the 'contingency of Hebrews'. The controversial moment comes three pages from the end,* at p333. 'If Hebrews can relativise and critique parts of its authoritative Scriptures in the light of what has happened in Christ (see above), should not any biblical theology that adopts its approach be prepared to critique and relativise parts of its Scriptures-including now, of course, the New Testament, in the light of its central confession about the gospel of the crucified and risen Jesus?' It is (as a justifying footnote explains) about judging the bible by the standard of Christ, not a new one of our own, but that fulfilment in Christ's 'not-yet-ness' allows room in the Spirit for doing some of that fulfilling! 'It also entails that the fulfilment in

Christ has both an 'already' and a 'not yet' aspect and that the specific implications of this for later settings remain to be worked out by responsible interpreters under the guidance of the Spirit.' *That will include a criticism of Hebrews for giving hostages to fortune (or the history of interpretation) in its over-readiness to claim the finality of Christ and not just his fulfilment which was roughly simultaneous with a Jewish 'supercessionism' regarding the OT (from cult to synagogue).*

Trevor Hart nicely draws attention to how Karl Barth re-worked his doctrine of baptism in the light of NT evidence and provided a systematic yet 'open-textured' and even open-ended, provisional theology with plenty of 'eschatological reservation'. Systematic theology, as it tilts at the issues of the day need to kept honest by a biblical theology which works from the bible's agenda. While of course it would be hermeneutically naïve to conceive this as a two-step movement of first, a descriptive biblical theology, then a normative systematics. But the latter has the task of making sense of Scripture for our place in culture.

John Webster writes on the clarity of Scripture with special attention in the small-print section to Luther, Zwingli and especially Bullinger with his controlling notion of 'the history of the proceeding of the Word of God.' Inspiration takes place in the divine use of human authors and their speech to become sanctified or holy. The texts have an ontology, 'they have a measure of durability and resistance and can be spoken of in se. They are more than a score for performance, much more than an empty space for readerly poetics.' (366) It is a unique communicative action, one that does not belong to general hermeneutics. Clarity with the help of the Spirit serves efficacy as scripture gets caught up in God's revelation and a communicative presence; but it is the words themselves which receive that clarity as God uses them.

Rusty Reno shows how the patristic-era exegetes like Origen and Chrysostom did not feel they had to *explain* scripture and draw out abstract lessons from it. For Reno it is Protestantism's fault for being less than detailed whereas Chrysostom refers the text to the Christian practice of prayer, reflection on the liturgy. 'To my mind, the distance between the literal sense and theological abstractions is the single greatest failure of earnest and well-meaning attempts by modern exegetes of the NT to produce theological exegesis.' (391f). So it is better when Roy Harrisville on Romans 8:26 uses the phrase 'cruciform life' rather than 'redemption'

or 'eschatological'. It means using the plain sense of the text to allow Nicene personal Trinitarianism to shine through. Reno mocks Brueggemann's phrase: 'it is human agency in the service of Yahweh's solidarity with Israel.' (395) This should be contrasted with the example of Gregory of Nyssa, who, on Exodus 'does not draw away for the semantic particularity of Exodus.' (396). Theology is not a result but a method of exegesis. Reno even takes issue with Childs' following the sign's witness to the *res*. 'Childs assumes that true theology must move from 'description' of what the text says to 'analysis' of its subject matter, and this subject matter is formulated with the abstracted and scripturally thin concepts that characterize so much unsuccessful theological exegesis.' (399) Childs is more concerned with the biblical view of justification rather than how to reconcile Galatians with Leviticus. *This is a very worthwhile and stimulating paper.*

In Stephen Chapman's 'Imaginative Readings of Scripture and Theological Interpretation', the author fears that there is too much subjectivity and too little intellectual rigour in recent approaches which try to make Scripture sound meaningful. The Church fathers were right that for understanding and being touched, study is required. Imagination is good if it helps us stick closer to the text, but not if it would stand in its way. It must be like Bach using Ernesti yet then using his own music to touch the present, or the preacher using historical criticism in Moby Dick only to rise above it. *I fear he misrepresents L.T. Johnson on p433, unless Johnson is saying that the lack of mutual need of historical reconstruction and theology is mutual.* Chapman likes Kierkegaard's Fear and Trembling: 'if the theological interpretation of Scripture is to find a receptive audience – if it is to touch hearts as well as minds – it will need to be just as direct, every bit as imaginative, and similarly sly.' (441) *Yet how does this accord with 2 Cor 4:2 about non-sly communication of the gospel?*

Charles Scobie outlines three stages of biblical interpretation in preaching: Historical context – canonical context – hearers of the sermon. The work at the 2nd stage can overcome the damage done at the first and form the agenda for the third.

Vol VI: Reading Luke: Interpretation, Reflection, Formation (2006)

I consider myself ill-qualified to evaluate a book

born out of Lukan scholarship so I shall confine myself to what I see to be a few important features:

There is an introductory essay by Tony Thiselton which works more as a response or vote of thanks to the papers. In passing he makes his point (in criticism of the early volumes of the Blackwell series 'Reception history is not simply a description of any or every example drawn from a history of interpretation.' (42) *By this I think he means that Jauss was more interested in the performances and discontinuities, but I would argue that this is exactly what the Blackwell series is interested in!*

Scott Spencer complains about the traditional bracketing out of theology from NT Introductions, and despite Wenham's concern that there has been an over-reaction, thinks that no establishing that Luke was an eye-witness makes his account 'objective'. Spencer wants to insist on the importance of God and the Holy Spirit for Luke. Spencer thinks it is important not to be distracted by possible historical influences on the text as Luke wrote it, but should follow the text 'informed by the principal symbolic 'scenarios' structuring Lukan society (not events, but more Neyrey's codes, relations, boundaries.) Yet he only gives us one short paragraph of how this sheds light on theological matters: to understand God as Heavenly Patron, Honored Patriarch and Holy of Holies) and the resonance between Christ's suffering status and that of the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:33-35 (*although why the eunuch should be regarded as 'suffering' seems like eisegesis to me.*)

David Moessner tells us that Luke's Gospel, as all books of the Hellenistic era, is complete in itself with a *diegesis* in which meaning was conveyed by arrangement, and so the significance of Jesus' death as the saving event is not lost by seeing it as only a mid-point stage in the whole of Luke-Acts.

Jesus' parables about money are not about money according to John Nolland, pace David Holgate. This is affirmed and then qualified by Stephen Wright on account of the realism of the parable; it is about people first, though not about wealth and possessions, narrowly conceived. It is more than just a simile - it is a story whose details are to move us ethically

Wright skilfully manages to build on Nolland's essay and take it further: 'the primary way in which this parable works is by inviting its hearers into a realistic world so as to motivate and inspire a readjustment of their own vision of the world and their behaviour within it, rather than by 'revealing'

or 'arguing' something about God...' (223) For Luke in turn, the parables function as 'the gospel in miniature' Ricoeur's dialectic of intention and exteriorization of the text is the hermeneutic Wright prefers, in this valuable essay. Canonically we should expect to understand the parable better than Luke, though the implication is that Jesus is bigger than all meanings.

Max Turner, building on years of scholarly endeavour, judiciously concludes: 'Luke does not *explicitly* connect the Spirit with the broader soteriological functions which John and Paul elucidate. But his broad, dynamic, individual and corporate, highly experiential view of the 'salvation' of God accomplished in Acts *demand*s an explanation as to what immanent power of God could achieve such a result.' (287) The early Dunn was simply wrong to think that only Jesus and not the disciples through his presence had this experience, but the experience of the Spirit is an experience of God and therefore salvific, not just a *donum superadditum*.

I don't find the 'theological' chapters by Hahn, Scobie and Bartholomew/Holt quite so illuminating, but that might be my loss.

It is welcome that there are three chapters at the end on the Reception of Luke's Gospel. For some reason the great F. Bovon refers to Andrew Gregory's work in the 2nd century but wants to go further: the allegorical Gnostic interpretations ('a source for authors wishing to create new stories') were responded to by the orthodox ('commentators to interpret and explain') and Luke was to be read as part of a fourfold gospel (396). Gregory himself in a responding essay underscores this last point to show how the 2nd-century church was clear where the traditions about Jesus had become enscripturated. The canonical gospels are 'authoritative witness to the world behind the text', where Jesus is to be found 'and that a Christian reading of Luke must treat it as pointing to something behind its text rather than as an end in itself.' (410) Gregory nicely points to the importance of the oral 'living' tradition and that of the canonical gospels, although in his contention that the resurrected Jesus is not the same Jesus as 'the historical Jesus', despite there being some continuity, in saying 'there is continuity between Jesus born of Mary and Jesus who was raised from the dead and remains alive today, but the two are not the same, and neither is identical to the historical Jesus whose life and teachings historians seek to reconstruct today', *he seems to confuse that which is reconstructed with that which the resurrected Jesus implies – that is no adop-*

tionist 'Son of God come lately' but a pre-existent Son of God in the womb of Mary to the cross and beyond.

Joel Green's 'Afterword' informs us that we have lost the literal sense in a variety of opinions as to what that might be. The canonical approach demands putting Acts after John, not so that 'Luke-Acts' nexus is ignored but that it is not absolutised. Green actually sees much mileage in 'Luke-Acts' and nicely writes: 'Given the way the third evangelist has written the story of Jesus into the story of the Septuagint, the way he has written the story of the early church into the story of Jesus, and the way he has reached an end to this narrative without bringing closure to the story of the actualization of God's purpose in history may provide us with clues as to how best to read canonically in this way.' (441). More generally with N.T. Wright he calls for a theology of history to be attempted. Yet of course there are still theological questions about the significance, such that 'the essential truth-claim lies above all in the claim of this narrative to interpret reality in the light of God's self-disclosure of God's own character and purpose working itself out in the cosmos and on the plain of human events.' (443) A rule of faith demands doctrinal orthodoxy but also Christian orthopraxy in reading Scripture, and to that end looking at the history of impact of embodiment is welcome. We are to make full disclosure of our methodological commitments while preparing ourselves to listen and yield to the text. Also Eco has shown Green how meaning is plural though not limitless, and Green (448) shows that a theological reading of Scripture has the text in final form and as a whole, with a recognition of the cultural embeddedness of text, the canonical address and the witness of Scripture seen in its effects in the church, doctrinal formulations included.

Vol VII: Canon and Biblical Interpretation (2007)

By volumes 6 and 7, Tony Thiselton has stepped in to the breach in contributing the Introductions. Thiselton may be wrong to see too easy alliances between Childs and James Sanders (canon formation according to the need of the communities) or Walter Moberly (a canonical 'way of reading'). To what extent can it really be said (7) that Childs's Exodus commentary anticipates Jaussian reception history according to which: 'The literal sense is not merely the semantic or linguistic level of meaning alone, but an *actualisation* of the text for each successive generation of the community of faith based

on the linguistic meaning in its canonical context? *For Childs surely the reality lies between text and res as one which is the active partner.* As Thiselton reports Seitz, it is about text and *truth* while allowing both to surprise us, to take the initiative. Thiselton is honest enough to admit he has not been able to read Chapman, Chris Wright and Stephen Dempster. He does well to warn the reader that Lemcio's 'Gospels good and theocentric/ Paulines bad and Christocentric' is at best *übertrieben*. Thiselton as a hermeneut makes sure in his concluding comment to remind us that plurality of interpretations need not mean Babel or incoherence, but that Bakhtin-like, it leads us from one frequency into the fullness of the rainbow (my metaphor!)

Childs' essay (already published in *Pro Ecclesia* 2005) begins with an outline of the theological bankruptcy of the use of the canon idea in Anglo-Saxon circles and ends with a discussion of German scholarship. There is a reference to the important essay by Söding in *Th Rev* 2003 where he worries about Dohmen's tendency to miss out the realities by too much attention to author, text and reader. The 'new Germans' (mostly Catholic with Janowski, Rendtorff and Oeming also mentioned) have been interested in theology, church and the canon (not merely its formation) as well as Jewish reading. Yet perhaps attention to hermeneutics does not guarantee a theological reading, especially one which would pay attention to Christology and judgement, and using the canonical approach as one hermeneutic for reception amongst others just will not do.

Chris Seitz echoes this point when he writes: 'The area calling out for greatest clarity, at least in the guild of biblical scholarship, is just what is meant by the turn to *theological interpretation*.' (104) One is reminded of the words of Jesus: 'we piped but you did not dance'. There is pressure from the plain sense and not just the odd proof text towards 'finding the Trinity therein'. The text is our 'adversary' as other, its wildness in its overweeningness, as we struggle to make these connections. Seitz insists on the text of the OT being something akin to that of the Hebrew bible since it is something the Church has *received*. There might be some unclarity about where canonical closing stood at the time of the NT: was it two-part, three-part or four-part? (96) Seitz makes the point that for the LXX to count, Augustine had to defend a theory of *inspired* translation. Last he takes aim at the speech-act theory as being too abstract and dehistoricising and also at Richard Hays's project for

allowing the NT to swallow the OT.

Farkasfalvy's essay is a sound and cogent account of how in the second century the four-fold gospel stopped a Marcionite reduction of Christianity to an idea. E. Lemcio re-visits the ground for which he finds few dialogue partners, that the four Gospels need to be the major partner in our theology of and from the NT: it isn't, e.g. all about Jesus' death and resurrection. In fact Jesus's death was not all that significant. What did matter was his manifesting the Father to the world. It gets bolder on p138: 'He was not sent in order to die. Neither his death nor resurrection achieved anything.... This prophetic calling tends to be obscured when the richly textures text is overlaid and flattened by a royal or messianic Christology, as Croatto has recently argued.' (141)

Stephen Evans' essay is about whether the question of pseudonymity matters very much. But he thinks 2 Peter was by Peter, just as all the NT books were written by those who thought of themselves as apostles. Kierkegaard gives him a clue here.

Stephen Chapman argues for a canonical view of inspiration which takes the Incarnational analogy very seriously as has Peter Enns in his *Inspiration and Incarnation*. *He does not seem aware of James Barr's criticism of Barth's use of the analogy in The Old and New in Interpretation and the agreement of PR Wells on this (James Barr and the Bible)* He admires Vanhoozer for abandoning speech-act theory of inspiration (185) and for coming round to seeing canonization as the providential process of becoming Scripture.

Vol VIII: The Bible and the University (2007)

There is to my ear a slight discord in what Bartholomew writes in the preface and William Abraham echoes in his paper: it is all about paying attention to Christ (which all accept) and recovering biblical literacy and seeing these two things as almost the same thing. Are they? The SAHS project rightly refused to leave faith 'at the door'. Biblical studies has operated 'too much in isolation from the other intellectual disciplines of the university' (Lyle Jeffrey, 2) There is a pronounced dislike of the Humboldtian making the theology department into a self-referential world of its own. What is the alternative? D. Lyle Jeffrey traces the Judeo-Christianizing of Hellenistic culture. *(Extra 's' seem to have crept in to the name of Robert Wilken on p4 and the Latin homines, although that it what my spell-*

checker wants to do with it too!) Ricoeur also gets mis-spelled (11). More importantly, is Boethius's Lady Philosophy really Lady Chôkma of the biblical Proverbs, as Lyle Jeffrey claims? As often the angel is in the detail: in what way did Bonventure turn the learning hierarchy of the seven liberal arts around? Was it that they were not to be worked through in order to qualify for theological knowledge, so much as their already receiving theology through the study of creation, even if the arts can be traced back to 'the ultimate sourced of our knowledge, human and divine, namely Scripture as articulated divine Word' (8)? Or in Martianus Capella (not Cappella) 'the predominant riches of the biblical stadium to become a constantly flowing fountain, irrigating all of the other arts.' In other words all knowledge (all discourse?) is Scripture-soaked, even when or perhaps most supremely, when the Bible is explicitly under attack; as in the case of Goethe. Yet he admits that biblical illiteracy is rampant and we need to learn from Mary whose preparation came from reading Scripture (at least in the imagination of the Flemish painter Campin whose depiction of the Annunciation adorns the front cover of the book.) However, there has been a loss of an anchoring central story since Matthew Arnold. 'The problem is that readers so bereft cannot relate any of these imaginative works to a coherent cultural conversation or ongoing dialectic across the disciplines, in which all the major works play a part. To put this in another way: such readers cannot 'see' the degree to which the greatest texts in English literature are already part of a conversation whose dialectical '*in principium*' was a Word from God'. The biblical canon is the rule of recognition for all subsequent canons.

Dallas Willard laments the state we are in. The myths which are seen to be behind Christianity as an oppressive institution are replaced by all-knowing secular myths. Yet only Christianity can give the big picture or story and a reason for being 'genuinely good'. The modern university cannot judge between good and evil, whereas 'the good person, on the biblical view, is the person who is permeated by *agape* love.' But in the secular university what belongs to tradition cannot be knowledge (there is a helpful overview of a number of 'why the American education system is literally worthless' e.g. by Marsden and by Reuben), preferring what is challenging and provocative to what is true, with research as a kind of 'social ferment' which promotes arrogance along with the false modesty of something only being 'true for me'. I

think the most useful part of Willard's chapter is his emphasis on the style of the bible as a gentle one and encompassing one, reflecting the character of Christ. 'It does not just state truths and invite us to verify and know them; it uses every possible mode of projection and presentation to draw us into the reality of which it speaks: image, story, art, metaphor, ritual, event, not just *in* the bible, but projected from it into the rich texture of life around it.' (36) Towards the end of this paper, Willard seems to oscillate between claiming all for Christian truth and realising that the latter is not 'scientific knowledge'.

William Abraham contends that there are other resources for theologians which function as means of grace, soteriologically not epistemologically. The bible as one of these means does not suit what even the best-intentioned biblical scholars tend to do to it. *Incredibly naïve statements are issued along the way*: 'The gospel becomes simply one more option among others rather than being the radical, transforming Word of God.' *It is always nice to have a scapegoat. That biblical studies has cut theology off from its constitutive norm may well be an accurate diagnosis, but how else are we to hear from that norm? Bart Ehrman's loss of faith is seen as the result of wanting too hard to find Christ through the Scriptures when all there is to learn is the variety of opinions about meaning. 'Rather than give us food for the soul it offers elaborate menus and recipes' (well there are healthy and unhealthy diets.)* Having just blamed theology at p52 he writes that Theology needs to reclaim Scripture. On p53 he deals with Gabler who had the right idea even if he didn't know how to put it into practice. 'Speaking of exegeting the apostles, he confidently notes that "it may be finally established whether all the opinions of every type and sort altogether, are *truly divine*, or rather whether some of them *which have no bearing on salvation*, were left to their own ingenuity.' The key phrase here is 'which have no bearing on salvation,' a feature of the text which Gabler identifies with the truly divine. *Abraham seems to think that very few biblical scholars are doing this, or that they would not know what was 'divine', whereas I would imagine that the historically informed exegete is exactly the person to trust for a judgement on what is essential and non-essential in the scriptural message.*

Abraham wants to resist the bible as foundation in the sense of giving us facts, not as providing epistemological lenses. We should forget epistemology whether Scriptural or any other version,

theology should not be a slave to historical investigation or philosophical investigation for that matter. The theologian can affirm the great truths of the faith whatever history is saying. We should think of the canon in a life and wisdom-love giving way. 'Ancillary to this we need to develop a new sub-discipline I theology and philosophy, namely the epistemology of theology, in order to address the issues that first generated the vision of Scripture as a criterion of truth in theology'.

Al Wolters tells us that how we conceive of the relationship of nature and grace will determine how we interpret Scriptures like Proverbs 31 as to what biblical 'fear' means, or 2 Pet 3:18 about the end of the world. His position is *gratia intra naturam* (which he contrasts with three other possibilities, including a caricature of Aquinas's position). Unlike Abraham he is clear that methodology and the getting right thereof through confessing our own philosophical presuppositions is crucial. On his model, biblical scholarship (like 'nature') is to be renewed by the 'grace' of theology which reminds it of the unity of the bible, or at least the story behind it and helps to explicate certain biblical concepts, such as 'creation as separation': this however looks like the bible shaping philosophy rather than vice-versa. As grace to nature, theology should sit alongside, within other 'sister' disciplines.

With Scott Hahn and Pope Benedict XVI, theology in the bible comes out of a habitat of faith and worship (especially as even in the Platonic Academy) but scientific exegetes seem to ignore that and only wish to reduce it, explain it away. Faith is a legitimate source of knowledge and enquiry. Unless we see that Scripture is the product of the Church then we will not be so ready to interpret it ecclesially. For Benedict the Church is the 'living historical subject' of God's Word (91), or more fully from Spirit of the liturgy, 168, in the footnote: 'the faith of the Church does not exist as an ensemble of texts, rather, the texts-the words-exist because there is a corresponding subject which gives them their basis and their inner coherence. Empirically speaking, the preaching of the apostles called into existence the social organisation "Church" as a kind of historical subject.') There appears to be no felt contradiction in these two sentences; the words are a means to produce the life that is the church; events are the content of the Word. The Church is the place where faith from the past is brought into the present and oriented towards the future (95): theology lives out of the Church's remembrance,

as love seeks understanding. Benedict's *Principles of Catholic theology* witnesses to a high view of Scripture as normative theology. He favours a biblical theology of 'covenant'; this means that the OT is read as shaped crucicentrically so that the bible comes to speak through the liturgy in the eucharistic Mass. *In my view the argument rather loses its way in rhetoric as we come to the end of this account by Hahn. But it is a very useful contribution.* Glenn Olsen's is another Catholic convert who thinks that without a magisterium we will end up with a flux of interpretations; this is against R. Longenecker's view that the only *sensus plenior* allowed is when the NT does this with the OT. *Here there seems a bit of a confusion. When we look at the Church fathers it is not the case that we need to think of post-biblical events fulfilling the OT (Eusebius would be an exception here) but of Origen, Augustine et al thinking that there is fulfilment of the OT in the NT which the NT was not explicit about; the case of whether God was (e.g.) on the side of Joan of Arc does not really concern the fulfilling of prophecy as such.* In any case his point is that the magisterium can stop any claims about events in church history being ridiculous and partisan. He is appreciative of O'Keefe and Reno's 2005 *Sanctified Vision* as to the way in which allegorical readings are not imposing but discovering depth dimensions of the text, but reserved about their pre-modern/modern.

The essays by Robert Roberts and Robert Cochran are about as far as one gets from the flavour of 'Scripture and theology' throughout the whole project. Roberts writing on 'situationism and the NT psychology of the heart' makes use of various experiments in which people's true colours were exposed by being part of a group in response to a crisis or threat. He concludes that it was not just the situation that made 'good' people act strangely badly but that the unvirtuous dispositions were largely already there. Virtue is sometimes skin-deep when not personally chosen in an atmosphere of learning: Nero stopped being the good Stoic when the reason for behaving (his bullying mother Agrippina) died. Christians need to think for themselves and know themselves. A NT psychology offers the hope of transformation, a re-training of the heart in the church, just as Aristotle admitted that one could not hope to be virtuous in a city state that had failed. Cochran on 'the Bible, positive law and the legal academy' argues that power is not necessarily a bad thing (according to O'Donovan's Thomistic notion) and thinks that Christians should try to bring the law

of a state closer to the ideal enunciated by Jesus without becoming so enforcing that it will be too much and become counter-productive. Yet the law should educate and lead to the virtue of Christ, as a good and gentle schoolmaster, presumably. God remains unchanged and people are just as morally hardened as they were in Moses' and Jesus' time, so divorce laws (e.g.) should make such a thing more difficult though not impossible. Christian lawyers will have to go against the grain and the secular elite for whom the First Amendment is appealed to as soon as Christians even try to raise the issue. As Roberts previous essay argued, the myth of the Kantian individual being free to be moral is just that – a myth, but it continues to be a powerful one. He quotes the jurist Blackstone to urge that 'natural law' always needs reinforcement by revealed law and proposes: 'the law should work to protect intermediate institutions and should encourage individuals in society to care for one another.' *I found these two chapters refreshing and instructive.*

I pass over the rather idiosyncratic chapter by David I. Smith which tries to employ Comenius to help us with our method in Christian education. John Sullivan as one of the minority of British-European contributors. He promotes the idea that exegesis works from the inside in sympathy with the text of the community and that interpretation means adjusting and opening one's personal self up to receive the meaning, a sort of ascetic reading. He rejoices in Lesley Smith's challenge to Leclercq's positing of a sharp monastic/scholastic contrast in theological method. He deplores the utilitarianism in the British educational system with instrumental reason replacing contemplative. No Christian institution should over-react by allowing Christian orthodoxy to function as an ideology. (234) He promotes an umbrella which creates an environment congenial to Christian thinking, but also to non-Christian thinking. 'the Christian university prompts a reading of self, scholarship and faith that is generously outward-looking: the life of the mind for the good of the world'. *Yet one wonders if it is only commercialising managerialism that the Christian university has to fear. If it will not act the Christian university in more positive ways, by promoting Christian initiatives, who then will?*

Byron Johnson's essay on biblical literacy in America is full of useful statistics and a conclusion that it is not as low as has been suggested as well as the interesting finding 'Frequent bible readers are far less likely than the average person to have read

The Da Vinci Code.' (251)

Roger Lundin's essay tells the story of Emersonian subversion of Scriptural rhetoric (in Thoreau and then Whitman and applauded by Northrop Frye) while Melville and Hawthorne appreciated the darker side of the biblical message as it accorded with how the world truly seemed to be, and Emily Dickinson saw the bible offering 'rich alternatives to the poverty of modern thought' (273) To their questions Lundin offers a renewed Barthian *theologia crucis* as the only way to a theology of resurrection glory.

Stephen Evans 'Afterword' is really a summary of the various essays. It is Lyle Jeffrey who gets to offer the last substantive chapter freedom is only a good if it serves truth and the good of the community). But none of this really works well as a conclusion in the sense of marshalling the voices, although on the very last page (310) Evans does try to leave us with three points out of the tapestry of these essays.

1. In Christian institutions the Christian narrative should define the institution. *Amen!*
2. We must read the bible as a whole and as the Word of God.
3. This is because 'knowing' is a function of the whole person, not just the intellect, and is shaped by communities and practices. This is particularly true for moral and religious knowledge.' *To my mind there is a slight non sequitur here. How does it follow that because knowing is holistic for a person hence the bible should be read as a whole? There are better reasons for reading the bible as a whole.*

Conclusion

Over these five volumes reviewed above there is a huge amount of material for reflection and discussion. Everyone is given a say to the extent that premature 'general conclusions' are largely avoided. Plaudits to Craig Bartholomew for having the vision and for managing to keep the whole thing together and to Tony Thiselton for acting as a highly competent lieutenant. www.sahs-info.org should help us to find out where the project goes after the completion of this series. If anything we can trace a bit of continental drift as the sponsors moved from being the British Society and the project being based in Cheltenham to the involvement of Baylor University and others along with the relocation of the general editor, although the appointment of Thiselton around the time of Volume 5 helped to

keep the British connection. But it has to be seen as a transatlantic project. Nothing wrong with that (except that I feel that the Reformed epistemologists and the Christian literary heritage specialists have other and better places to publish), not least when it brings us (e.g) the voices of Childs and Seitz, Reno and the two Roberts (Cochran and Roberts) in the last volume. Yet something of its usefulness for the European situation might be lost. I say this as one who believes in the internationalism of theology and biblical studies. However I am aware that the currents of influence and engage-

ment are complex ones and it cannot be assumed that the problem of the Enlightenment for faith and the question about the Bible as the Word of God – for that is what this project is all about – is best dealt with while largely ignoring the cultures in which the Enlightenment and its developments and its shaping of biblical theology, for better and for worse, mostly took place. Perhaps there could also have been a slightly stronger editorial control to unify the contributions without extinguishing the fresh creativity which is evident. In this project for all its smorgasbord of riches, the sum of the parts seems greater than the whole.

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Stephen R. Holmes (editor)

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Contributors include Colin Gunton, Robert Jenson, Stephen Holmes, Christoph Schwöbel, Colin Greene, Luke Bretherton, and Brian Horne.

Stephen R. Holmes is a Baptist minister and Lecturer in Theology at the University of St Andrews in Scotland.

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Tony Gray did his DPhil in Theology at Oxford and is currently Production Manager for Bound Biographies in Oxfordshire. He has edited, written and ghost-written several books. **Steve English** is a full-time freelance cartoonist who illustrates for a number of national comics and magazines including the *Horrible Histories* and *Horrible Science* Collection. He also writes and illustrates his own cartoon strips which are published in Britain and abroad.

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NEW FROM PATERNOSTER

A New Kind of Conversation

Blogging Toward a Postmodern Evangelical Faith

Myron Bradley Penner & Hunter Barnes (editors)

Using the format of the weblog, *A New Kind of Conversation* is an experimental book that enters into a conversational theological exploration with five evangelical leaders and academics (Brian McLaren, Bruce Ellis Benson, Ellen Haroutunian, Mabilia Kenzon, and Myron Bradley Penner), who are the primary bloggers. Originally posted on anewkindofconversation.com, people all over the world were invited to blog on the following topics: What is 'Postmodernity'? What is a Postmodern Evangelical? Theology and (Non)(Post) Foundationalism; The Bible, Theology and Postmodernism; Evangelical Faith and (Postmodern) Others; Postmodern Apologetics; Postmodern Ministry; Spiritual Formation in a Postmodern Context. The book is a condensed version of that conversation.

Myron Bradley Penner is Professor of Philosophy and Theology, Prairie College, Canada; **Hunter Barnes** is Creative Arts Director for Zarephath Christian Church, in Zarephath, New Jersey.

978-1932805-58-1 / 229 x 152mm / 240pp / £11.99

Chrysalis

A Forgotten Phase in the Journey of Faith

Alan Jamieson

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Alan Jamieson is a minister in New Zealand and a trained sociologist. His internationally acclaimed first book, *A Churchless Faith*, researched why people leave their churches to continue their walk of faith outside the church.

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Jason Clark

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Jason Clark is the Senior/Founding Pastor of Vineyard Church, Sutton. He heads up Emergent-UK and is currently studying for a PhD in theology at King's College in London.

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Book Reviews – Recensions – Buchbesprechungen

* * * * *

Dem rechten Glauben auf der Spur: Eine Bildungsreise durch das Elsaß, die Niederlande, Böhmen und Deutschland; Das Reisetagebuch des Hieronymus Annoni von 1736

Hieronymus Annoni

Hrsg. von J. Burkardt, H. Gantner-Schlee, M. Knierim
Zürich: TVZ, 2006

Pb., 342 pp., Euro 29,80

ISBN-13 978-3-290-17373-9

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der Basler Pfarrer Hieronymus Annoni (1697-1770) ist einer der wichtigsten Repräsentanten des Schweizerischen Pietismus im 18. Jahrhundert. Bei hervorragender Quellenlage ist dennoch bisher nicht viel über ihn veröffentlicht worden. Hildegard Gantner-Schlee hat nach ihrer Annoni-Biographie von 2001 mit Hilfe von zwei Fachkollegen nun ein zweites Annoni-Werk publiziert, dieses Mal das Manuskript einer Bildungsreise mit zahlreichen Kontakten zu bekannten christlichen Persönlichkeiten seiner Zeit: Tersteegen, Oetinger, Francke, Freylinghausen, Zinzendorf, Dober, Nitschmann, Stolberg-Wernigerode und Urlsperger. Damit sind auch schon wichtige Stationen der Reise genannt: Der Niederrhein, die Wetterau, Halle, Herrnhut und Augsburg. Amüsant zu lesen ist die lange Liste der Sehenswürdigkeiten, die 1736 den Touristen gezeigt wurden. So entsteht ein Zeitgemälde, das unterhaltsam und lehrreich zugleich ist, eine „pietistische Hintertreppe“.

SUMMARY

The Basel pastor Hieronymus Annoni (1697-1770) is one of the most significant representatives of Swiss Pietism in the 18th Century. Although the state of the sources is excellent yet until now there has not been much published about him

Hildegard Gantner-Schlee after her Annoni-Biography of 2001 with help from two specialist colleagues has now published a second work on Annoni, this time the manuscript of an educational journey with numerous contacts to well-known Christian personalities of his time: Tersteegen, Oetinger, Francke, Freylinghausen, Zinzendorf, Dober, Nitschmann, Stolberg-Wernigerode and Urlsperger. Also mentioned are the important stops on the journey: the lower Rhine, Wetterau, Halle, Herrnhut and Augsburg. It is amusing to read the long list of 'must see' sites which the tourists of 1736 had pointed out to them. Thus there emerges a portrait of an age that was as entertaining as it was instructive, a 'pietist backstairs'.

RÉSUMÉ

Hieronymus Annoni (1697-1770), qui fut pasteur à Bâle, est une des figures les plus importantes du piétisme suisse au XVIII^e siècle. Bien qu'on dispose de sources en excellent

état de conservation, il n'y a eu jusqu'à présent que peu de publications qui lui soient consacrées. Après sa biographie de Annoni, publiée en 2001, Hildegard Gantner-Schlee vient de publier, avec le concours de deux autres spécialistes, un second ouvrage sur Annoni. Il s'agit du journal d'un voyage de formation qui a donné lieu à des contacts avec de nombreuses personnalités chrétiennes connues de l'époque : Tersteegen, Oetinger, Francke, Freylinghausen, Zinzendorf, Dober, Nitschmann, Stolberg-Wernigerode et Urlsperger. Les étapes importantes de ce voyage sont aussi relevées : la région inférieure du Rhin, Wetterau, Halle, Herrnhut et Augsburg. Il est amusant de découvrir la longue liste de sites que l'on recommandait aux touristes en 1736. On voit ainsi apparaître une description d'une époque où l'on pouvait aussi bien se divertir que s'instruire, dans l'antichambre du piétisme.

* * * *

Der Basler Pfarrer Hieronymus Annoni (1697-1770) ist kein *Nobody*, sondern neben Samuel Lutz und Daniel Willi einer der „bedeutendsten Exponenten des Schweizer Pietismus“ im 18. Jahrhundert (S. 11). Die Schweizer Kunsthistorikerin Hildegard Gantner-Schlee hat es sich daher zur Aufgabe gemacht, durch Publikationen über Annoni auf die ungehobenen archivalischen Schätze der Basler Universitätsbibliothek aufmerksam zu machen. 2001 erschien aus ihrer Feder eine 260 Seiten umfassende Biographie des Basler Pietisten. Schon diese Veröffentlichung ließ darauf hoffen, dass das Lebenswerk dieses wichtigen Mannes weiter bearbeitet und durch Sekundärliteratur sowie Neuherausgabe von Quellen für die Pietismusforschung der Gegenwart fruchtbar gemacht werden würde.

Mit dem Tagebuch der sechsmonatigen Reise im Jahr 1736 hat Frau Gantner-Schlee nun in Gemeinschaft mit zwei Historikern aus Münster und Wuppertal eine wichtige Handschrift aus dem Leben Annonis veröffentlicht. Sie gibt einen Einblick in das pietistische Netzwerk in Europa, das den Basler mit seinen beiden großbürgerlichen Reisegenossen Hans Ulrich Hegner und Bernhadin Im Thurn auf einer Bildungsreise durch das Elsaß rheinabwärts über Speyer, Heidelberg, Mannheim, Mainz und Koblenz zum niederrheinischen Pietismus führte. Von dort aus besuchte Annoni Städte in Belgien und Holland, auf dem Rückweg Pietisten in Hessen, und reiste dann durch Eisenach, Gotha, Erfurt, Weimar und Jena in die frommen Hochburgen Halle und Leipzig. Doch diese waren nur Zwischenstationen auf dem Weg über Dresden zum östlichsten Zielpunkt: Herrnhut. Von dort ging der Weg heimwärts über Zittau, Prag, Regensburg, Augsburg, Memmingen und die Bodenseeregion.

Edierte Reiseberichte aus der ersten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts sind eine Seltenheit, und so ist die Publikation nicht nur für Pietismusforscher interessant. Auch

das *Kassenbuch* der drei Reisenden mit sämtlichen Ausgaben für Unterkunft, Verpflegung, Eintrittsgelder, Trinkgelder, Briefporto usw. an den jeweiligen Orten ist abgedruckt (S. 268-298) und vermittelt trotz seiner formal „trockenen“ Auflistung einen lebendigen Eindruck vom Reisen in längst vergangenen Zeiten. In diesen gab es noch echte „Retourkutschen“, aber auch Übernachtungen auf Stroh und schlechtes Essen (vgl. S. 31, 52, 60).

Neben pietistischen Geistesgrößen und weniger bekannten Laienchristen seiner Zeit ist das Hauptaugenmerk der Reisenden besonders auf touristische Merkwürdigkeiten aller Art gerichtet: Ausstellungen und Sammlungen aller Art, besonders mit Versteinerungen, Gärten, Burgen und Schlösser, Bibliotheken, Kuriositätenkabinette und kunstvolle Maschinen sowie die Judenviertel in den damaligen Großstädten.

Die Bildungsreise war zugleich eine Art Pilgerfahrt zu frommen Gesinnungsgenossen und Institutionen, zum frommen „Zionsberg“ Herrnhut mit seinem reichen liturgischen und geistlichen Leben. Die wichtigsten besuchten Personen von Annonis Reise waren: Der pietistischen Theologieprofessor Christoph Raab in Duisburg, Gerhard Tersteegen in Mülheim an der Ruhr – dieser rät, nicht zu viel, sondern das Richtige zu lesen –, der Radikalpietist Johann Friedrich Reitz und Johann Christian Seitz in Amsterdam. In Rijnsburg besichtigt man das Haus von Pierre Poiret mit seiner berühmten Bibliothek (S. 112). In den niederländischen Häfen wird das Elend der wartenden USA-Auswanderer ausführlich dokumentiert. In Frankfurt trifft man sich zu Tee und Wein unter anderem mit dem Pietisten Senckenberg, und auf der Ronneburg in der Wetterau mit Graf Zinzendorf. Im Umfeld der pietistischen Glaubenswerke von Halle lernt Annoni u. a. Oetinger, A. H. Franckes Sohn, Lange, Freylinghausen, Callenberg und H. E. Graf von Stolberg-Wernigerode ebenso kennen wie in Jena den berühmten Spätorthodoxen J. G. Walch. Unter den Herrnhutern finden sich neben Zinzendorf auch Nitschmann und Dober. Auf der Rückreise ist besonders die Kaffee-Gesellschaft bei Samuel Urlsperger in Augsburg hervorzuheben. Am Ende der Reise wieder in Basel angelangt, dankt Annoni Gott mit einem Lied für sein Geleit und belegt seine Heimatstadt aufgrund älterer und neuerer schlechter Erfahrungen bei seiner Ankunft mit dem Schimpfnamen „Babel“ (S. 266f). Sein „Hochwacht-Lied“ als ein gesungenes Gebet für die besuchten und weitere Glaubensbrüder in der weiten Welt wird im Anschluss in Faksimile wiedergegeben (S. 290-299).

In der Veröffentlichung des Reiseberichts steckt sehr viel Arbeit. Erklärende Anmerkungen zu Sprache und Geschichte, gut recherchierte Literaturbelege, ausgezeichnete Register mit Informationen zu den wichtigen darin aufgeführten Personen belegen die vorbildliche Qualität der geleisteten Forschung über den Basler Pietisten, die unbedingt fortgesetzt werden sollte.

Jochen Eber
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The Jews and the World in the Fourth Gospel Parallelism, Function, and Context

Lars Kierspel

WUNT II/220, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006, PB,
xii+283 pp., 54 Euro, ISBN 3-16-149069-X

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Nach dem Holocaust wurde dem Johannesevangelium vielfach vorgeworfen, ein christlicher Text mit einer anti-jüdischen Polemik zu sein, die den Juden als ganze Nation Feindschaft gegen Jesus und Schuld an dessen Tod zuschreiben würde. Entgegen solch einer unsachgemäßen Pauschalisierung weist Lars Kierspel nach, dass „die Juden“ und „die Welt“ in einem mehrfachen Parallelismus stehen, wobei die „Welt“, die meist in den Reden Jesu verwendet wird, den übergeordneten Begriff darstellt. Jesu Konflikt mit der jüdischen Obrigkeit wird im Johannesevangelium durch den Konflikt der frühen Kirche mit „der Welt“ im Kontext des römischen Reiches fortgesetzt.

SUMMARY

Since the Holocaust the Gospel of John was charged being a Christian text with an anti-Jewish polemic which would accuse the Jews as a whole nation of hostility against Jesus and of responsibility for his death. Against those faulty generalizations, Lars Kierspel shows that the Gospel puts the terms 'the Jews' and 'the world' in a multiple parallelism. In this parallelism 'the world' which is mostly used in the speeches of Jesus has a superior function. Jesus' conflict with the Jewish authorities is the prologue for the conflict of the early church with 'the world' in the context of the Roman Empire.

RÉSUMÉ

Depuis la Shoah, on a reproché à l'Évangile de Jean d'être un texte chrétien à caractère anti-juif : le peuple juif dans son ensemble y serait accusé d'hostilité envers Jésus et serait considéré comme responsable de sa mort. Lars Kierspel rejette ces fausses généralisations et montre que l'Évangile établit entre les expressions « les Juifs » et « le monde » une relation parallèle multiforme. Dans ce cadre, c'est « le monde », surtout employé dans les discours de Jésus, qui joue le rôle dominant. Le conflit de Jésus avec les autorités juives apparaît comme le prologue au conflit de l'Église primitive avec « le monde », dans l'empire romain.

* * * *

Insbesondere seit dem Holocaust steht das Johannesevangelium unter dem Vorwurf des Antijudaismus. Vielfach wurde aus dem Johannesevangelium eine Schuldzuweisung an das jüdische Volk für den Tod Jesu abgeleitet und Aussagen wie „die Juden verfolgten Jesus“ oder „die Juden murrten über ihn“ wurden als pauschale Verunglimpfung einer ganzen Nation verstanden.

Lars Kierspel hat diesen irrtümlichen Vorwurf zum Anlass genommen, um sich in seiner im Jahre 2006 am *Southern Baptist Theological Seminary* (Louisville, Kentucky) unter der Supervision von Dr. Mark A. Seifrid

verfassten Dissertation, die nun in erweiterter Form in der Tübinger Reihe Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament vorliegt, der Frage der Juden im Johannesevangelium zu widmen.

Im ersten der sechs Kapitel seiner Arbeit gibt Kierspel einen 50-seitigen Überblick über die Forschungsgeschichte. Mit 71-maliger Verwendung ist *οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι* ein Schlüsselbegriff im Evangelium, für den die Forschung verschiedene Deutungen vorgeschlagen hat: ein Begriff, der speziell die jüdische Obrigkeit oder mehr im geographischen Sinne die Bewohner von Judäa meint oder in einem weiteren Sinne als ethnisch-religiösen Begriff oder speziell für Judenchristen verwendet wird, um damit einen innerchristlichen Konflikt zu beschreiben, oder ganz allgemein als religiösen Begriff gebraucht wird, der ohne empirischen Bezug „Repräsentanten des Unglaubens“ oder der „ungläubigen Welt im Allgemeinen“ beschreibt.

Kierspel meint, dass man dem Vorwurf des Antijudaismus nicht dadurch begegnen kann, indem man dem Begriff „die Juden“ eingrenzt auf jüdische Obrigkeit in Jerusalem oder Judaisten. Zudem werde dies der Vielfalt der Verwendung im Johannesevangelium nicht gerecht. So folgert Kierspel aus den fünf vorgeschlagenen Interpretationen, dass eine möglichst breite Definition von Juden (religiöser oder ethnisch-religiöser Begriff) besser zum Kontext passt als engere und speziellere Definitionen wie jüdische Obrigkeit in Jerusalem, Pharisäer oder Judäer.

Des weiteren widmet sich dieser Forschungsüberblick der in den letzten 30 Jahren veröffentlichten Literatur zum Thema und ihren methodologischen Ansätzen. Zwischen 1972 und 2005 wurden über zehn Dissertationen und Monographien zur Frage der Juden im Johannesevangelium geschrieben mit der ganzen Bandbreite von diachronischem Ansatz, sozio-rhetorischer Kritik, literarkritischem Ansatz, synchronischem Ansatz, linguistischen Methoden, narrativer Kritik und „reader-response criticism“, die Kierspel darstellt, woraufhin er als eigenen Ansatz seiner Arbeit eine synchronische Betrachtungsweise entfaltet, die sowohl die Erzähl- als auch die Redeabschnitte beinhaltet. Kierspel betrachtet dabei das Johannesevangelium als literarische Einheit – inklusive des Prologs (1,1-18) und des Epilogs (Kap. 21) – und plädiert dafür, die Perikopen in fortlaufender Reihenfolge zu interpretieren. Als weitere methodische Prämisse untersucht Kierspel die Interaktion zwischen Text und ursprünglichen Lesern in ihrem speziellen sozio-historischen Kontext.

In seinem zweiten Abschnitt stellt Kierspel in einer Wortstudie zu *Ἰουδαῖοι* fest, dass der Begriff im Johannesevangelium vielschichtig verwendet wird und an sich keine negative Grundbedeutung hat, sondern in 21 Fällen mit neutraler, in 16 Fällen mit positiver und in 34 Fällen mit negativer Konnotation verwendet wird. Diese Bedeutungsvielfalt ist nicht in literarkritischer Weise zu deuten, sondern in einem synchronischen Ansatz, der den Begriff der „Juden“ in einem Parallelis-

mus zur „Welt“ versteht. So liegt die wichtigste Erkenntnis dieser Arbeit im Nachweis, dass der Verfasser des Johannesevangeliums *οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι* und *ὁ κόσμος* in drei verschiedenen Weisen parallel setzt: zunächst auf einer macrostrukturellen, kompositionellen Ebene, wonach *κοσμοι* ausschließlich oder vorwiegend im Prolog, in den Abschiedsreden und im Epilog gebraucht wird, während der erste Hauptteil (1,19-12,50) und der Passionsbericht vorwiegend *Ἰουδαῖοι* gebraucht, aber selten nur *κόσμος*; dann als zweites in einem narratologischen Parallelismus, nach dem der Autor des Evangeliums „die Welt“ vor allem für die Reden (71 von 78 Fällen), meist die von Jesus, gebraucht und „die Juden“ vorwiegend für die Passagen des Erzählers (59 von 71 Fällen); und drittens in einem vielfältigen konzeptionellen Parallelismus zwischen „Juden“ und der „Welt“ im Bereich von Begriffen, Personen und Nuancen.

Kierspel stellt dann in einer detaillierten Untersuchung wichtiger Perikopen auf die Frage nach der Funktion dieser beiden Termini fest, dass in der Konzeption des Johannesevangeliums *κοσμοι* in strategischer Position erscheint und damit den Schwerpunkt bildet, während der Begriff *οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι* dem untergeordnet ist, quasi als Teil der gottfeindlichen Welt erscheint. Der Begriff „Welt“, obwohl er eine Bandbreite an lexikalischen Bedeutungsmöglichkeiten hat, lässt sich nach Kierspels Untersuchung in fast allen Vorkommnissen im Johannesevangelium allgemein als Menschheit verstehen.

Das letzte Hauptkapitel des Buches bemüht sich um eine historische Einordnung des Evangeliums in Bezug auf die Spannung zwischen der Gemeinde und den Juden bzw. der Welt. Entgegen der vielfach in der johanneischen Forschung vertretenen Auffassung, wonach die Aussagen des Evangeliums über die Juden aus dem Konflikt der jungen Kirche mit der Synagoge zu verstehen seien, vertritt Kierspel die Auffassung, dass Aussagen, wonach die Welt Jesus (Joh 7,7; 15,18b.23f) oder die Jünger (Joh 15,18a.19) hasst, am besten auf dem Hintergrund der Verfolgung der jungen Kirche im römischen Reich unter Domitian gegen Ende des ersten Jahrhunderts zu verstehen sind. Dabei nutzt der Verfasser des Evangeliums die Auseinandersetzung Jesu mit seinen jüdischen Opponenten zur Vorlage für den späteren Kampf der Nachfolger, nämlich der Verfolgungssituation der ursprünglichen Lesergemeinde. Diesem Parallelismus von Juden und Welt liegt zugrunde, dass die Opposition gegen Jesus durch die jüdische Obrigkeit durch eine Opposition gegen die Kirche in einem römisch-heidnischen Umfeld fortgesetzt wird.

In drei Anhängen stellt Kierspel seine Ergebnisse zur Übersetzung und zum Gebrauch von *κόσμος* und *Ἰουδαῖος* im Johannesevangelium in tabellarischer Form dar und bietet damit dem Leser eine gute Möglichkeit, die Stellen nachzuschlagen und die Schlussfolgerungen zu überprüfen.

Insgesamt betreibt Kierspel mit seiner Arbeit eine überzeugende Argumentation, in der er dem Vorwurf

einer antijüdischen Polemik des Evangeliums widerspricht. Das tut er, indem er durch die besondere Akzentsetzung auf die Makrostruktur und Einheit des Evangeliums und durch die Unterordnung des Begriffes „Juden“ unter den Begriff „Welt“, der das eigentliche Bewährungs- und Konfliktfeld der Lesergemeinde darstellt, in interessanter Weise von bisherigen Untersuchungen zu dieser Frage abweicht.

Klaus Bensel, Bergisch Gladbach, Deutschland

Luther Handbuch

Albrecht Beutel, Editor

Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005, Pb., XIV + 537 pp.,

Euro 44,-

ISBN 978-3-16-148267-0

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In einer neuen Reihe von Handbüchern will der Mohr Siebeck-Verlag in Tübingen Studierenden und Wissenschaftlern einen Überblick über wichtige Forschungsgegenstände geben. Als erster Band erschien die von Albrecht Beutel herausgegebene Aufsatzsammlung zu Martin Luther. Inzwischen ist ein weiteres Handbuch zu Augustinus erschienen (2007). Das Luther-Handbuch gibt auf mehr als 500 eng bedruckten Textseiten einen Überblick über den Stand der Lutherforschung in allen geschichtlichen und theologischen Fragestellungen. Auch wenn einzelne Beiträge aus dem Rahmen fallen, ist dennoch ein hohes Maß an Einheitlichkeit der Aufsätze von 25 Autoren gewährleistet. Neben Kurt Alands *Hilfsbuch zum Lutherstudium* und Martin Brechts Luther-Biographie wird das Luther-Handbuch zum wichtigsten Nachschlagewerk über das Leben des Reformators werden.

RÉSUMÉ

Les éditions Mohr Siebeck de Tübingue ont entrepris une nouvelle série de manuels destinés à dresser un état de la recherche sur des sujets importants à l'intention des étudiants et spécialistes. Le premier a pour éditeur Albrecht Beutel et rassemble des essais sur Martin Luther. Un autre manuel, sur Saint Augustin, a paru ensuite en 2007. Le manuel consacré à Luther dresse en plus de 500 pages l'état de la recherche sur Luther dans tous ses aspects historiques et théologiques. Ces contributions, émanant de vingt-cinq auteurs, ont presque toutes une forte unité entre elles. À côté du manuel de Kurt Aland et de la biographie réalisée par Martin Brecht, ce manuel sur Luther sera l'un des ouvrages de référence les plus importants pour l'étude de la vie du réformateur.

SUMMARY

In one of the new series of handbooks Mohr Siebeck publishers in Tübingen aim to give students and scholars an overview of the state of research on important subjects. The first of these is the collection of essays on Martin Luther, edited by Albrecht Beutel. In the meantime another hand-

book – on Augustine – has appeared (2007). The Luther-handbook gives in more than 500 densely printed pages of text the state of Luther-study in all historical and theological aspects. With the exception of some contributions there is a high level of unity maintained among these essays by 25 authors. Along with Kurt Aland's Luther Handbook and Martin Brecht's biography of Luther the Luther-Handbook will become a most important reference tool for the life of the Reformer.

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Ein Anfänger in Kirchengeschichte wird kaum die letzten Jahrgänge des *Luther-Jahrbuchs* durchforsten, um herauszubekommen, wo er am besten mit der Lektüre von originalen Lutherschriften beginnen oder die wichtigste Sekundärliteratur zu einzelnen Themen finden kann. Ein Handbuch wie das neue *Luther-Handbuch* ist daher besonders für Studierende in den ersten Semestern eine große Hilfe. Zusammen mit Kurt Alands *Hilfsbuch zum Lutherstudium* und Martin Brechts dreibändiger Biographie *Martin Luther* wird sich das von dem Münsteraner Kirchengeschichtler Albrecht Beutel herausgegebene Handbuch als zuverlässiger Zugang zum Werk des Reformators erweisen. Kein einzelner Autor kann sich in den Details auskennen wie die beteiligten 25 Fachleute, die jeweils über einen bestimmten Aspekt von Luthers Leben und Werk schreiben. Doch nicht nur über sein Lebenswerk, sondern „nebenbei“ auch über Persönlichkeiten aus seinem Umfeld erhält der Leser Informationen, die auf dem neusten Stand sind, so zum Beispiel zu Thomas Müntzer (S. 139f).

Das Handbuch ist in vier Hauptteile geteilt. Der erste, kurze Teil (A. Orientierung, S. 2-34) informiert über Lutherausgaben, Hilfsmittel und die letzten hundert Jahre der Lutherforschung. Im zweiten Teil (B. Person, S. 36-256) werden historische Themen zu Luthers Lebensweg aufgearbeitet. Hier sind die Traditionen wichtig, in denen Luther aufwuchs (Mönchtum, Mystik, Humanismus etc.) und die Beziehungen, die sein Leben prägten (Papsttum, Bauern, Müntzer, Erasmus, Zwingli, Melancthon etc.) Auch sein Verhältnis zu Bildung, Musik, Kunst und Sprache wird untersucht.

Der dritte Teil des Handbuchs stellt Luthers Lebenswerk dar (C. Werk, S. 258-459). Zuerst werden die Themen, nach Gattungen geordnet, vorgestellt (Bibelübersetzung, Programmschriften, Streitschriften, Erbauungsschriften, Katechismen, Dichtungen, Predigten, Vorlesungen, Disputationen, Briefe und Tischreden). Im zweiten Abschnitt dieses Teils werden wichtige Themen von Luthers Theologie behandelt (Wort Gottes, Glaube und Rechtfertigung, Christus, Mensch, Kirche etc.). Ein kurzer Abschnitt über die Strukturen von Luthers Theologie als Schriftauslegung, Unterscheidungslehre und Erfahrungswissenschaft aus der Feder von A. Beutel beschließt diesen wohl wichtigsten Teil des Werkes.

Der letzte, knappe Teil des Handbuchs zur Wirkungsgeschichte Luthers durch die Jahrhunderte wurde von Karl-Heinz zur Mühlen verfasst (D. Wirkung und

Rezeption, S. 462-488). Ein stattliches Literaturverzeichnis und umfangreiche Register beschließen den Band.

Bei der großen Anzahl von Autoren ließen sich im Text manchmal Überschneidungen nicht vermeiden. Besonders übersichtlich und quasi lexikalisch informieren die Beiträge des Herausgebers Albrecht Beutel. Eher schwierig zu verstehen sind die Aufsätze von Eilert Herms; Dietrich Korsch schildert eher seine eigene Sicht theologischer Themen anhand von Luther, anstatt Luther selbst sprechen zu lassen. Doch die überwiegende Anzahl der Beiträge ist gediegen gearbeitet, wobei dem Rezensenten neben Beutel auch Notger Slenczka, Dorothea Wendebourg, Christian Peters, Volker Leppin, Thomas Kaufmann und Irene Dingel besonders positiv aufgefallen sind. Besonders interessant scheinen – aus subjektiver Perspektive – Luthers Aussagen zum Wort Gottes und zur Theologie. Luthers Erbauungsschriftstellerei und sein geistliches Leben (S. 295ff, Trostbriefe 345, intensive Bibellektüre 445f) sollten in evangelikalischen Kreisen mehr wahrgenommen werden. – Fazit: Das Luther Handbuch wird mit Sicherheit einen prominenten Platz in jeder theologischen Bibliothek erhalten und behalten.

Jochen Eber, Schriesheim bei Heidelberg, Deutschland

Wahrheit und Erfahrung – Themenbuch zur Systematischen Theologie. Band 3: Heiliger Geist, Kirche, Sakramente, Neuschöpfung
Herrmann, Christian (Hrsg.)

TVG, STM Band 18. Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus 2006,
 480 S., Pb., Euro 18,90
 ISBN 978-3-417-295-44-3

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Mit dem Erscheinen des 3. Bandes ist die Arbeit an der Themenbuchreihe Systematische Theologie abgeschlossen, so dass die von dem Tübinger Bibliotheksrat Christian Herrmann herausgegebene Trilogie nun vollständig vorliegt. In diesem Band werden die Topoi des dritten Artikels Heiliger Geist, Kirche und Sakramente sowie Zukunft der Kirche und Neuschöpfung von 14 verschiedenen Autoren behandelt. Damit liegt in deutscher Sprache erstmals der Versuch einer gemeinschaftlich erstellten Darstellung christlicher Lehre in evangelikaler Perspektive vor, die sich sowohl durch ihren theologischen als auch praxisrelevanten Bezug der Dogmatik auszeichnet und damit das Zueinander von Wahrheit und Erfahrung in einem breiten Themenspektrum zur Sprache bringt.

SUMMARY

With the appearance of the 3 volumes the work of the series of books of themes in Systematic Theology complete, so that the trilogy edited by the Tübingen librarian Christian Herrmann now appears in full. In this volume the topics of the Third Article of the Creed: the Holy Spirit, Church and

Sacraments as well as the future of the Church and New Creation are dealt with by 14 different authors. Thereby there appears in German for the first time an attempt at a communally produced outline of Christian teaching from an evangelical perspective, which excels as much through its theological as also its practical style of Dogmatics and thereby brings to expression the interface of truth and experience across a broad spectrum of themes.

RÉSUMÉ

La parution de ce troisième volume vient compléter la série de livres consacrés à des thèmes de théologie systématique, publiée par Christian Herrmann, bibliothécaire à Tübingue. Quatorze auteurs traitent ici des sujets contenus dans le troisième article de la confession de foi : le Saint-Esprit, l'Église, les sacrements, le futur de l'Église et la nouvelle création. Ainsi dispose-t-on en allemand pour la première fois d'un ouvrage collectif exposant l'enseignement chrétien dans une perspective évangélique, et qui excelle à la fois par le contenu théologique et la manière dont il fait ressortir la pertinence de la dogmatique pour la pratique. Il met ainsi en lumière le lien entre la vérité et l'expérience en abordant un large spectre de thèmes.

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Nach einem Geleitwort von Wolfhart Schlichting, einem Vertreter des konfessionellen Luthertums, eröffnet in einem *ersten Kapitel* der Straßburger Systematiker Karsten Lehmkuhler den theologischen Reigen mit einem Beitrag über Person und Wirken des Heiligen Geistes (S. 9-27). Damit wird vor allen ekklesiologischen Fragen dem Initiator der Kirche, dem Heiligen Geist der erste Rang eingeräumt. Denn „ohne Geist gäbe es keinen Glauben, keine Kirche, keine Sakramente, keine Rechtfertigung, kein christliches Leben, keine Auferstehung“ (S. 9). Somit ist der Geist selbst Voraussetzung für eine Lehre vom Geist und von der Kirche. Lehmkuhler entfaltet seinen Beitrag anhand der vier Fragen: „Wer ist der Heilige Geist?“, „Wie schenkt sich der Heilige Geist?“, „Wie wohnt der Heilige Geist im Christen?“ und „Was schenkt der Heilige Geist?“ und zielt damit bereits auf das elementare Anliegen einer christlichen Pneumatologie, die nur trinitarisch verstanden werden kann.

Erst viel später im Buch (S. 203-212) geht der Leiter des Lebenszentrums Adelschhofen, Oskar Föller, der sich aufgrund seiner eigenen Forschungsarbeit zu den Charismen qualifiziert hat, knapp und kenntnisreich auf wesentliche Anliegen der Charismenlehre ein.

Das *zweite Kapitel* beantwortet die Frage „Was heißt Kirche?“ (S. 28-246). Roland Scharfenberg beschreibt in seinem grundsätzlichen Artikel „Sein und Tun der Gemeinde Jesu“ (S. 28-43) und stellt dabei als das Charakteristikum der Kirche „die Entität der durch das Heilswerk Christi Herausgerufenen“ wohlthuend klar heraus.

Martin Abraham behandelt als evangelischer Pfarrer in seinem Artikel (S. 44-70) das evangelische Kirchen- und Gemeindeverständnis und versucht, sowohl

Unterschiede als auch Schnittmengen von Kirche und Gemeinden darzustellen sowie das Profil evangelischer Ekklesiologie zu beschreiben. Dabei betont er – gut lutherisch – die Alleinwirksamkeit des Wortes Gottes mit allen seinen pneumatologischen und schöpfungstheologischen Implikationen als Grund der Kirche und kann von daher eine Offenheit der Gestaltung zulassen.

Markus *Liebelt*, Dozent an der FTA in Gießen, zeigt in seinem Artikel zum Thema „Amt und Priestertum aller Gläubigen“ (S. 71-103) die doppelte Problematik in der theologischen Begründung des geistlichen Leitungsamtes im evangelischen Kontext auf. Er verweist darauf, dass sich neutestamentliches Gemeindeverständnis nicht am Amtsverständnis (vgl. römisch-katholische Kirche), sondern an der göttlichen Erwählung und Sendung der Seinen festmacht, woraus sich die Dynamik der Gemeinde als Missionsgemeinde ergibt.

In einem weiteren Exkurs (S. 104-125) geht er auf die komplexe Thematik der Frauenordination ein. Dieses unter Evangelikalen heikle Thema entfaltet er unter verschiedenen hermeneutischen, exegetischen und pastoraltheologischen Gesichtspunkten, vermeidet aber eine eigene explizite Stellungnahme.

Thomas *Schirrmacher* plädiert in seinem Artikel „Ohne Kirche ist kein Staat zu machen“ (S. 126-147) für eine sozioethische und politische Verantwortung der Kirche, weil es eine „weltanschaulich neutrale Politik nicht geben“ kann und die Kirche schon von daher gefordert ist. In der Konsequenz plädiert er für eine „Vier-Reiche-Lehre“, in der die Mandate Familie, Kirche, Arbeit / Wirtschaft, Staat miteinander verwoben und aufeinander bezogen sind.

In einem kleinen und feinen Exkurs (S. 148-159) fragt der Herausgeber Christian *Herrmann* nach der Berechtigung einer christlichen Politik, wobei er auch auf die aktuelle Thematik christlicher Parteien eingeht.

Der Gießener Dozent an der FTA, Berthold *Schwarz*, entfaltet in seinem längeren Artikel „Mission als ekklesiologische Wesensaussage“ (160-202) das unaufgebbare Anliegen einer von der Ortsgemeinde getragenen und verantworteten Mission und beklagt in diesem Zusammenhang die weithin erkennbare „gemeindelose Missionsarbeit sowie missionslose Gemeindearbeit“ (163).

Ein nach wie vor aktuelles Thema über die unter Christen und Kirchen zu vollziehende Einheit greift Jochen *Eber* in seinem Artikel „Evangelikale Christen und die Ökumene“ auf (S. 213-226), indem er den Einheitswillen Jesu zum Anlass nimmt, das Verständnis evangelikaler Christen zur Einheit der Kirche(n) kritisch zu hinterfragen und mögliche Schritte auf dem Weg zur Einheit aufzuzeigen.

Die Wichtigkeit und Notwendigkeit des Bekenntnisses in der Bedeutung der Konfessionalität der Kirche zeigt Armin *Wenz* in seinem Artikel auf (S. 227-246). Dieses Anliegen stellt gerade für freikirchliche Christen eine nicht unwesentliche Herausforderung zu erneuerter Reflexion dar.

In einem kleineren dritten Kapitel wird der Topos

Taufe sowohl aus volkskirchlicher – von Friedrich Beißer adäquat dargestellt (S. 247-258) – als auch aus freikirchlicher Sicht – kompetent von Johannes *Demandt* (S. 259-272) – ausgeführt. Beide Aufsätze zeigen zwar die erheblichen Unterschiede der Standpunkte, bieten aber auch Anknüpfungsmöglichkeiten im gegenseitigen Taufverständnis. Der Rezensent kann der Auffassung über „die Taufe als Handeln Gottes und des Menschen“ (Demandt: 264ff), bei der der Primat göttlich providenten Handelns vor der Antwort des Glaubens zu betonen ist, eine biblisch plausible Begründung und hohe theologische Stringenz nicht absprechen.

Im vierten und letzten Haupt-Kapitel liefert Claus *Schwalmbach* den umfangreichsten Artikel des Buches (S. 290-361) mit einer die Eschatologie sehr grundsätzlich und differenziert behandelnden Perspektive. Von der Bedeutungsvielfalt des Begriffs in der neueren Theologiegeschichte über die Darstellungen theologischer Differenzierungen und individueller sowie universal-kosmischer Dimensionen spannt er den Bogen zu dogmatischen Unterscheidungen von Gericht und Heil, alter und neuer Schöpfung, der Verhältnisbestimmung von Zeit und Ewigkeit bis hin zum Wesen christlicher Hoffnung über den Tod hinaus sowie einem breiten Exkurs über den menschlichen Tod.

Rolf *Hille* geht der Frage nach dem Heilsuniversalismus der frühen Kirche und heutiger Aktualisierungen profund und kompakt nach (S. 362-380), um diese Möglichkeit mit grundlegenden biblisch-theologischen Aspekten zur Problematik auszuschließen.

Sechs evangelikale Modelle der Endzeit werden von Thomas *Schirrmacher* in seinem Artikel vergleichend untersucht und anhand verschiedener Spezialthemen (Israels Zukunft, Antichrist und Große Trübsal, Verhältnis von Entrückung, Preisgericht, Wiederkunft Christi, Weltgericht und Auferstehung der Toten) ausgewertet (381-403).

Berthold *Schwarz* widmet sich in einem kritischen Exkurs über den „Chiliasmus und Dispensationalismus als theologische Herausforderung“ einem im evangelikalen Raum sehr einflussreichen Thema (404-439) und nimmt in einem weiteren Exkurs „Israeltheologien unter [die] Lupe“ (S. 440-460).

Jedem Buchbeitrag angefügt sind „Aufgaben zur Vertiefung“ und ein mehr oder weniger ausführliches Literaturverzeichnis. Ein Personenregister für das Gesamtwerk (I-III) rundet den Band ab.

Abschließend kann man fragen, ob das Konzept, verschiedene systematische Topoi von so unterschiedlichen Autoren behandeln zu lassen, aufgegangen ist. Die Stärke dieses Ansatzes, durch die Autorenvelfalt ein weites evangelikal-theologisches Spektrum (mit teilweise gegensätzlichen Auffassungen) zu ermöglichen, ist freilich gleichzeitig seine formale Schwäche. Zu unterschiedlich in Aufriss, Struktur und Niveau sind die einzelnen Artikel, als dass sie als aus einem Guss bezeichnet werden und miteinander verglichen werden könnten. Vielleicht kann bei einer Neuherausgabe in einem Band

auf eine stringenter Struktur der Erarbeitung der einzelnen Themen geachtet werden, so wie sich das bereits in den bekannten Aufrissen der Dogmatik – etwa von Pöhlmann und Ott – bewährt hat. Nichtsdestotrotz findet man in diesem und den beiden anderen Büchern eine Fülle bemerkenswerter theologischer Anregungen zu wichtigen Fragen systematischer Theologie mit einem relevanten Praxisbezug.

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Nahum

Heinz-Josef Fabry

Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament
Freiburg, Basel, Wien: Herder, 2006, Hb., 232 pp.,
Euro 50,-
ISBN 978-3-451-26850-2

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Fabrys Kommentar zum Nahumbuch (HThKAT) ist ein wichtiger Beitrag zu diesem kurzen Prophetenbuch. Fabry hat einen weiten Horizont, was die Sekundärliteratur angeht. Er zeigt ein starkes Interesse an den Texteditionen des Nahumtextes. Sehr ansprechend ist die ausführliche Einleitung zur Bedeutung Assyriens für das Alte Testament und die Propheten. Die Kommentierung des Textes geschieht weitgehend synchron, obwohl jeweils eine historisch-kritische Vorarbeit für die Textabschnitte erfolgt. Begrüßenswert ist das Ringen Fabrys in Frage nach der Botschaft des Nahumbuches für den heutigen Leser.

SUMMARY

Fabry's Commentary on Nahum in the Herders *Theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament* series is an important contribution to this short prophetic book. Fabry has a wide horizon, that which the secondary literature is concerned with. He takes a sharp interest in the textual editions of Nahum. The comprehensive introduction on the significance of Assyria for the Old Testament and the prophets is very appealing. The commenting on the text proceeds largely in a synchronic method, although at times there is historical-critical 'preparatory work' for some sections of text. To be welcomed is Fabry's wrestling with the question of the message of Nahum for today's reader.

RÉSUMÉ

Le commentaire de Fabry sur le livre de Nahoum dans la série *Theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament* publiée chez Herders apporte une contribution importante à l'étude de ce petit livre prophétique. Fabry a un large horizon et est très informé de ce qui a été écrit sur ce livre. Il s'intéresse particulièrement aux éditions du texte de Nahoum. L'introduction très développée consacrée à ce que représentait l'Assyrie pour l'Ancien Testament et les prophètes est remarquable. Le commentaire du texte est abordé selon une approche essentiellement synchronique, même si l'auteur se livre parfois à un « travail préliminaire »

historico-critique pour certaines sections du livre. On peut encore saluer l'effort de Fabry pour montrer ce que le message de Nahoum peut apporter au lecteur d'aujourd'hui.

* * * *

Mit 230 Seiten Fabry legt einen ausführlichen Kommentar zum kurzen Nahum-Buch vor. In der Reihe der Dodekapropheten erscheint nach Micha (2000) und Zephania (2002) der dritte Kommentar in der HThKAT. Zunächst bietet der Kommentar ein ausführliches Literaturverzeichnis. Hier fällt das starke Interesse an Texteditionen auf, was angesichts des Schwerpunktes des Autors in der Septuaginta- und Qumranforschung nicht verwundert. Auffällig ist auch Fabrys breites Spektrum in der Liste der Nahum-Kommentare (S. 14-16). Er nennt neben deutschsprachigen und englischen Kommentaren auch niederländische (Goslinga, van der Woude) und französische Titel (Deissler, Dupont-Sommer, George, Keller). Auch zeigt sich ein weites Feld in der exegetischen Methodik von diachron (Seybold) bis synchron (Sweeney). Fabry scheut sich nicht, evangelikale Exegeten (z.B. Christensen, Longman, Johnston, u.a. wahrzunehmen 17ff). Ferner zeigen die Titel der Monographien, dass Fabry auf der Höhe der Zeit ist und Titel bis in die Jahre 2005/6 aufgenommen hat. Dieser weite Horizont Fabrys wird auch in der Besprechung der Forschungsgeschichte erkennbar. Obwohl selber historisch-kritisch arbeitend, kann er mit ironischem Unterton selbstkritisch feststellen: „Nun ist es ein Charakteristikum der kritischen Exegese, alles – bis auf die historisch-kritische Methode – in Frage zu stellen.“ (32)

Fabry widmet die Hälfte des Kommentars einer ausführlichen Einleitung (S. 25-120): I. Forschungsgeschichtliche Aspekte (Datierung, Redaktion, Struktur, Theologie, Geschichte Assyriens); II. Textüberlieferung; III. Textanalyse; IV. Literarische Analyse; V. Intertextuelle Bezüge; VI. Theologische Perspektive; VII. Rezeption.

Mehrfach wird deutlich, dass Fabry eine ausgewogene Darstellung anstrebt. So diskutiert er knapp Für und Wider der Früh- (kurz nach 663) und mittleren Datierung (um 622). Beide Positionen hält Fabry für „nicht unwahrscheinlich“ (S. 28f) und nimmt schließlich in seiner eigenen Datierung eine mittlere Position ein, in der Nahum seine drei Reden „unmittelbar um 626 v. Chr. Schriftlich niedergelegt habe, was eine in der späten Manasse-Zeit begonnene Predigerzeit dieses Propheten keineswegs ausschließen muss“ (S. 30). Fabry sieht in 3,11b einen „versteckten Hinweis“, als Assyrien sich in der Zeit nach dem Tod Assurbanipals im Jahre 627 auf dem Höhepunkt seiner Macht befindet, die Chaldäer unter Nabopolassar aber diese günstige Lage mit einem Angriff auf Ninive ausnützen (S. 30f).

Fabry ist sich auch bewusst, dass die Redaktionsgeschichte des Buches aufgrund unterschiedlicher Ansätze „sehr disparat gesehen“ wird (S. 34). Er stellt synchrone Ansätze kurz dar, kann jedoch im folgenden Abschnitt fortfahren (S. 35): „Nach wie vor argumentieren die

meisten Kommentare diachron.“ Eine Auseinandersetzung mit unterschiedliche Positionen erfolgt dann ab III. Textanalyse (S. 81ff) und IV. Literarische Analyse des Nahumbuches (S. 85ff). Hier wird deutlich, dass Fabry innerhalb der exegetischen Methodik eine Mittelposition einnimmt. Er arbeitet moderat literarkritisch. Doch spricht er sich beispielsweise gegen den Versuch aus, „die zweite Hälfte des Akrostichons in Nah.1 zu rekonstruieren“ und plädiert mit Spronk für „eine poetische Struktur des Buches bestehend aus drei Strophen“ (S. 81). Fabry will auch nicht dem Vorhaben folgen, hinter den einzelnen prophetischen Reden gegen Ninive konkrete Redesituationen ausfindig zu machen. Aber er geht eher von einzelnen Sätzen aus, die Nahum vorgefunden, übernommen oder andere neu geschaffen bzw. später nachgeschoben hat (S. 88).

Hervorzuheben ist der „Überblick über die Geschichte Assyriens“ (S. 38-68). Wenn sich eine ausführliche Einführung zu dieser Thematik zu einem Buch innerhalb des Dodekapropheten anbietet, dann bei Nahum. Fabry begegnet der Herausforderung mit viel Geschick, ausgehend von einem breit angelegten geschichtlichen Überblick zu Assyrien, um diesen schließlich bis auf die Propheten des AT zu fokussieren. Fabry beginnt seinen Überblick mit der Notiz in Gen.10,8-12. In diesen Versen erkennt er: „Die biblischen Reminiszenz“ muss eine sehr alte Zeit im Blick haben, denn Ninive war spätestens seit 2500 v. Chr. eine bedeutende Stadt.“ Die anschließende Beschreibung der Geschichte Mesopotamiens im 3. und 2. Jahrtausend fällt knapp aus, ist aber dem Gegenstand angemessen (S. 40-43). Ab der neuassyrischen Zeit und den Berührungen mit Israel und Juda (Schlacht bei Qarqar) bis hin zu Belagerung und Eroberung Samarias (Salmanassar V, Sargon II) werden die Ausführungen konkreter und ausführlicher (Sanherib, Assurbanipal). Die Erklärungen sind informativ und haben das Ziel, die Rolle Assyriens eben für die Zeit Nahums herauszuarbeiten. Sehr hilfreich und übersichtlich erscheint auch der „Versuch der einer Charakterisierung Assyriens“ in acht Unterpunkten (zum Bsp. Theologie, Ökonomie, Nation, Tradition, Religion), wo Fabry die sprichwörtliche Grausamkeit Assyriens, erläutert. Anschließend folgt, wie sich das Alte Testament mit der assyrischen Krise auseinandergesetzt hat, hier insbesondere die Propheten (S. 61ff).

In den Ausführungen zur Bedeutung No-Amons (Nah 3,8f) greift Fabry auf ägyptische und assyrisch-babylonische Quellen zurück und versucht eine geschichtliche Einordnung. Jedoch wird sich mancher Leser fragen, warum diese Diskussion hier in der Einleitung des Kommentars platziert ist, zumal substantiell möglicherweise gar nicht so viel übrig bleibt, wenn Fabry selbst schreibt, „dass ihre Redaktionsgeschichte und Datierung [der äg. und ass.-bab. Quellen] völlig unklar ist“ (S. 73).

Fabry ist mit den Methoden der Auslegung im Nahumbuch vertraut und stellt diese meist auch ausgewogen dar. Jedoch wäre eine Evaluierung, die zu einem Mit- und Zueinander der Exegese geführt hätte, wün-

schenswert gewesen. Stattdessen kommt Fabry unter „IV. Literarische Analyse des Nahum-Buches, 1. Überblick über die Literarkritik“ am Ende seiner Ausführungen zu der Schlussfolgerung: „Insofern sind die Kohärenzstörungen als Signale für ein Textwachstum wahrzunehmen. Diesen Beobachtungen und ihrer Abarbeitung mit dem Instrumentarium der Historisch-kritischen Methode ist der vorliegende Kommentar verpflichtet“ (S. 87). Ganz anders klingt dies beispielsweise in dem jüngst erschienenen Jeremia-Kommentar von Fischer (HThKAT, 2005), der für eine „Zurückhaltung gegenüber literarkritischen Erklärungen“ eintritt (S. 93):

„Eine diachrone Exegese scheint möglicherweise an Einzelstellen Detailprobleme zu lösen, jedoch werden infolgedessen im Hinblick auf die Gesamtzusammenhänge der Bücher mehr Fragen und Unsicherheiten aufgeworfen. Ein synchroner Weg würde mit weniger Hypothesen auskommen und wäre damit wissenschaftlich verantwortlicher.“

Wird Fabrys Kommentar dem Anspruch des Herausgebers gerecht? Der Schwerpunkt soll bewusst nicht auf der historisch-kritischen Analyse liegen, sondern auf der „Herausarbeitung der Makrostrukturen des Endtextes und dessen theologische (und kanonische) Interpretation.“ Der Überlieferungsprozesses soll zwar „nicht ausgeblendet werden; er wird allerdings nur insoweit skizziert, als er interpretatorisch fruchtbar gemacht werden kann.“ Jedoch muss sich der Herausgeber die Anfrage gefallen lassen, ob das selbst vorgegebene Ziel zumindest für diesen Nahumkommentar nicht ganz erreicht wurde:

„HThKAT kegt seine [sic] Schwerpunkt nicht auf die historisch-kritische Analyse oder die Einzelsemantik, sondern auf die Herausarbeitung der Makrostrukturen des Endtextes und dessen theologische (und kanonische) Interpretation. HThKAT will so nicht nur jüdische Auslegungstradition aufgreifen, sondern zugleich der christlichen Praxis in Lehre und Verkündigung entsprechen, in der der kanonische Endtext (nicht seine Vorstufen) als Gotteswort gelesen wird. Da sowohl Makrostrukturen des Endtextes wie die Komplexität seiner theologischen Aussagen in der Regel das Ergebnis seines auch theologisch bedeutsamen. (vgl. http://www.herder.de/theologie/programm/hthk_at/index_html?par_onl_struktur=704728&onl_struktur=704734)

Fabrys Kommentierung (S. 121ff) geschieht mit folgendem Schema: 1. Zu Text und Übersetzung (sehr ausführlich); 2. Literar- und redaktionskritische Erwägungen; 3. Zu Form und Gattung; 4. Auslegung; 5. Bedeutung (theologische Zuspitzung mit Anregungen für die Predigt). Fabrys Vorgehen ist in sich schlüssig.

Die Vers-für-Vers-Auslegung (unter Auslegung) erfolgt bei Fabry synchron am Endtext und kommt bis auf wenige Ausnahmen, meist als kurze Anspielungen (S. 148, 168, 179f, 211, 220, 224f), ohne literar- oder redaktionskritische Exegese aus. Ein Aufzeigen und Aus-

wertung von Makrostrukturen ist bei Fabry nicht zu erkennen (einzig die Anlehnung an Kessler & Christensen mit einer chiasmatischen Struktur für Nahum-Habakuk auf der Grundlage intertextueller Bezüge, S. 100f). Fabry bietet also in einer Vorarbeit literar- und redaktionskritische Erkenntnisse, bleibt dem kundigen Leser aber schuldig, wie er diese Ergebnisse mit der Auslegung am Endtext verknüpft haben will. Positiv fällt der letzte Schritt auf (Bedeutung), in dem Fabrys Anliegen abzuspielen ist, die für viele postmoderne Ohren fremde Botschaft des Nahumbuches, relevant und praktisch werden zu lassen.

Für Leser, die sich ernsthaft mit dem Nahumbuch beschäftigen möchten, lohnt sich der Griff nach dem Kommentar Fabrys. Insbesondere die Ausführungen zu Assyrien fördern das Verständnis zur Umwelt des Alten Testaments. Ferner wird der Leser vom klaren Aufbau der Kommentierung profitieren. Fabry schafft es insgesamt, die Botschaft des Nahumbuches mit den Aspekten der Gewalt und Brutalität ausgewogen im Kontext der alttestamentlichen Theologie darzustellen, sodass auch der heutige Leser diese problematische Thematik adäquat erfassen kann. Gerade im Kontext der aktuellen religiösen und politischen Ereignisse kann dies einen wichtigen Beitrag leisten.

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1001 Nacht: Wege ins Paradies

Andrea Müller, Hartmut Roder, Editors,

Mainz: Ph. von Zabern, 2006, Hb., 212 pp., €30

ISBN 3-8053-3700-0

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieser Sammelband beleuchtet überwiegend Paradiesvorstellungen, die das Paradies im Diesseits suchen oder teilweise auch als reale Modellversuche aufzurichten trachteten. Dabei geht es um verschiedene Sozialutopien, verschiedene politische Bewegungen, verschiedene religiöse Vorstellungen, die Warenparadiese moderner Konsumgesellschaften bis hin zur Schaffung paradiesischer Körper durch plastische Chirurgie. Indirekt zeigt der Band einen Teil der Wirkungsgeschichte biblischer Paradiesvorstellungen. Andere Beiträge beschreiben anscheinend konstante menschliche Sehnsüchte, die sich kulturell verschieden äußern und an die Mission und Evangelisation anknüpfen kann.

SUMMARY

This collection predominantly illuminates ideas of paradise which look for paradise in this world or sometimes also have treated it as a model to direct life. Thus it has to do with different social utopias, various political movements, religious ideas, the paradise of goods of the modern consumer society even to the extent of creating paradisaical bodies through plastic surgery. The volume has indirect reference to part of the effective-history of biblical texts. Other con-

tributions describe the seemingly incessant human longings which express themselves outwardly in various ways and can connect with mission and evangelisation.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage collectif s'intéresse aux notions du paradis dans les courants qui cherchent le paradis en ce monde, ou encore ceux qui ont vu dans le paradis un modèle pour orienter la vie présente. Il traite donc de diverses utopies sociales, mouvements politiques, idées religieuses, ainsi que du paradis des biens de la société de consommation moderne qui va jusqu'à chercher à produire des corps paradisiaques par la chirurgie plastique. L'ouvrage se réfère indirectement à la part jouée par les textes bibliques dans ces courants de pensée. D'autres contributions décrivent les aspirations incessantes de l'homme qui se manifestent de diverses manières et peuvent servir de tremplin à la mission et à l'évangélisation.

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Der vorliegende Sammelband erschien anlässlich der gleichnamigen Ausstellung im Überseemuseum in Bremen (www.uebersee-museum.de). Dieser Hintergrund erklärt seine besondere Perspektive auf das Paradies. Die Herausgeber schreiben:

Die Suche nach einem sinnvollen Leben begleitet die Menschen, seit sie – religiös gesprochen – den „Garten Eden“ verlassen mussten und Mühsal, Krankheit und Tod zu ihren täglichen Begleitern wurden. Diese zeit- und ortslosen Sehnsüchte, die sich in religiösen Lebensformen zu verwirklichten suchten und auch in reale Modellversuche zur Schaffung neuer Gesellschaftsformen auf Erden mündeten, haben im 21. Jahrhundert nichts von ihrer Aktualität eingebüßt (Umschlag).

Das Ziel der Aufsatzsammlung besteht darin:

Den Jenseitsorten verschiedener Glaubensrichtungen werden die diesseitigen „Paradiesprojekte“ gegenübergestellt, deren vielfältige Erlösungsphantasien und Erfüllungsangebote von den Sozialutopien der frühen Neuzeit bis zu den politischen Bewegungen des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts reichen. Andere Wege führen in arkadische Landschaften oder weisen nach Shangri-La. Von den Warenparadiesen unserer Einkaufstempel bis hin zur Herstellung eines utopischen Körperdesigns mit Mitteln der Chirurgie führen viele Pfade in das neue Elysium (Umschlag).

Daher werden religiöse Paradiesvorstellungen nur knapp und überblicksweise behandelt, wobei sie freilich an anderen Stellen im Hintergrund stehen. In Anknüpfung an sie, aber auch im bewussten Gegensatz sind einige der dargestellten diesseitigen Paradiesprojekte entstanden. Spannend ist dabei auch, dass einige der religiösen Paradiese, unter anderem der namensspendende Paradiesgarten Eden durchaus diesseitig waren und viele Religionen neben einem diesseitigen Paradies auch einen jenseitigen Himmel kennen (zum Himmel vgl.

K. Berger et al., *Bilder des Himmels: Die Geschichte des Jenseits von der Bibel bis zur Gegenwart*; Freiburg, Basel, Wien: Herder, 2006).

Der Band beginnt mit den Erzählungen der Schahrasad und deren Wirkungsgeschichte im Orient und Abendland und widmet sich dann den verschiedenen Vorstellungen vom Paradies.

Im ersten Teil, „1001 Nacht“, geht es um die Paradiesvorstellungen dieses orientalischen Erzählzyklus und ihre Wirkungsgeschichte: „Einleitung“ (H. Roder, S. 9f); „Das Paradies in den Erzählungen aus ‚Tausendundeine Nacht‘“ (C. Ott, S. 10-18; Indien, Persien, Arabien, das Paradies und die Liebe); „Traumparadies ‚Tausendundeine Nacht‘? Wandel der Rezeption – Wandel der Mentalitäten“ (W. Walther, S. 19-26) und „Von Träumenden und Pilgern: Der Orient als malerisches Paradies im 19. Jahrhundert“ (V. Paulus, S. 27-36).

Der Teil „Religiöse Paradiese“ enthält drei Beiträge: B. U. Schipper fasst „Gegenwelten – Paradiesvorstellungen in den Religionen“ zusammen (S. 37-44, Anfänge der Paradiesvorstellung, Christentum, Judentum, Paradiesvorstellungen im Islam und Buddhismus, ferner knapp zu dem Paradies in der Moderne). Schipper schließt: „So steht die Vorstellung vom Paradies letztlich für die eingangs genannte Grundsehnsucht des Menschen nach einer Überwindung einer als defizitär erlebten Alltagsrealität. Je nachdem, welche Bedeutung die Religion in einer Gesellschaft hat, wird diese Vorstellung vom heilvollen Lebensraum unterschiedlich ausgeformt – bis hin zu den säkularen Gegenwelten des 21. Jahrhunderts, bei denen die Zukunftshoffnung zu einer innerweltlichen Größe geworden ist“ (S. 44). D. Quintern beschreibt die „Paradiesische Illusion Unsterblichkeit: Das Gilgamesch-Epos“ (S. 45-52) und N. Büttner „Irdische und himmlische Paradiese in der christlichen Kunst“ (S. 53-60).

In „Irdische Paradiese“ geht es um irdische Gegenwelten: H. Roder beschreibt die historische Entwicklung in „Der Weg zum Paradies auf Erden“ (S. 61-68, frühe Utopien, Von der Erlösung im Jenseits zur Erfüllung im Diesseits, der Industrialismus als Voraussetzung für den Konsumismus, die Wieder-Verzauberung und Entgrenzung der Welt). E. Determann untersucht „Geschlossene Gesellschaften – Sozialutopien von Thomas Morus bis Walt Disney“ (S. 69-76). R. Niemann beschreibt „Monte Verità – das Paradies auf dem Berge“ (S. 77-84) und D. Klein, „Der Sonnenorden in der Südsee – Engelhardts Traum vom Paradies“ (S. 85-92). S. Behnken widmet sich „Ramraj – eine soziale Utopie von göttlichem Willen“ (S. 93-100). I. Backmeister-Collacott zeichnet „Pop up into a new world – Architekturutopien im 20. und 21. Jahrhundert“ nach (S. 101-108). H. Roder schreibt „Consumo ergo sum? Himmel und Hölle im Waren-Paradies der Industriegesellschaft“ (S. 109-116, das „elfte“ Gebot: Einkaufen bis zum Umfallen, die Wiederverzauberung des Menschen, Konsumismus – eine neue Religion?, der flexible Mensch des Konsumismus und Konsumismus als fragi-

ler Motor der Weltökonomie). Roder schließt: Für den Bürger rückten der Konsum einer schier unerschöpflich erscheinenden Zahl von Produkten und das Leben in einer durch Konsum geprägten Kultur in den Rang der elementaren Gewinnung und Sicherung seiner eigenen Identität. Erwerb, Besitz und Nutzung von Gütern erlangten in der sich nun durchsetzenden Überfluggesellschaft zunehmen einen Spitzenplatz im Olymp von Status und Sinn, Geschmack und Stilbildung jedes Einzelnen“ (S. 109). V. Paulus untersucht die „Körperutopia“ – der Körper in der Postmoderne“ (S. 117-124, vom Ideal der Kunst zur Schönheitschirurgie, der postmoderne Jungbrunnen aus Fitness und Anti-Aging, der menschliche Körper als Code).

Teil vier beleuchtet „Mensch und Natur“ in folgenden Beiträgen: A. Müller, „Der Garten – ein Paradies zwischen Himmel und Erde“ (S. 125-132); F. D. Steinheimer, „Die Suche nach dem verlorenen Paradies – Bedeutungswandel der Paradies- und Wildnisvorstellungen“ (S. 133-140); U. Burkhardt, „Für wen das Paradies? Tiergärten einst und heute“ (S. 141-148) und P.-R. Becker, „Die Paradiese der Erstbeschreiber“ (S. 149-156, Tiere und Pflanzen in deren Namen das Wort Paradies aufgenommen ist).

Der letzte Teil gilt verschiedenen geografischen Utopien. A. Müller fragt „Wo liegt das Paradies? Von Irrfahrten und Paradiessuchern“ (S. 157-164). H. Kammerer-Grothaus beschreibt „Südseeparadiese“ und der „Edle Wilde“ (S. 165-172; Entdeckung und Kartographie der süd pazifischen Inselwelt, Tahiti, das Südseeparadies als Lektüremythos, heutige Situation) und von B. Baumann stammt „Auf der Suche nach Shangri-La“ (S. 173-180). Der Band schließt unter der Überschrift Ausflüge ins Paradies mit einer Sammlung von Paradiestexten aus „Tausendundeine Nacht“, Genesis, Offenbarung des Johannes Kap. 21; Koran Sure 52.19-25, Ovid, Vergil, Hans Sachs und andere (S. 181-207).

Der durchweg verständlich geschriebene Band enthält 127 Farb- und 18 Schwarzweißabbildungen. Neben den historischen Überblicken bietet er interessante Einsichten in die europäische Geistesgeschichte der Vergangenheit und Gegenwart. Er ist ferner von Interesse für Missiologen (Südsee, teils langlebige europäische Vorstellungen vom Orient und anderen Teilen der Welt) und bietet Anregungen für die Analyse westlicher Gesellschaften und ihrer prekären diesseitigen Vorstellungen vom Glück. In Ansätzen weist er auch auf die Sehnsüchte hinter verschiedenen säkularen Paradiesvorstellungen hin, die ein Anknüpfungspunkt für die Verkündigung des Evangeliums sein können.

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*AugustinusAuslese: Texte zum
Glaubensbekenntnis*

Sieben, Hermann Josef

Paderborn: Schöningh, 2006, Pb., 491 pp., Euro 59,-
ISBN 978-3-506-75668-8

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der Frankfurter Jesuit Hermann Josef Sieben hat mit dieser Auswahl von Texten des Kirchenvaters Augustinus zum Apostolischen Glaubensbekenntnis ein sehr wertvolles Buch herausgebracht. Die umfangreiche Sammlung von Originalzitationen zu den Themen des Credo erweist sich als eine hervorragende Einführung in die Theologie des größten lateinischsprechenden Kirchenvaters. Mit Hilfe eines Bibelstellen-, Personen- und Sachregisters kann der Leser leicht auch zu kleineren Themen zentrale Aussagen von Augustinus finden. Die Textauswahl hat nicht nur wissenschaftlich-theologischen, sondern durchaus auch erbaulichen Charakter. Eine Übersetzung in andere europäische Sprachen wäre sehr wünschenswert.

SUMMARY

The Frankfurt Jesuit Hermann Josef Sieben has brought out a very useful book of a selection of texts by the church father Augustine on the Apostolic Creed. The comprehensive collection of original citations on the theme of the Creed proves itself to be an outstanding introduction to the theology of the greatest Latin church father. With the help of an index of bible passages, persons and subjects the reader can easily find core statements about smaller themes. The selection of texts has not only a scholarly-theological but also a fully edifying character. A translation into other European languages would be desirable.

RÉSUMÉ

Le jésuite Hermann Josef Sieben a produit un ouvrage très utile qui contient une sélection de textes de Saint Augustin sur le symbole des apôtres. Ce large recueil de citations s'avère être une excellente introduction à la théologie du plus grand théologien de l'Église latine ancienne. Des index des textes bibliques, des personnes et des sujets permettent de trouver facilement les affirmations clés sur les moindres thèmes. Les textes ont non seulement une valeur théologique et académique, mais aussi un caractère édifiant. On ne peut que souhaiter une traduction dans d'autres langues européennes.

* * * *

Das umfangreiche Lebenswerk des Kirchenvaters Augustinus zieht eine noch umfangreichere Sekundärliteratur nach sich, die in der Bearbeitung altkirchlicher Themen ihresgleichen sucht. Daher ist es sehr zu begrüßen, dass der emeritierte Frankfurter Professor Hermann Josef Sieben SJ eine deutschsprachige Textsammlung von Augustinuszitationen, die sich am Apostolikum orientiert, zusammengestellt hat. Das heute so genannte „Apostolische Glaubensbekenntnis“ findet sich erst im 8. Jahrhundert; es geht aber auf das altkirchliche altrömische

Taufsymbol zurück. Von Augustinus existieren sieben Auslegungen des altkirchlichen Glaubensbekenntnisses nach der in Mailand gebrauchten Fassung und eine Auslegung des im nordafrikanischen Hippo Regius gebrauchten Textes. Besonders, aber nicht nur auf diese Texte hat Sieben in seiner Auswahl zurückgegriffen. Insgesamt zitiert er Passagen aus 54 Werken des Kirchenvaters bzw. aus Sammlungen wie seinen Predigten und Briefen. Er hat nicht nur die Homilien benutzt, sondern neben den Predigten auch andere, mehr lehrhaft-wissenschaftliche Texte von Augustinus verwendet.

Herausgekommen ist bei der intensiven Sammel-, Sichtungs- und Übersetzungstätigkeit des Herausgebers ein 460 Textseiten umfassendes Kompendium der Theologie des Augustinus, dessen Themenwahl durch den Text des Apostolischen Credo bestimmt ist. Sieben hat seine Auswahl nicht dem heutigen theologischen Zeitgeschmack angepasst – das kann für den Leser nur von Vorteil sein: „Der eine oder andere Text kann dabei vielleicht auch zu einem Nachdenken provozieren, auf wie festen *biblischen* Füßen eigentlich unsere von Augustinus abweichenden Anschauungen stehen.“ (S. 11, Hervorhebung: J. E.)

Kein Leser wird das Buch auf einmal durchlesen wollen, aber auch beim stöbernden Lesen – „Was sagt Augustinus hierzu?, was meint er dazu? – kann man sich nur schwer wieder losreißen: zu interessant und einfach auch: zu gut im Vergleich mit den zahlreichen nachfolgenden Auslegern des Credo bis in die Gegenwart ist das, was der Kirchenvater zu sagen hat. Hilfreich ist hierbei nicht nur das Bibelstellen-, sondern besonders auch das Sach- und Personenverzeichnis. Ein knappes Zitat erklärt zum Beispiel, dass Augustin die Apokatastasislehre ablehnt (S. 253). Das Jüngste Gericht über alle Menschen ist ein zukünftiges Faktum, an dem keinesfalls zu zweifeln ist (S. 308). In der Taufe wird die Sünde vergeben (S. 410). Auch wenn evangelische Leser speziell bei Augustins Ekklesiologie manches Fragezeichen setzen werden, ist das Werk doch für evangelische Theologen, die sich in Augustinus' Theologie orientieren wollen, sehr zu empfehlen. Eine weitere Auflage wird vielleicht zu einem Preis, den auch Studierende bezahlen können, möglich werden. Nach Einschätzung des Rezensenten wird das Buch auf Jahre hinaus seinen Platz in der Augustinus-Rezeption behaupten. Es wäre zu wünschen, dass es in andere Sprachen übersetzt wird.

Jochen Eber, Schriesheim bei Heidelberg, Deutschland

Und Gott sah, dass es gut war. Eine Theologie der Schöpfung

Medard Kehl (Mitarb. v. H.-D. Mutschler u. M. Sievernich)

Freiburg, Basel, Wien: Herder, 2006. 432 S., € 24,90
ISBN: 978-3-451-29273-6

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der katholische Systematiker Medard Kehl entwickelt in seinem Buch eine christliche Schöpfungslehre, die gleichzeitig das Gottesverständnis und das Wirklichkeitsverständnis des Glaubens beinhaltet. Dabei spannt er den Bogen theologischer Reflexion von verschiedenen Facetten gelebten Schöpfungsglaubens heute über die Breite des biblischen Schöpfungszeugnisses in Altem und Neuem Testament, vier große theologie-geschichtliche Entwürfe zum Thema bis hin zu den systematischen Herausforderungen der Theodizeefrage, der Erbsündenlehre und der Frage nach dem Teufel. Erst danach nimmt er den Dialog mit den Anfragen „von außen“ (Naturwissenschaft, ökologische Ethik und muslimischer Schöpfungsglaube) auf. Damit ist ein Standardwerk aus katholischer Perspektive zu einem heute hoch relevanten Topos entstanden, der auch für Evangelikale von großem Interesse ist.

SUMMARY

The Catholic Systematic Theologian Medard Kehl develops in his book a Christian doctrine of creation which at the same time contains understanding of God and faith's conception of reality. Therefore he spans the range of theological reflection of various facets of lived creation-faith today over the breadth of biblical references to creation in Old and New Testaments, four great theological-historical sketches on the theme including the systematic challenges of the Theodicy question, 'original sin', and the issue of 'the devil'. Only then does he take up a dialogue with the questions 'from outside' (natural science, ecological ethics and Islamic faith about creation). So arises from a catholic viewpoint a standard work, which is of great interest also for evangelicals on a theme that is highly relevant for today.

RÉSUMÉ

Medard Kehl, systématicien catholique, consacre ce livre à une doctrine chrétienne de la création qui englobe à la fois une vision de Dieu et de la réalité dans la perspective de la foi. Sa réflexion théologique intègre diverses facettes d'une foi en la création vécue aujourd'hui, l'ensemble des textes se référant à la création dans l'Ancien Testament et le Nouveau et quatre grands survols théologico-historiques sur le thème. Il traite en outre des sujets de la théodicée, du péché originel et du diable. Il aborde ensuite les questions qui sont posées « de l'extérieur », comme celles que suscitent les sciences, l'éthique écologique et la doctrine islamique de la création. On a là d'un point de vue catholique un ouvrage majeur, d'un grand intérêt pour les évangéliques, sur un thème très important pour notre époque.

* * * *
Kehl versteht die christliche Schöpfungslehre als „Anknüpfungspunkt“ für die oft strittigen Auseinandersetzungen mit außerchristlichen Gottes- und Welt-sichten. Hier tun sich – besonders durch das heute alles dominierende evolutive Weltbild und die wiederkehrenden Varianten deistischer und pantheistischer Lehren – schier unüberwindbare Widersprüche zum christlichen Schöpfungsglauben auf, durch das das christliche Bekenntnis zu Gott, dem „Schöpfer Himmels und der Erden“ stark herausgefordert wird.

Um in diesen Herausforderungen bestehen zu können, sieht Kehl die Notwendigkeit, „Schöpfungstheologie eindeutig, als ein Stück der Offenbarungstheologie“ zu behandeln (S. 23). Nur wenn Schöpfung als Selbstoffenbarung Gottes und „integraler Bestandteil... der Geschichte des Heils“ (S. 23) begriffen wird, kann der Dialog mit anderen Anfragen gelingen. Der Glaube ist „das entscheidende Kriterium“ für das, was letztlich mit dem christlichen Schöpfungsverständnis vereinbar ist und was nicht.

In der Einleitung (S. 23-56) beschreibt er die Aufgabe einer christlichen Schöpfungslehre, zählt die besonderen Herausforderungen heute auf und klärt die wesentlichen Grundbegriffe und Lehraussagen der Schöpfungstheologie. Diese Ausführungen reißen bereits das ganze Spektrum der damit zusammenhängenden Fragen prägnant an: Schöpfung *als creatio* – die Frage nach dem Ursprung, einer Schöpfung aus dem Nichts (*creatio ex nihilo*), der Entstehung der Zeit, der fortwährenden Schöpfung (*creatio continua*), der Vorsehung (*providentia*) und dem Motiv des Schaffens (*amore*) – im Unterschied zu Schöpfung *als creatura* – gemeint sind die Fragen nach der Geschöpflichkeit als Signatur alles Endlichen, der relativen Eigenständigkeit und dem Gutsein der Schöpfung, um dann auch Symbole der Schöpfung aus der Natur, der Kunst, dem gesellschaftlichen Bereich und der Erfahrung personaler Begegnung als Anschauung heranzuziehen.

In fünf großen Schritten schreitet Kehl das theologische Gelände eines christlichen Schöpfungsglaubens ab. Im ersten Hauptteil (S. 58-99) nimmt der *die Phänomene* in den Blick, d.h. er reflektiert, wie der Glaube heute „in universalkirchlicher Form“ praktiziert wird. Diese Kapitel sind überwiegend der katholischen Frömmigkeit gewidmet (Liturgie der Osternacht und Viertes Eucharistisches Hochgebet) und bieten für Protestanten einen interessanten Einblick. Auch gemeinsame Themen wie der Erste Artikel des Credo und die Fragen nach dem Segen sowie dem neu erwachten Interesse an Engeln werden ausgeführt.

Im zweiten Hauptteil (S. 102-154) behandelt Kehl die Ursprünge des Schöpfungsglaubens in AT und NT, indem er die Spannungsfelder von geschichtlichem Jahwe-Glauben und Mythologie aufzeigt sowie Gottes Königtum, die von Sünde und Tod beschädigte Schöpfung und die in der Schöpfung wahrnehmbare Weisheit des Schöpfers. Auch die universalen Aussagen des NT's

zu Schöpfung und Erlösung, inklusive der christologischen Aussagen über den Schöpfungsmittler umreißt Kehl kompakt. Die universale Hoffnung auf die Vollendung der Schöpfung steht für ihn nicht im Gegensatz zum kosmischen Gericht über die Welt.

Der dritte Teil (S. 156-236) beschäftigt sich anhand ausgewählter geschichtlicher Epochen mit den theologischen Entwürfen Irenäus' von Lyon, Augustins, Thomas' von Aquin und Romano Guardinis.

Um die systematische „Kohärenz“ herzustellen, kommt Kehl im vierten Teil (S. 237-300), u.a. auf den „springenden Punkt des christlichen Schöpfungsglaubens“ zu sprechen: „Gott zugleich über und in seiner Schöpfung“ (S. 238). Gottes Handeln als Schöpfer an und in seiner Welt, der Schöpfer und das Leid seiner Geschöpfe (Theodizee) und die Macht der Sünde (Erb-sündenlehre) sind die wichtigen Themen dieses Absatzes, die knapp und gut skizziert werden.

Erst im fünften Hauptteil geht Kehl auf die Anfragen von außen ein. Dazu lässt er seinen Kollegen H.-D. Mutschler über das Spannungsfeld Naturwissenschaft und Schöpfungsglaube schreiben. Je ein kleines Kapitel beschäftigt sich abschließend mit ökologischer Ethik und dem Unterschied zwischen christlichem und muslimischem Schöpfungsglauben.

Es ist für Evangelikale durchaus spannend und mit Gewinn verbunden, Kehls Buch zu lesen. Das der katholischen Theologie eigene untrennbare Aufeinanderbe-zugensein von Natur und Gnade kann herausfordern, über eine neue Verhältnisbestimmung nachzudenken, ohne freilich die im protestantischen Denken betonte grund-sätzliche Unterschiedenheit von Reich Gottes und Welt aufzugeben.

Über Kehls Abgrenzung zur seiner Meinung nach fundamentalistischen Engführung des Kreationismus, der keinerlei Kompatibilität zwischen biblischen Schöp-fungsaussagen und evolutiven Konzepten erkennen will, kann allerdings gestritten werden. Kehl sieht in der prinzipiellen Offenheit der naturwissenschaftlich erhobenen Phänomene für eine religiöse Perspektive eine Chance, zwischen naturwissenschaftlicher und religiöser Welt-sicht zu vermitteln und kompatible Momente so zu rezipieren, dass der Schöpfungsglaube neue Akzente enthält.

Horst Afflerbach, Bergneustadt, Deutschland

Studien zur Christologie. Kleine Schriften IV

Martin Hengel

ed. Claus – Jürgen Thornton, WUNT 201. Tübingen:
Mohr Siebeck, 2006. x + 650 pp. € 179, cloth.
ISBN 3-16-149196-3

Jesus und die Evangelien: Kleine Schriften V

ed. Claus – Jürgen Thornton, WUNT 211. Tübingen:
Mohr Siebeck, 2007. xii + 725 pp., € 189, cloth.
ISBN 978-3-16-149327-0. 189

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Diese Sammelbände bieten zusammen 34 Aufsätze und den Nachdruck dreier kleinerer Monographien des emeritierten Tübinger Neutestamentlers Martin Hengel. Es handelt sich um verschiedene Beiträge zur Christologie des Neuen Testaments und zu Jesus und den Evangelien, die teilweise die Forschungsgeschichte mitbestimmt haben. In ihrer soliden historischen, philologischen aber auch theologischen Orientierung haben sie bleibenden Wert und zeigen, wie gründliche Arbeit am Neuen Testament aussieht, die sich jenseits von Sensationen und Spekulationen der Sache selbst mit hoher Kompetenz und Engagement widmet. Auch von diesen Bänden der *Kleinen Schriften* Hengels wäre eine broschiierte Studienausgabe wünschenswert.

RÉSUMÉ

Ces volumes reprennent trente-quatre articles et trois brèves monographies de Martin Hengel, qui fut professeur de Nouveau Testament à Tübingue. On y trouve diverses contributions à la christologie du Nouveau Testament et à la recherche sur Jésus et les évangiles qui ont exercé une certaine influence dans l'histoire académique. Leur solide orientation historique, philologique, mais aussi théologique, leur confère une valeur durable et en font des modèles d'études sérieuses sur le Nouveau Testament, qui évitent le sensationnalisme et la spéculation, et font preuve d'une compétence au plus haut niveau, en même temps que d'un intérêt certain pour la matière traitée.

SUMMARY

This collection offers 34 essays and the reprint of three smaller monographs of the retired Tübingen New Testament scholar Martin Hengel. It deals with the various contributions to a Christology of the New Testament and to Jesus and the Gospels, which have somewhat shaped the history of research. With their solid historical, philological but also theological orientation they have enduring value and show how thorough work on the NT should look, which goes beyond sensationalising and speculations to dedicate itself with top competence and engagement to the matter itself. A paperback study edition of these smaller works of Hengel is to be desired.

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Mit den angezeigten umfangreichen Bänden legt der emeritierte Tübinger Neutestamentler Martin Hengel

den vierten und fünften Band seiner „kleinen Schriften“ vor (*Judaica et Hellenistica: Kleine Schriften I*, 1996; *Judaica, Hellenistica et Christiana: Kleine Schriften II*, 1999; *Paulus und Jakobus: Kleine Schriften III*, 2002; alle Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck). Freilich handelt es sich bei den „Kleinen Schriften“ dieser und der früheren Bände teilweise um Beiträge im Umfang kleiner Monographien!

Der vierte Band der Kleinen Schriften, *Studien zur Christologie*, enthält in chronologischer Reihenfolge dreizehn Studien, die zwischen 1967 und 2004 erschienen sind. Dazu gehören „Der Kreuzestod Jesu Christi als Gottes souveräne Erlösungstat: Exegese über 2. Korinther 5,11 – 21“ (S. 1-26); „Christologie und neutestamentliche Chronologie: Zu einer Aporie in der Geschichte des Urchristentums“ (S. 27-51); „Ist der Osterglaube noch zu retten?“ (S. 52-73) und der Abdruck der kleinen Monographie *Der Sohn Gottes*, die 1977 in der zweiten, ergänzten Auflage erschienen war (S. 74-145, *Der Sohn Gottes: Die Entstehung der Christologie und die jüdisch-hellenistische Religionsgeschichte*; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1975; engl. *The Son of God*; London: SCM, 1976; später auch abgedruckt in *The Cross of the Son of God*; London: SCM, 1986).

Weitere Studien sind „Der stellvertretende Sühnetod Jesu: Ein Beitrag zur Entstehung des urchristlichen Kerygmas“ (S. 146-184); „Hymnus und Christologie“ (S. 185-204); „Das Christuslied im frühesten Gottesdienst“ (S. 205-258); „Jesus, der Messias Israels: Zum Streit über das ‚messianische Sendungsbewußtsein‘ Jesu“ (S. 259-280); „Setze dich zu meiner Rechten!?: Die Inthronisation Christi zur Rechten Gottes und Psalm 110.1“ (S. 281-367); „Die Throngemeinschaft des Lammes mit Gott in der Johannesapokalypse“ (S. 368-385); „Das Begräbnis Jesu bei Paulus und die leibliche Auferstehung aus dem Grabe“ (S. 386-450); „Das Mahl in der Nacht, ‚in der Jesus ausgeliefert wurde‘ (1 Kor 11.23)“ (S. 451-495) und „Abba, Maranatha, Hosanna und die Anfänge der Christologie“ (S. 496-534).

Der Band endet mit einigen *Corrigenda* zu *Paulus und Jakobus, Kleine Schriften III* (S. 535f) und Registern für die Bände Kleine Schriften III und IV (S. 537-650, Stellen, Autoren, Sachen, griechische, hebräische und aramäische Begriffe). Alle Texte wurden vom Verfasser durchgesehen und teilweise auch aktualisiert. Zwei weitere Beiträge Hengels zur Christologie finden sich in Band III der Kleinen Schriften (siehe oben); vgl. ferner die von Hengel zusammen mit A. M. Schwemer verfasste Monographie *Der messianische Anspruch Jesu und die Anfänge der Christologie: Vier Studien*, WUNT 138 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001; Studienausgabe 2003) und den englischen Aufsatzband *Studies in Early Christology* (Edinburgh, Clark, 1995), dessen Beiträge teilweise in deutscher Fassung im vorliegenden vierten Band der Kleinen Schriften enthalten sind. Hengels Studien konzentrieren sich vor allem auf die früheste Entwicklung der Christologie:

Angestoßen wurde dieselbe durch die Begegnung

der Jünger mit ihrem von Gott auferweckten Meister Jesus von Nazareth, der wegen seines messianischen Anspruchs gekreuzigt worden war. Es verband sich damit eine einzigartige, stürmische Denkbewegung, die aus den galiläischen Nachfolgern Jesu Messiasboten machte. Auf jüdischem Mutterboden entstand dadurch eine neue, eschatologisch-enthusiastische Gemeinschaft, die relativ rasch die Grenzen des eigenen Volkes überschritt und die Welt veränderte. Die entscheidenden Entwicklungsstufen bei dieser Denkbewegung müssen in erstaunlich kurzer Zeit erreicht worden sein.... Die Christologie, und untrennbar verbunden mit ihr die Soteriologie, bildete dabei das Herzstück des neuen Glaubens (Vorwort)

Durchweg verbindet Hengel gründliche Exegese mit hervorragenden Kenntnissen der frühjüdischen und hellenistisch-römischen Welt des Neuen Testaments. Er ist mit der internationalen Forschung im Gespräch und greift exegetische, historische, theologische und in Ansätzen auch systematische Fragen auf. Seine Beiträge zur Christologie des Neuen Testaments, die immer wieder die kritische Forschung gekonnt hinterfragen und mit guten Gründen (u. a. deren historische Plausibilität) für eine frühe Hochchristologie im Gegensatz zu langen Entwicklungsprozessen, argumentieren, werden auf Jahre bedenkenswert bleiben. Eine Studienausgabe wäre wünschenswert.

Der fünfte Band, *Jesus und die Evangelien*, enthält in größtenteils chronologischer Reihenfolge 26 Beiträge aus einem Zeitraum von 45 Jahren (1959-2004). Die Beiträge wurden durchgesehen und teilweise auch ergänzt. Der Index zu diesem Band soll in dem im Vorwort angekündigten sechsten Band der kleinen Schriften Martin Hengels erscheinen. Nach Hengel spiegeln die vorliegenden Studien

so auch ein Stück der wissenschaftlichen Entwicklung des Autors, seiner Auseinandersetzungen und Interessen wieder, und sie zeigen zugleich, dass strenge philologische und historische Arbeit, die Frage nach der Wahrheit des Evangeliums und die Stellungnahme zu brennenden Zeitfragen sich von der „theologischen Existenz“ des Autors nicht trennen lassen, sondern stets aufeinander bezogen sind. Nur durch diese – meines Erachtens enge – innere Verbindung wird exegetische und theologische Arbeit in gegenseitiger Wechselwirkung fruchtbar (Vorwort).

Der Band enthält: „Die Heilungen Jesu und medizinisches Denken“ (S. 1-27, zusammen mit Rudolf Hengel); „Maria Magdalena und die Frauen als Zeugen“ (S. 28-39); den Nachdruck der Monographie *Nachfolge und Charisma: Eine exegetisch-religionsgeschichtliche Studie zu Mt 8,21f und Jesu Ruf in die Nachfolge* (BZNW 34, 1968) auf Seite S. 40-138; die Aufsätze „Das Gleichnis von den Weingärtnern Mk 12,1-12 im Lichte der Zenonpapyri und der rabbinischen Gleichnisse“ (S. 139-176); „Markus 7,3 pugmh/: Die Geschichte einer exegetischen Aporie und der Versuch ihrer Lösung“ (177-93), die eng-

lischsprachige Rezension von S. G. D. Brandons Studie *Jesus and the Zealots: A Study of the Political Factor in Primitive Christianity* von 1967 (S. 194-204); die Aufsätze „Leben in der Veränderung: Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis der Bergpredigt“ (205-216); „War Jesus Revolutionär?“ (S. 217-244); „Gewalt und Gewaltlosigkeit: Zur ‚politischen Theologie‘ in neutestamentlicher Zeit“ (S. 245-288); „Kerygma oder Geschichte? Zur Problematik einer falschen Alternative in der Synoptikerforschung aufgezeigt an Hand einiger neuer Monographien“ (S. 289-305); „Augstein und der Menschensohn“ (S. 306-315); „Ein Blick zurück im Zorn: Zur Neubearbeitung von Rudolf Augsteins ‚Jesus Menschensohn‘“ (S. 316-322); „Die Magier aus dem Osten und die Flucht nach Ägypten (Mt 2) im Rahmen der antiken Religionsgeschichte und der Theologie des Matthäus“ (S. 323-351, zusammen mit Helmut Merkel); „Jesus und die Tora“ (S. 352-374); „Das Ende aller Politik: Die Bergpredigt in der aktuellen Diskussion“ (S. 375-90); „Die Bergpredigt im Widerstreit“ (S. 391-407); „Reich Christi, Reich Gottes und Weltreich im Johannesevangelium“ (S. 408-429); „Probleme des Markusevangeliums“ (S. 430-477); „Entstehungszeit und Situation des Markusevangeliums“ (S. 478-526); „Die Evangelienüberschriften“ (S. 526-567; zum Problem, die Form des Titels, die Bezeugung des Titels im 2. Jahrhundert, das eigene Zeugnis der vier Evangelien und die Individualität der Autoren, die praktische Notwendigkeit des Titels, Buchtitel in der Antike und Editionen im frühen Christentum, die Schriftlesung im Gottesdienst, Gemeindebibliotheken und Bücherschrank, frühchristliche Schreibergewohnheiten, Zusammenfassung und Folgerungen).

Der folgende Aufsatz, „Der ‚dionysische‘ Messias: Zur Auslegung des Weinwunders in Kana (Joh 2,1-11)“ (S. 568-600) erscheint hier erstmalig in deutscher Sprache, Englisch als „The Interpretation of the Wine Miracle at Cana: John 2:1-11, in L. D. Hurst, N. T. Wright (Hrsg.), *The Glory of Christ in the New Testament: Studies in Christology. In Memory of G. B. Caird* (1987), S. 83-112. Weitere Aufsätze sind „Die Schriftauslegung des 4. Evangeliums auf dem Hintergrund der urchristlichen Exegese“ (S. 601-643); „Der Finger und die Herrschaft Gottes in Lk 11,20“ (S. 644-663); „Die vier Evangelien und das eine Evangelium von Jesus Christus“ (S. 664-682); „Jesuszeugnisse außerhalb der Evangelien“ (S. 683-701) und „Die ersten nichtchristlichen Leser der Evangelien“ (S. 703-725; „Insgesamt wird man annehmen dürfen, dass die Bekanntschaft einzelner Heiden im 2. Jahrhundert mit den Evangelien jedoch größer war, als allgemein vermutet wird“, S. 725).

Einige der hier abgedruckten Beiträge haben die neutestamentliche Forschung der letzten vierzig Jahre mitbestimmt und sind fester Bestandteil der wissenschaftlichen Diskussion geworden. Wegen ihrer soliden historischen, philologischen, aber auch theologischen Orientierung, die das Werk Hengels kennzeichnet, werden die Beiträge beider Bände auch in Zukunft wertvoll bleiben. Gerade mit dieser Orientierung waren und sind die Beiträge

Hengels für evangelikale Forschung wichtig und wegweisend. Sie zeigen, dass sich konservative Positionen mit guten Argumenten nicht nur verteidigen, sondern auch positiv und richtungsweisend darstellen lassen.

Abschließend ist auf Hengels neuen Band (zusammen mit Anna Maria Schwemer) *Jesus und das Judentum* hinzuweisen (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007). Dabei handelt es sich um den ersten, einer auf mehrere Bände breit angelegten Geschichte des frühen Christentums, mit der Hengel sein vielfältiges und umfangreiches Lebenswerk zusammenfasst. Möge ihm dazu die Schaffenskraft und Lebenszeit vergönnt sein.

Christoph Stenschke, *Missionshaus Bibelschule Wiedenest and Department of New Testament, University of South Africa*

**Paul de Tarse en Méditerranée :
Recherches autour de la navigation dans
l'Antiquité (Ac 27 - 28,16)**

Chantal Reynier

Lectio Divina 206, Paris : Cerf, 2006, 288 pp.
€ 28.00, pb

RÉSUMÉ

Chantal Reynier, une exégète enseignant dans un centre d'études jésuite à Paris, étudie le récit du voyage mouvementé de Paul vers Rome, non pas sous ses aspects littéraire ou théologique, mais comme témoin des conditions de la navigation dans l'Antiquité. Une recherche approfondie sur les textes anciens et aussi sur les découvertes récentes de l'archéologie navale lui permet d'établir la valeur historique de la narration. Face aux théologiens qui considèrent ces chapitres comme une fiction née du désir de l'auteur du Livre des Actes de briller par une narration haute en couleurs à la gloire de Paul, sorte de héros homérique comparable à Ulysse, elle conclut que ce passage relate un véritable voyage, fournissant de précieuses informations non seulement sur les modalités de la navigation antique, mais aussi sur la personne de l'apôtre. Les évangéliques se réjouissent d'une conclusion aussi positive.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Chantal Reynier, eine Exegetin mit Lehrstuhl an einer jesuitischen Fakultät in Paris, untersucht den Bericht der turbulenten des Paulus nach Rom nicht nach seinen literarischen oder theologischen Aspekten, sondern als ein Zeugnis der Umständen der Navigation im Altertum. Eine vertiefte Untersuchung der alten Texte sowie auch der neuen Funde der Seefahrts-Archäologie erlaubt ihr den historischen Wert der Erzählung aufzuzeigen. Die Autorin ist sich bewusst, dass manche Theologen diese Kapitel als Fiktion behandeln. Fiktion, die aus dem Wunsch des Autors erwachsen sei, selber zu brillieren durch eine farbenreiche Erzählung zu Ehren des Paulus als eine Art homerischen Helden, der mit Odysseus vergleichbar wäre. Diesen Theologen gegenüber schließt sie selber, dass die Erzählung von einer wirk-

lichen Reise berichtet und wertvolle Informationen liefert, nicht nur über die Arten der antiken Seefahrt, sondern auch über die Person des Apostels. Evangelikale freuen sich über eine so positive Schlussfolgerung.

SUMMARY

Chantal Reynier, an exegete who teaches in a Jesuit centre of studies in Paris, examines the account of the turbulent voyage of Paul to Rome, not from a literary or theological angle, but as witness to the conditions of nautical navigation in antiquity. A thorough investigation of the ancient texts but also recent discoveries in naval archaeology allows her to confirm the historical value of the narrative. Contrary to theologians who treat these chapters as fiction, born from the desire of the author of Acts to make Paul more glorious by highlighting the colour in the story, making him as sort of Homeric hero like Ulysses, she concludes that the passage relates a real journey, and she offers valuable information not only on the ways of sailing in the ancient world, but also on the person of the Apostle. Evangelicals will be happy with such a positive conclusion.

* * * *

Chantal Reynier, professeur d'exégèse biblique au Centre Sèvres (centre d'études jésuite à Paris), qui a déjà publié un livre intitulé *La Bible et la Mer* (Cerf, 2003) démontre son double intérêt, la Bible et la navigation, en se penchant sur les chapitres 27 et 28 du livre des Actes des Apôtres. Elle n'étudie par le célèbre voyage de l'apôtre vers Rome sous ses aspects littéraire ou théologique. Elle aborde le texte en tant que témoin des conditions de navigation à l'époque : quelle est sa valeur vu sous cet angle ? Elle est parfaitement au courant des réserves faites par divers auteurs sur la valeur historique de ces chapitres. Elle cite Jürgen Becker (*Paul, l'apôtre des nations*) : « Pratiquement rien de ce chapitre [27] ne peut être exploité du point de vue historique... ». Elle sait que l'identification du lieu indiqué pour l'échouement, Malte, est discutée. Elle sait qu'on a voulu voir dans ces chapitres l'ambition, pour l'auteur du livre des Actes, de présenter Paul comme un héros homérique, à la manière d'Ulysse dans l'*Odyssée*. On a rapproché ce récit des romans de la littérature antique, entre le I^{er} et le III^e siècle. On a, en particulier, établi des parallèles avec les récits de tempêtes dans ces romans, ainsi que dans des biographies ou autobiographies. En relevant certains points communs on a cru pouvoir parler de fiction (H Conzelmann, J. Roloff), de « morceau de bravoure » pour impressionner favorablement les lecteurs. Chantal Reynier, qui n'est pourtant pas attachée au principe de l'historicité de tout ce qui est rapporté dans le livre des Actes, parvient, dans sa conclusion à la thèse suivante : on est en présence « d'un récit de navigation digne de foi » (p. 190). L'étude du récit, où la forme alexandrine du texte est privilégiée pour sa technicité, démontre une compétence et une précision remarquables dans la description de la navigation. L'auteur est convaincue que le livre des Actes relate un vrai voyage, une véritable expérience de la mer. La

précision de la terminologie maritime, la pertinence des manœuvres rapportées empêchent de réduire le récit à la seule réminiscence littéraire ou au seul plan symbolique, encore moins à la copie d'une œuvre existante. Il y a effectivement un transfert de Paul à Rome, un voyage singulier. Si ce voyage est consigné de cette manière, c'est qu'il y avait dans l'entourage de Paul des personnes compétentes en matière maritime. On peut parler de « valeur historique du texte... » Ac 27-28.16, par l'ampleur, la précision et la technicité de la documentation nautique, sans oublier l'expérience maritime qu'il recèle, constitue, au sein de la littérature antique, une source incontestable et irremplaçable pour l'histoire de la navigation au I^{er} siècle et aussi pour la connaissance de Saul de Tarse » (p. 192). Pour parvenir à ce résultat Chantal Reynier a recherché non seulement tout ce qui pouvait éclairer la question de la navigation en Méditerranée dans la littérature antique, mais aussi les découvertes récentes de l'archéologie navale (équipement des bateaux, manœuvres nautiques, organisation du commerce, installations portuaires, vie à bord des navires, etc.). Des cartes, des annexes, un glossaire témoignent de la qualité de l'information. Le lecteur de tendance évangélique est à la fois impressionné par le sérieux de l'entreprise et reconnaissant pour une conclusion vraiment positive.

Samuel Bénétreau, L'Hay-les Roses, France

La Bible au microscope : exégèse et théologie biblique, volume 1

Henri Blocher

Vaux-sur-Seine : Edifac, 2006, 314 pp. (Band 2 für
2007 angesagt) € 20.00, pb

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieser Band bringt allgemeinverständliche wie auch mehr akademische Artikel aus quarante Jahren Lehrtätigkeit zusammen. Dogmatik und Exegese sind vereint. Artikel zum Status der Bibel als inspiriertes Wort Gottes, zur Hermeneutik und zu einigen alttestamentlichen Propheten bilden die Hauptteile des Buches. Die Sicht des Gesamten wie die Liebe zum Detail prägen die Arbeitsweise des Autors.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce volume réunit des articles issus de 40 années d'enseignement. Certains articles sont plus académiques, d'autres sont plus facilement compréhensibles. Les articles sur le statut de la Bible comme parole inspirée de Dieu, sur l'herméneutique et sur quelques prophètes de l'Ancien Testament forment les parties majeures du livre. La vue d'ensemble comme l'amour du détail caractérisent la manière de travailler de l'auteur.

SUMMARY

This volume brings together articles written during forty years of teaching. Some articles are more academic, others

are simpler to digest. The articles on the status of the Bible as the inspired Word of God, on hermeneutics and on some of the Old Testament prophets make up the major part of the book. The ability to see the big picture combined with an eye for detail stamp the working methods of the author.

* * * *

Vierzig Jahre Lehrtätigkeit Henri Blochers an der freikirchlichen Fakultät von Vaux-sur-Seine bei Paris gaben seinen Kollegen Anlass, einen ersten Sammelband seiner Artikel herauszugeben. Die Auswahl wurde thematisch getroffen, nicht nach akademischen und allgemeinverständlichen Artikeln geordnet. Drei Artikel sind in Englisch verfasst und auch so belassen.

Drei Aspekte dieses Bandes sind kennzeichnend für die Laufbahn des Autors. Erstens die gegenseitige Befruchtung von Dogmatik und Exegese. Zweitens die feste Überzeugung des Wertes der Bibel als inspiriertes Wort Gottes, zuverlässig, voller Weisheit, das Wesen Gottes und seines Sohnes Jesus-Christus offenbarend. Und drittens die Verbindung von akademischer Tätigkeit und gemeindebezogenem Engagement.

Dieser erste Band ist in drei Teile gegliedert:

Einleitend wird aufgezeigt, welche das Herz des Menschen und die Furcht Gottes verstanden werden können. Das Herz (und das Herz des Theologen) als Zentrum des Denkens und Wesens, nicht in erster Linie der Gefühle, diese biblische Darstellung liegt dem Autor sehr am Herzen. Mit einer detaillierten Exegese von Sprüche 1.7 (in Englisch, zuerst in *Tyndale Bulletin* veröffentlicht) zeigt der Autor dann auf andere Weise, wie es sich mit dem Denken des Menschen in der Furcht Gottes verhält.

Der zweite Hauptteil beschäftigt sich mit dem Wesen und dem Status der Bibel, und mit biblischer Hermeneutik. Einer Serie von Studien zu biblischen Schlüsseltexten (S. 59-119) folgen fünf eher systematische Artikel. Mit wie immer sehr engagiertem Sprachstil führt er in Themen wie „Irrtumslosigkeit (Unfehlbarkeit“, oder „Analogie des Glaubens“ ein.

Und dann geht die Artikelsammlung zum Teil der Lehrtätigkeit des Autors ausserhalb systematischer Theologie über: den Propheten des Alten Testaments (diesem Teil sind ein Artikel über die Poesie im Alten Testament und ein weiterer über Psalm 67 vorgelagert). Den Gesamttext beachten und das Detail nie vernachlässigen, dies gehört auch in diesen Artikeln über Jesaja (S. 217-292), Habakuk (S. 293-302) und Sacharia 3 (S. 303-311) zur Arbeitsweise. Der Ausdruck des Mikroskops im Titel ist kein Zufall. Das Detail scheint dem Autor keine Last, sondern eine Gelegenheit wertvoller Einsichten. Henri Blocher sieht im Mikroskop ein Instrument sowohl der Begeisterung eines Amateurs als auch der Technik eines Forschers. Wer nur die Technik eines Forschers verlangt, folgt dem Autor nicht wirklich.

David Gysel, Vaux-sur-Seine

Nathan's Oracle (2 Samuel 7) and its Interpreters (Bible in History no. 5)

Michael Avioz

Bern: Peter Lang, 2005, xx + 230 pp., £28.40, pb,
ISBN 3-03910-806-9

SUMMARY

This is a synchronic reading of 2 Samuel 7 and its intertextual allusions within the rest of the books of Samuel as well as Kings and Chronicles. Drawing on ANE parallels, Avioz highlights the themes of why David was barred from building the temple and the nature of the promise to him as the key issues to explore. The reading of 2 Samuel 7 is carefully done and the intertextual explorations offer interesting possibilities, but the book is badly let down by poor presentation.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage est une étude synchronique du texte de 2 Samuel 7 et des reprises ou allusions à ce texte dans le reste des livres de Samuel ainsi que dans ceux des Rois et des Chroniques. Prenant en considération les parallèles dans le Proche-Orient ancien, Avioz éclaire les raisons qui ont empêché David de construire le temple et la nature de la promesse dynastique. L'étude du texte est soignée et les explorations intertextuelles ouvrent des pistes intéressantes, mais le livre est desservi par sa présentation.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Das Buch liest 2. Samuel 7 und seine intertextuellen Anspielungen synchron innerhalb des Restes der Samuelbücher und der Königs- und Chronikbücher. Avioz bezieht altorientalisches Vergleichsmaterial ein und betont als Schlüsselthemen zum einen die Frage, warum David der Bau des Tempels verwehrt wurde, und zum anderen das Wesen der ihm gegebenen Verheissung. Dieser Leseansatz zu 2. Samuel 7 wird sorgfältig ausgeführt und die intertextuellen Entdeckungsreisen bieten interessante Möglichkeiten, aber dem Buch wird durch die schlechte Präsentation ein Bärendienst erwiesen.

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This is a significantly revised form of the author's doctoral dissertation which was submitted to Bar-Ilan University in 2003. After a brief introduction examining earlier studies of 2 Samuel 7 and setting out Avioz' own approach, the book is divided into three parts of roughly equal length. These examine Nathan's oracle within the context of the books of Samuel and then its echoes in the books of Kings and Chronicles. Intertextuality is thus a crucial feature of Avioz' approach, so that the 'Interpreters' of the title are those already present within some of the narrative texts of the Hebrew Bible.

Methodologically, Avioz positions himself as a synchronic reader of the text, though he carefully distinguishes himself from some so-called 'close readings' that do not allow other parts of the books of Samuel to guide the interpretation of 2 Samuel 7. Avioz identifies two

key issues within the oracle that require attention; David's disqualification from building the temple and the nature of the promise made to him. Avioz is not interested in questions of Deuteronomistic redaction within Samuel and Kings, though perhaps the question needs slightly more than the cursory comment it receives since it is arguably significant for the author-centred intertextuality with which he is concerned.

Drawing on comparative texts, Avioz argues that the reason David was barred from building the temple was because construction of a temple was something that only the deity could initiate. The prohibition on temple construction was thus a temporary feature, not a permanent bar, an interpretation that obviates the need to remove verse 13 as a later intrusion into the text. He also argues that 2 Samuel 7 represents a covenant with both conditional and unconditional elements, notwithstanding the absence of the word 'covenant' in the text. This reading of the oracle is not novel in itself, but Avioz shows himself to be a capable and attentive interpreter of the text. With this interpretation established, he is then able to note the way earlier passages in Samuel had prepared for the oracle, and the ways in which subsequent portions engage with it, thus demonstrating a degree of intertextuality within the books of Samuel.

The more obviously intertextual elements are then explored through echoes in the books of Kings and Chronicles. The argument for this is frequently by way of tables of shared vocabulary. For Kings, Avioz notes that reference back to the oracle is largely complete by the end of the Solomon narrative, largely because from this point the temple has been built. However, the dynastic element of the promise does receive later reference. The approach to Chronicles is similar, though Avioz first explores the way the Chronicler adapts the text in 1 Chronicles 17, so that the later echoes are refracted through the Chronicler's own interests. The temple is of obvious importance for the Chronicler, and David and Solomon are the ideal kings because of their attitude to it, but the theme of the endurance of the house of David is also important.

Avioz thus offers a well-reasoned interpretation of the oracle and at least some of its earlier interpreters, but the book is not without its problems. Although he is aware that other texts (especially Psalms, but also prophetic texts) draw on the oracle, a clearer rationale needs to be provided as to why Kings and Chronicles should be regarded as foundational for further study of these themes within the Hebrew Bible, especially if Chronicles is a late text. Likewise, although he provides some argument for his model of intertextuality it is not really sufficient for the weight placed upon it. But the book's greatest weakness is its presentation which does not match the care of its argument. There are incomplete sentences and phrases which simply do not connect to their subject matter, something that could have been resolved with some basic editing. More annoyingly, Hebrew text is poorly presented, with inappropriate line breaks and

frequent situations where text that was obviously meant to be in Hebrew is left in Roman characters. This frequency of this is simply unacceptable and detracts from the quality of an otherwise admirable book.

David G. Firth, Culver, England

*Fixing the Indemnity:
The Life and Work of Sir George Adam Smith
(1856-1942)
(Paternoster Theological Monographs)
Iain D. Campbell*

Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2004, xx + 256 pp.,
£19.99, pb, ISBN 1-84227-228-4

SUMMARY

Fixing the Indemnity is the first critical and complete biography of Sir George Adam Smith, a famous Scottish Presbyterian pastor and professor who was a major promoter of historical criticism in the late Victorian and Edwardian era's battle over the Bible. A fine intellectual biography largely focussed on Smith's still influential scholarly publications and his attempt to wed evangelical faith with critical methods, Iain Campbell suggests Smith's contributions, even apart from their historical importance, raises important questions for the contemporary church about the danger of making the gospel accountable to critical methods as well as the nature of honest scholarship within a confessionally-faithful church.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Fixing the Indemnity ist die erste kritische und vollständige Biographie über Sir George Adam Smith, einem berühmten schottischen presbyterianischen Pastor und Professor, der ein wichtiger Förderer der historischen Kritik in den Schlachten um die Bibel in der spätviktorianischen und edwardianischen Ära war. Es handelt sich um eine gediegene Biographie, die sich größtenteils auf Smiths immer noch einflussreiche wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen und auf seinen Versuch, evangelikalen Glauben mit kritischen Methoden zu verheiraten, konzentriert. Iain Campbells Anregung lautet, dass Smiths Beiträge auch abgesehen von ihrer historischen Bedeutung wichtige Fragen für die heutige Kirche in Bezug auf die Gefahr aufwerfen, das Evangelium vor den Richterstuhl kritischer Methoden zu zerren und in Bezug auf das Wesen ehrlicher Wissenschaft innerhalb einer bekennnistreuen Kirche.

RÉSUMÉ

Voici la première biographie critique et complète de Sir George Adam Smith, un célèbre pasteur et professeur presbytérien écossais, qui a été l'un des promoteurs principaux de la critique historique dans le débat concernant la Bible à la fin de l'époque victorienne. C'est une biographie intelligente qui fait une large place aux publications académiques de Smith, lesquelles exercent encore une certaine influence, et qui s'efforcent de marier une foi évangélique

à l'emploi de méthodes critiques. Campbell fait valoir qu'à côté de leur importance historique, les travaux de Smith soulèvent des questions importantes pour l'Église d'aujourd'hui, notamment concernant le danger d'assujettir l'Évangile aux méthodes critiques ou encore quant à la nature d'un travail académique honnête effectué dans le cadre confessionnel d'une Église fidèle.

* * * *

The Scottish Presbyterian professor George Adam Smith (1856-1942) boasted in 1899 that modern criticism had conquered the traditional theories of the Bible's inspiration and authority. 'It only remains to fix the amount of the indemnity' (*Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament*, London, 1901, p. 72). In Iain Campbell's engaging biography of Smith, this brash claim justifies the importance of an historical study as well as begs for a fresh theological assessment of the indemnity's cost. For Smith emerges from Campbell's study as a pivotal figure in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century campaign to alter traditional notions of Scripture: over a long career as pastor, professor, and university principal, he largely persuaded his own denomination, as well as much of the English-speaking evangelical world, that historical criticism could secure a Bible that would powerfully speak the gospel to the modern age. And, Campbell is able to draw on current biblical scholarship to prove that Smith's claim of total victory was premature, and that the indemnity – far from being fixed – is under constant negotiation as evangelical churches struggle to balance fidelity to traditional confession and dogma with honest scholarship.

Fixing the Indemnity is characterized by clear, chronological analysis of Smith's life and contribution to church and academy against the backdrop, helpfully reconstructed, of the social and ecclesial upheaval in Britain c.1880-1935. Initial chapters recount Smith's upbringing and seminary education within the evangelical Free Church of Scotland. Of signal importance at this stage of his life was the impact of the 1873-74 Moody Revival upon his heart, and the equally strong effect of German higher criticism upon his head. Indeed, Campbell interprets young Smith's commitment to an experiential, non-dogmatic evangelicalism as being reinforced by the new scholarly reconstructions of the Old Testament as the historical record of Israel's developing experience of God. A thoroughly historical approach to Scripture, Smith discovered, could pry the gospel free from dead dogma and yesterday's creed and let it be heard and felt afresh in the living history of God's people, in Bible times or now. Smith's espousal of what became known as 'believing criticism' is then traced through chapters detailing a successful pastorate in Aberdeen, a professorship in Glasgow that permitted scholarly and semi-popular dissemination of his views, and finally his long principalship of the University of Aberdeen. While *Fixing the Indemnity* foremost describes and assesses Smith's still influential contribution to biblical scholar-

ship, Campbell strikes a good balance between detailed examination of Smith's significant academic work, e.g. his commentary on Isaiah (1888-1892) and *Historical Geography of the Holy Land* (1894), his church work, civic duties, and a remarkable personal life which included a knighthood and royal chaplaincy. Two chapters are interspersed into the chronological narrative: one assesses Smith's groundbreaking contribution to the study of the historical – indeed, theological – geography of the Holy Land; the other takes up Smith's activity in the First World War, especially as a voice giving theological justification to Britain's war aims.

An impressive handling of primary source documents, particularly Smith's unpublished papers, makes this study the only critical and complete biography of the subject. It will be of profit to historians of modern British church history as well as Old Testament scholars interested in the history of their discipline. However, the theological intent motivating this book calls out too for attention. The theologically conservative author respects Smith's desire to hold together faith and scholarship but frankly assesses as pyrrhic the victory of Smith and his generation's believing criticism. Campbell lets the unresolved problems he finds raised by Smith's aims pose questions to the contemporary church: can a Bible reconstructed according to historical critical methods bear the weight of the gospel? Does modern criticism, even when it wishes (as with Smith) to recover a relevant and living Bible for the church, inevitably pull Scripture out of the pew and into the academy? What should be the relationship between creed or church confession and criticism? Surprisingly, Campbell makes no reference to the flurry of canonical or theological approaches to the Bible published in the past few decades, nor to the ways of approaching the relationship between church confession and historical contextuality that refuse either absolute status. Yet, both tendencies, each in their own way, mitigate somewhat the battle depicted in *Fixing the Indemnity* between evangelical commitment to the faith 'once delivered' and the challenges posed by modern thought. But these caveats are precisely the sort of response Campbell wants to encourage in his thought-provoking study of a man whose legacy is still very much with us.

Todd Statham, Winsen, Germany

What are They Saying about the Historical Jesus?

David B. Gowler

New York: Paulist Press, 2007, x + 190 pp.,
\$14.95, pb, ISBN 978-0-8091-445-7

SUMMARY

Gowler surveys and critiques the current state of historical Jesus research. He rapidly summarizes the 'modern period' and the 'continuing quest'. The longest chapter reviews the work of the Jesus Seminar and its critics. Gowler's sum-

maries are concise and highlight the major contributions of many different scholars. He consistently suggests that the best path forward will focus on the sociological context of Jesus' life and work. The book would work well in an undergraduate class.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Gowler gibt einen kritischen Überblick über den gegenwärtigen Stand der Forschung zum historischen Jesus. Er fasst die „moderne Periode“ und die „weitergehende Frage“ schnell zusammen. Das längste Kapitel bespricht die Arbeit des Jesus-Seminars und seiner Kritiker. Gowler's Zusammenfassungen sind prägnant heben die Hauptbeiträge vieler unterschiedlicher Gelehrter hervor. Er regt durchgängig an, dass sich der zukunftsreichste Weg auf den soziologischen Kontext des Lebens und Wirkens Jesu konzentrieren wird. Das Buch würde sich gut für die Arbeit in unteren Semestern eignen.

RÉSUMÉ

Gowler fait une présentation critique de l'état de la recherche sur le Jésus historique. Il résume rapidement la « période moderne » et la façon dont la « quête du Jésus historique » se poursuit. Un long chapitre passe en revue les travaux du séminaire sur Jésus et les réponses de ses critiques. Les présentations sont concises et mettent en valeur les contributions majeures de nombreux spécialistes. Il indique que la meilleure voie d'approche pour progresser à l'avenir est de s'intéresser au contexte sociologique de la vie et de l'œuvre de Jésus.

* * * *

Gowler's review of the current state of historical Jesus studies quickly and easily brings the student up to speed. The first two chapters summarize the 'modern period' and the 'continuing quest' (often called the 'New Quest') and the third focuses on the Jesus Seminar and its critics. In the remaining four chapters, Gowler reviews several contributions by key scholars of the last quarter century. The book concludes with a 'Further Reading' section.

The first two chapters cover the 'modern period' and the 'continuing quest.' The questions raised in the modern period and its collapse provide the background for the contemporary debate. Gowler's survey is concise and helpful as he highlights the basic questions that drove research during these times.

In the third chapter, Gowler turns to the Jesus Seminar and its major advocates and critics. He seeks to balance the critique of the Jesus Seminar with an appreciation of their work. He outlines well the methods and conclusions of the Jesus Seminar and summarizes the work of R.W. Funk and M. Borg. The second half of the chapter reviews the responses to the Jesus Seminar offered by L.T. Johnson, B. Witherington, and N.T. Wright. Gowler appears to think that most of these critiques missed the mark. He is certainly correct to note that criticism based on one's academic post is misleading, but one's own religious upbringing does affect one's reading of the text, especially if one is moving away from

it. In his desire to reject misplaced criticisms, Gowler does not fully appreciate the critiques of the Jesus Seminar offered by these scholars.

The last four chapters summarize several trajectories from the last quarter century. Under the title 'The Eschatological Prophet and the Restoration of Israel' (chapter four), Gowler reviews the work of E.P. Sanders, D. Allison, and P. Fredrikson. Each of these, in some manner, highlights the apocalyptic ideas ascribed to Jesus and his actions. None of these scholars, according to Gowler, give enough attention to the sociological factors.

Gowler turns in chapter five to J.D. Crossan. He reviews Crossan's many contributions in temporal order, which enables the reader to see the development in Crossan's thought. He notes in the conclusion that the major weakness of Crossan's work is his dismissal of apocalyptic images.

In chapter six, 'The Elijah-like Eschatological Prophet', Gowler summarizes the work of J.P. Meier by highlighting the major issues addressed in each of Meier's volumes. He criticizes Meier's reliance on literary evidence and the historical-critical method at the expense of other methods. He also thinks the claim that Jesus presented himself as Elijah 'is explicitly contradicted' by other texts (p.120).

The final chapter focuses on G. Theissen and W.R. Herzog II. Both scholars give more attention to the social contexts in which Jesus lived. The chapter concludes with a note about some other scholars whose works could not be discussed. Gowler uses this to reinforce his critique of the historical-critical method by appealing for other methods and perspectives.

A theme that runs throughout the book is the quest to make the historical Jesus relevant. Gowler explains in the Preface (p.ix) that his own quest for the historical Jesus has driven much of his thought, and the book concludes with an appeal to the reader to make Jesus relevant (p.144). The historical Jesus must fit his sociological context, but he will also be applicable, mainly through challenging, today's culture.

As with any book that summarizes scholarly debates, there are always some problems. By situating Wright in the chapter on the Jesus Seminar, Gowler gives a misleading impression about Wright, namely, that he was directed solely at and motivated by the Jesus Seminar and, furthermore, he underestimates Wright's influence on present and future historical Jesus studies.

The book often, especially in the later chapters, has the feeling of several book reviews strung together. Well this helps one to know the content of a scholar's books, a more carefully crafted summary of the scholar's views would be helpful.

Gowler explains in the Conclusion that a more accurate account of the historical Jesus will focus on his relationship to and message for the poor. This theme reappears throughout his critiques of other scholars, but it rarely is subjected to any critique. It would be helpful for the reader if Gowler had noted some of the responses

to his own portrait of the historical Jesus rather than giving the misleading impression that it will solve the dilemmas of the debate.

Covering the vast amount of historical Jesus studies is no easy task, and some scholars must be left out. Gowler is fully aware of this problem, and he has picked many of the most important figures. The book would work well in an undergraduate class, especially if the instructor can include several other scholars who were passed over.

Jason Maston, Aberdeen, Scotland

'Works of the Law' at Qumran and in Paul

New Testament Monographs 13

Jacqueline C.R. de Roo

Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2007, xiv + 280 pp., £60, hb, ISBN 978-1-905048-30-4

SUMMARY

In this revision of her doctoral thesis, de Roo argues that 'works of the law' in the Qumran scrolls refers to one's obedience to the Torah which has atoning value. For Paul, though, the phrase is negative and describes one's reliance on Abraham's obedience as a means of atonement. Galatians and Romans are read with this more precise meaning in mind. In Romans Paul critiques the claim that one can trust in Abraham's obedience because, Paul argues, Abraham was a sinner like the rest of humanity. In Galatians he contends that Abraham's blessing is not the atonement offered by his obedience, but his seed, Jesus Christ. Pauline and Qumran scholars particularly will be interested in this book.

RÉSUMÉ

Dans cette révision de sa thèse de doctorat, Jacqueline de Roo plaide que l'expression « œuvres de la loi » se réfère, dans les textes de Qoumrân, à une obéissance à la Torah ayant valeur expiatoire. Pour Paul, cette expression désigne quelque chose de négatif, la confiance placée en l'obéissance d'Abraham vue comme moyen d'expiation. Elle lit donc les épîtres aux Galates et aux Romains avec ce sens précis en tête. Dans cette seconde épître, Paul critiquerait l'idée qu'on puisse compter sur l'obéissance d'Abraham en arguant qu'Abraham était un pécheur comme le reste de l'humanité. Dans l'épître aux Galates, il soutiendrait que la bénédiction d'Abraham ne consiste pas en son obéissance qui aurait valeur expiatoire, mais en sa descendance, Jésus-Christ. Les spécialistes de la littérature paulinienne et de Qoumrân trouveront intérêt à ce livre.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In dieser Überarbeitung seiner Dissertation argumentiert Roo, dass „Werke des Gesetzes“ in den Qumran-Schriftrollen auf den Gehorsam gegenüber der Tora verweisen, der sühnenden Wert hat. Für Paulus ist die Phrase jedoch negativ besetzt und beschreibt den Zusammenhang, dass sich jemand auf den Gehorsam Abrahams als Sühnemit-

tel verlässt. Der Galater- und der Römerbrief werden mit dieser präziseren Bedeutung gelesen. Im Römerbrief kritisiert Paulus die Behauptung, man könne auf Abrahams Gehorsam vertrauen, weil Abraham, so Paulus, wie der Rest der Welt ein Sünder war. Im Galaterbrief vertritt er die Ansicht, dass Abrahams Segen nicht in der Sühne besteht, die durch seinen Gehorsam angeboten wird, sondern dass die Sühne in seinem Samen, Jesus Christus, besteht. Das Buch wird besonders Paulus- und Qumranexperten interessieren.

* * * *

In this book, a revision of her doctoral thesis, de Roo enters the on-going debate about the meaning of the small, yet crucial phrase 'works of the law'. She provides an intriguing way past the stalled debate that recognizes the reality and intensity of Paul's polemic against 'works of the law'. The book has eight chapters and two appendices.

In the Qumran literature, the phrase occurs twice (4Q174 3 7; 4QMMT C 27) and, according to de Roo, is alluded to in CD 5.5-6a (see chapter 1). 'Works of the law' refers to one's obedience to the law in general, both ritual and ethical actions (pp.94-95). It is not describing works prescribed by the law, but works performed in obedience to the law (pp.82-94). She rejects the more common interpretation that links 4QMMT C 27 with the *halakhot* outlined in section B. More significantly, de Roo connects the phrase with atonement practices at Qumran. She highlights the many statements about obedience functioning as atonement for one's sins and those of other community members as well as those outside the community (pp.33-39). Enabled by God, the community obeys the Torah thereby bringing about atonement for sin.

While the phrase is positive for the Qumran community, in Paul's letters it is negative. Chapter 5 is the key to de Roo's thesis. Here she argues that Abraham provides the crucial, previously missed point to understanding Paul's polemic against 'works of the law'. For Paul's contemporaries, Abraham adhered perfectly to God's law, and his obedience had atoning affects for his descendants. In many early Jewish traditions, de Roo maintains, Abraham functions as a redeemer figure. For Paul, though, Abraham is a sinner, a transgressor of God's law, just like the rest of humanity. 'Works of the law' in Paul's letters, according to de Roo, refers neither to one's attempt to acquire salvation by one's own obedience nor to Jewish cultural distinctions, such as circumcision, food laws, or Sabbath regulations. Rather, the term refers to one's reliance on Abraham's obedience as atonement for one's own sins.

All scholars have recognized the importance of Abraham for Paul's argument in both Galatians and Romans, but de Roo's suggestion elevates Abraham's significance, for she finds the polemic against Abraham as a redeemer running throughout the argument of both letters. In Romans, Paul argues against the idea that Abraham was

perfectly obedient, that is, without sin. He maintains that, like the rest of humanity, Abraham was a sinner and in need of a saviour, who, for Paul, is Christ Jesus (chapters 6-7). In Galatians, Paul focuses on the opponents' claim that circumcision would unite one with Abraham, thereby allowing one to participate in his blessing. Paul claims, instead, that Abraham's blessing is his 'seed', Jesus Christ, the true redeemer (chapter 8).

De Roo's emphasis on Abraham in Paul's argument is to be welcomed, but it is precisely at this point that her suggestion seems to collapse. Her contention that Romans 2 is directed against the idea of Abraham as a redeemer (p.163) lacks evidence. Mentioning circumcision and the law does not mean one was relying on Abraham's works. Moreover, if Paul is combating the idea of relying on Abraham's obedience for atonement, then one would expect a more direct contrast between Abraham and Christ, for, in de Roo's suggestion, they offer opposing means to salvation. It is doubtful also that Paul is alluding to the *Akedah* traditions in Galatians 3.14 (see pp.140-42).

In spite of these reservations, de Roo's work highlights the importance of obedience for Paul's Jewish contemporaries and Paul's insistence that salvation comes only through Jesus Christ. Scholars interested in Paul and his relation to his Jewish contemporaries will benefit from this work.

Jason Maston, Aberdeen, Scotland

***Jesus as the Eschatological Davidic Shepherd:
Studies in the Old Testament, Second Temple
Judaism, and in the Gospel of Matthew***

Young S. Chae

Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006, x + 446 pp., € 74.00,
pb, ISBN 3161488768

SUMMARY

Chae analyzes the Davidic shepherd tradition in the Old Testament, Second Temple Judaism, and Matthew's Gospel. He seeks to show the light shed on Matthew by investigating the expectations created in Matthew's literary background as Second Temple literature fused eschatological traditions from Ezekiel 34-37 and related texts. This largely successful dissertation illustrates the importance of such material for Matthew. Chae offers fresh approaches to aspects of Matthean Christology, including the 'healing son of David' tradition.

RÉSUMÉ

Chae étudie la tradition du berger davidique dans l'Ancien Testament, dans le judaïsme du second temple et dans l'Évangile de Matthieu. Il s'efforce de montrer que les traditions eschatologiques développées dans la littérature du judaïsme du second temple, à partir d'Ézéchiel 34-37 et d'autres textes similaires, ont nourri des attentes qui faisaient partie de l'arrière plan littéraire de Matthieu et jet-

tent un éclairage sur certains aspects de son évangile. Cette thèse en grande partie convaincante montre l'importance de ces textes pour Matthieu. Chae propose de nouvelles pistes pour aborder certains aspects de la christologie matthéenne, et en particulier la tradition du « fils de David qui guérit ».

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Chae analysiert die davidische Hirtentradition im Alten Testament, im Judentum der Zeit des zweiten Tempels und im Matthäusevangelium. Er versucht zu zeigen, welches Licht auf das Matthäusevangelium fällt, wenn man die Erwartungen untersucht, die im literarischen Hintergrund erzeugt werden, in dem die Literatur aus der Zeit des zweiten Tempels die eschatologischen Traditionen aus Hesekiel 34-37 und ähnlichen Texten. Diese im großen und ganzen überzeugende Dissertation illustriert die Wichtigkeit dieses Materials für Matthäus. Chae bietet neue Ansätze zu Aspekten der matthäischen Christologie, inklusive der Tradition vom „heilenden Davidssohn“.

* * * *

This wide-ranging tome is the published version of Chae's 2004 doctoral dissertation from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, supervised by E. J. Schnabel. Chae explores the significance of Jewish shepherd traditions for Matthew's Gospel and its relevance for determining the origin of Matthew's 'healing Son of David.'

The first chapter analyzes OT and ANE shepherd traditions, concluding with a helpful review of the differences between ANE and OT shepherds and insisting that the eschatological redemptive aspects of YHWH's shepherding, including forgiveness and healing, are all but unique against their ANE background (31). Particularly detailed attention is paid to Ezekiel 34-37, Micah 2-5, and Zechariah 9-14. While appropriately accounting for variety, Chae argues for a surprisingly unified OT vision of restoration by means of shepherd-like defense, re-gathering and care under a divinely-appointed Davidic ruler (90-93). This synthesis provides a general answer to the question, 'How would Israel recognize the arrival of the promised eschatological Shepherd and God's Davidic Shepherd-Appointee?'

The second chapter shows a developing 'Davidic shepherd tradition' in Second Temple Judaism, particularly in the Qumran literature, *Psalms of Solomon*, and *Animal Apocalypse*. Chae argues that Ezekiel 34-37 is the most critical text for the period, exercising influence on Zechariah and 2TJ as a whole as Judaism built a unified shepherd tradition linked by various shepherding metaphors.

Chae then investigates the 'indelible mark' left on the first Gospel by this Jewish shepherd tradition in chapter three. Chae focuses interpretation on 'Matthew's narrative' while consistently defending historicity. For Matthean studies, Chae's most interesting theory is advanced as he presents the citations and allusions in 9:36; 10:6, 16; 15:24; 25:31-46 and 'metalepsis' in 7:15, 12:11-12,

and 18:10-14 as part of a network of sustained interaction with the OT and 2TJ shepherd traditions. This is not limited to one particular strand, but includes the Davidic shepherd tradition introduced by the citation of Micah 5:3-4 in Matt 2:6; the leadership of Israel as good or bad shepherds (introduced by the citation of Zech 13:7 in Matt 26:31); and the Ezekiel tradition in which 'Jesus assumes the role of YHWH the eschatological shepherd' (245). Compassion, leadership, healing, mission to (all) Israel and the nations, and (once Zechariah is fully factored in) suffering and affliction are all part of the shepherding program Matthew finds in the OT texts. These facets are often present in contemporaneous literature.

Chapter four covers Matthean christological passages where the shepherd theme runs beneath the surface. Some of Chae's work here is particularly insightful: the shepherd motif sheds light on Jesus' table fellowship with sinners in 9:10-13 and the conflict over this fellowship with the Pharisees (he often engages historical Jesus material, and to good effect in this instance). In Matthew 12, the Pharisees are cast as failed shepherds who would leave a sheep in a pit, rather than care for it as a shepherd should. He argues extensively and persuasively in this chapter that the Davidic shepherd tradition provides the best background to the 'therapeutic son of David' tradition, contra competing interpretations (e.g., Solomonic exorcist and suffering servant).

Chapter five concludes by analyzing the influence of the tradition in the conclusion of Matthew's gospel (Matthew 27 and 28). The bold foray into a possible Davidic shepherd background for the Great Commission, while not the last word on the subject, represents an important and successful new direction relative to previous scholarship. The sixth chapter relates Matthew's use of the tradition to the structure and narrative flow of the gospel, and is followed by a helpful conclusion including suggested points for future research. Chae summarises, 'Matthew communicates Jesus as the Shepherd, namely, as the eschatological shepherd (YHWH), the smitten shepherd, the Davidic Shepherd/King/Judge in the future, and currently the Davidic Shepherd Prince/Leader/Teacher for the eschatological one flock comprised of both Israel and the nations' (386).

The common nature of imagery such as sheep, lamb, staff or herd may cast some doubt as to whether Matthew engages in a unified portrayal of the fulfillment of the shepherd tradition. But Chae has provided strongly suggestive if not final evidence for the 'thematic coherence of Matthew's interaction' with the 'Jewish Davidic Shepherd tradition' (233-4). Whether this is 'likely' as Chae thinks will depend largely on the reader's judgment; this reviewer finds it highly probable. I am not fully convinced of every detail (that Matthew employs the shepherd tradition in 26:32; nor am I convinced of his association of the tradition with 27:51-53; see above). But in large measure Chae's thesis is persuasive on a host of fronts, particularly in the association of

various Matthean passages with a strong eschatological Davidic shepherd tradition. The text is pockmarked with errors (nearly one in every three pages by my count) due in part to the difficulties in writing a dissertation in a foreign language, yet few if any are fatal, and Chae is generally strong in his grasp of the language. This is a sweeping text useful or even vital for those interested in Matthean Christology and Davidic sonship; the OT and 2TJ shepherd tradition; various passages throughout Matthew including the shepherd/sheep passages (perhaps especially chapters 9-10 as a unit), 27:51-53, and the Great Commission; and other Matthean themes including Jews and Gentiles, exile and restoration, and the conflict between Jesus and the Jewish leadership.

Jason B. Hood, Dingwall, Scotland

Challenging Perspectives on the Gospel of John (WUNT II/219)

John Lierman, ed.

Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006, XII + 369 pp.,

€ 69.00, pb, ISBN 978-3-16-149113-9

SUMMARY

Challenging Perspectives on the Gospel of John contains twelve essays that arose out of the Cambridge Tyndale Fellowship New Testament Group, 2002. The essays call into question a number of commonly held views in Johannine studies or offer new suggestions for understanding the Gospel, its origin, and/or context. As such, the essays address a broad range of issues relating to the Gospel of John, including questions of Messianism, John's relationship with Luke, the reception of the Gospel in the second century, and connections between the emperor and Jesus. Like most collections of essays, they are not necessarily coherent as a collection, however, they raise a number of points that may require further study and that will have to be reckoned with in future scholarship.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Challenging Perspectives on the Gospel of John enthält zwölf Essays, die aus der neutestamentlichen Gruppe der Tyndale Fellowship heraus in Cambridge anlässlich ihres Treffens 2002 entstanden. Die Essays stellen eine Anzahl üblicher Ansichten aus der johanneischen Forschung in Frage oder bieten neue Anregungen an, das Evangelium, seinen Ursprung und/oder Kontext zu verstehen. Die Essays widmen sich einem breiten Spektrum an Fragen zum Johannesevangelium wie dem Messianismus, der Beziehung des Johannesevangeliums zum Lukasevangelium, der Rezeption des Johannesevangeliums im zweiten Jahrhundert sowie den Verbindungen zwischen dem Imperator und Jesus. Wie die meisten Aufsatzsammlungen bilden die Aufsätze kein kohärentes Ganzes, aber sie werfen eine Anzahl Punkte auf, die weiter verfolgt werden könnten und mit denen man im Voranschreiten der Forschung rechnen muss.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage contient douze articles émanant du groupe de travail sur le Nouveau Testament de la Tyndale Fellowship, en 2002. Ils remettent en question un certain nombre de points de vue communément répandus dans les études johanniques et proposent de nouvelles pistes concernant l'interprétation du quatrième Évangile, son origine et son contexte. Un large éventail de sujets y sont abordés en rapport avec l'Évangile de Jean, en particulier, les questions du messianisme, du rapport entre Jean et Luc, de la réception de cet Évangile au II^e siècle, et les rapports entre l'empereur et Jésus. Comme dans la plupart des ouvrages collectifs, les articles ne forment pas nécessairement une collection cohérente, mais ils ouvrent des pistes qui appellent des études plus approfondies et dont on devra tenir compte dans les travaux académiques à venir.

* * * *

Challenging Perspectives on the Gospel of John contains twelve essays that arose out of the Cambridge Tyndale Fellowship New Testament Group, 2002. The essays call into question a number of commonly held views in Johannine studies and offer some different suggestions for understanding the Gospel, its origin, and/or context. As such, the essays address a broad range of issues relating to the Gospel of John.

David Wenham's essay 'Paradigms and Possibilities in the Study of John's Gospel' serves as an introduction, highlighting some of the consensus views that are challenged in the course of the book. His statement 'the unthinkable often needs rethinking' serves as an unofficial theme of the book (p. 5).

In 'The Johannine Sayings of Jesus and the Question of Authenticity', Peter Ensor argues extensively for authentic sayings of Jesus in John's Gospel. Ensor contends that there are sayings of Jesus in John that meet the criteria of coherence and dissimilarity for authenticity, even in sayings where the words and sense of the sayings are not paralleled in the Synoptic Gospels.

Richard Bauckham takes up the question of Palestinian Messianism in his 'Messianism According to the Gospel of John'. Responding to views that the Messianism of the Gospel of John reflects later (post-AD 70) understandings, he argues that John maintains a distinction between three expected eschatological figures: prophet, priest, and Davidic Messiah. Bauckham concludes that there is nothing in the Gospel to assume that John's Messianism is incompatible with pre-AD 70 understandings.

Andreas Köstenberger addresses the question of the Gospel's composition in 'The Destruction of the Second Temple and the Composition of the Fourth Gospel'. Köstenberger contends that the destruction of the temple is 'a most promising candidate for formative influence on the Fourth Gospel' (p. 93). Focusing on the way in which Jesus replaces the temple, he suggests that the Gospel of John was written to provide answers to Jews struggling with the loss of the temple.

In 'The Third Gospel? The Relationship of John and Luke Reconsidered', Andrew Gregory questions the consensus view on the relationship between John and Luke. He argues that it is possible that John made use of Luke, Luke made use of John, or that they both made use of a common tradition. Although either relationship is possible, Gregory concludes that this should have no bearing for or against John as a source for the historical Jesus.

The sixth essay 'The Fourth Gospel in the Second Century: The Myth of Orthodox Johannophobia' by Charles Hill concentrates on the question of whether or not the Gospel of John was avoided by 'orthodox' writers in the second century. Hill shows that there is evidence of use of the Gospel by 'orthodox' writers in the earlier part of the second century, which is before known use of the Gospel by heterodox writers. Thus, the Gospel of John never had to be 'saved' from the heterodox.

Mark Stibbe adds to his work in narrative criticism with 'Telling the Father's Story: The Gospel of John as Narrative Theology'. He outlines some previous approaches to studying the Father in John before he traces various descriptions of God in the Gospel. As a result of this narrative approach, Stibbe argues that John presents God in a way that highlights his filial relationship and yet maintains his mysterious otherness.

In another narrative essay 'Narrative Theology in John 1-5', Steve Motyer discusses various ways of understanding the term 'narrative theology' and also the narrator's role as witness. He draws attention to the use of 'we' in 1.14, 16; 21.24 and argues that 'the narrative presents that cumulative experience that leads the 'we'-narrator to the testimony of 1:14' (p. 209, emphasis original).

John Lierman highlights the importance of Moses in 'The Mosaic Pattern of John's Christology'. Noting numerous similarities between Jesus and Moses, he contends that there is no evidence that Jesus is presented as a Davidic Messiah in John but rather as a Mosaic king.

Gary Burge in 'Revelation and Discipleship in St. John's Gospel' speaks of the Gospel as a drama and emphasises the role of the narrator as the reader's mentor. The reader is often unable to fully comprehend meaning, similar to the characters in the Gospel. Revelation experiences and illumination are central for discipleship, and it is only through the Holy Spirit that they can be understood.

Gabi Renz presents another narrative study in 'Nicodemus: An Ambiguous Disciple? A Narrative Sensitive Investigation'. Renz reasons that the Gospel's presentation of Nicodemus can be either positive or negative and that the reader is left to make a decision concerning Nicodemus. At the same time, he argues that all readers recognise that a right response to Jesus is necessary for discipleship.

In the final essay 'Jesus, the Emperor, and the Gospel According to John', Bill Salier maintains that the Gospel of John presents a polemic against Caesar and the imperial cult. He argues the polemic exists in the Gospel to

serve as pastoral encouragement for those who lived in the context of the cult.

As can be seen by these brief summaries, the essays address a broad range of issues and questions. Like most collections of essays, they are not necessarily coherent as a group, but they do challenge a number of consensus views in Johannine studies. Some of the questions addressed by these essays may require further investigation and at the least some rethinking of the majority view.

Benjamin Reynolds, Aberdeen, Scotland

***The Saving Righteousness of God:
Studies on Paul, Justification, and the New
Perspective
(Paternoster Biblical Monographs)***

Michael F. Bird

Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2007, xvii + 230 pp.,
£19.99, pb, ISBN 978-1-84227-465-1

SUMMARY

Bird provides an insightful synthesis regarding Paul's understanding of righteousness and justification, with a fresh emphasis on resurrection and incorporation. Writing from a reformed perspective, he then presents an irenic synthesis of traditionally reformed and New Perspective readings, while offering a critique of the New Perspective. He concludes with a needed negative assessment of the scorn poured out on N.T. Wright by those in the Reformed tradition.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Bird bietet eine Synthese zu Paulus' Verständnis von Gerechtigkeit und Rechtfertigung, die reich an Einsichten ist und eine neue Betonung auf die Auferstehung und die Eingliederung legt. Er schreibt aus einer reformierten Perspektive und präsentiert dann eine vermittelnde Synthese aus traditionell reformierten Leseweisen und solchen aus der „New Perspektive“. Er schließt mit einer dringend nötigen negativen Bewertung des Hohnes und Spottes, den Autoren aus der reformierten Tradition über N. T. Wright ausgegossen haben.

RÉSUMÉ

Bird offre ici une synthèse intelligente quant aux notions pauliniennes de la justice et de la justification, en mettant l'accent de manière originale sur les thèmes de la résurrection et de l'incorporation. Se situant dans la perspective réformée, il présente une synthèse irénique de la compréhension réformée traditionnelle et de la « nouvelle perspective sur Paul », tout en exprimant ses points de désaccord avec cette dernière. Il conclut en exprimant sa désapprobation quant au mépris dont certains qui appartiennent à la tradition réformée ont fait preuve envers N.T. Wright.

* * * *

With debates about righteousness and the New Perspective on Paul (hereafter NPP) raging in evangelical circles, Mike Bird has offered a welcomed monograph seeking to help calm the storm. Bird, who currently lectures at Highland Theological College in Scotland, provides a critical, exegetical analysis of righteousness and justification in Paul's letters in light of current debates. As he sets forward his understanding of God's saving righteousness in Paul, he critiques elements of the NPP but also distinguishes the positive aspects of NPP thought. He then incorporates those positive aspects within more traditional reformed readings. Bird argues that Paul's forensic justification is primarily soteriological but that it cannot be separated from the sociological effects. Thus, he writes: 'According to Paul, faith *alone* in Jesus is the basis of eschatological vindication; and faith *alone* marks out the true people of God.' (p. 182, cf. p. 1). His audience is the academic community at large but with an eye to those specifically within the reformed tradition where the orthodoxy of NPP readings and authors has been repeatedly called into question. Accordingly, this monograph serves as a mediating position and responds to Guy Waters' and others' works against the NPP and N.T. Wright.

Bird's book is roughly divided into two parts. In the first part, he provides his general perspective on justification and the righteousness of God without much direct focus on the NPP. These chapters include his summary position on key debates about righteousness (chapter 2), 'the significance that Jesus' resurrection has for Paul's understanding of justification' (p. 4) (chapter 3), and the importance of union with Christ as *incorporated* righteousness over and above *imputed* righteousness (chapter 4). The second half of the book interacts much more directly with NPP issues. These chapters include an evaluation of the weaknesses and strengths of NPP readings (chapter 5), an argument that 'righteousness has both soteriological and social significance' (p. 5) (chapter 6), a discussion of works and eschatological vindication in light of Romans 2.12-16 (chapter 7), and, finally, he concludes with a critique of the castigation that N.T. Wright has received (chapter 8).

What makes Bird's work so compelling is that it challenges evangelical thinking on several fronts. In the first half of his book, his chapters on the significance of the resurrection and the role of incorporation or union with Christ focus on two of the most central aspects of Paul's soteriology often neglected by evangelicals. Bird does not downplay the role of the cross, but he clearly shows that any view of Christ's work that solely focuses on the cross is deficient. At the same time, his neologism 'incorporated righteousness' better captures the direction of Paul's language and helps us transcend old debates. In the second half of the book, he urges balanced and reasoned thinking with regard to the NPP. As with many debates, the best answer is most often a complex both/and rather than a simplistic either/or. Bird does a good job of incorporating the strengths of both

sides, presenting a helpful, irenic synthesis in this area. I find his critique of the tone of the reformed debate and critique of the charges against Wright beneficial and well timed. The bibliography reflects his balanced position where he topically presents central works both for and against the NPP. One typographical error of note within the bibliography is that Kevin Bush not Kevin Bywater is the webmaster of the NT Wright Page (<http://www.ntwrightpage.com>) (211).

Four of the seven main chapters – chapters three, four, five, and six – have been previously published in evangelical journals over the last several years. These republished chapters contain, I think, his most insightful work of the book, so it is beneficial to have them all in one place and set within a larger setting. However, this book does not suffer from the disjunction that collections of previously published essays sometimes do.

Bird has taken on the difficult task of presenting a nuanced position over against those who see issues as one-sided. This is especially helpful coming from one who is firmly within the reformed camp. However, this monograph is more important than just another discussion of NPP debates. It provides an insightful synthesis regarding Paul's understanding of justification, as his perceptive discussions of resurrection and incorporation show.

Benjamin C. Blackwell, Durham, England

***Paul and His World:
Interpreting the New Testament in Its Context*
Helmut Koester**

Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007, xi + 301 pp.,
_ 19.44, hb, ISBN 978-0-8006-3890-0

SUMMARY

Helmut Koester has dedicated his life to the study of the New Testament world. This collection, made up of over two dozen essays derived from research that spans nearly half a century, walks the reader through his life's work. Koester is most impressive when he is dealing with issues of methodology and the appropriate use of tools and materials that are often utilised by NT scholars – particularly textual criticism, epistolography and archaeology. Additionally, he takes interest in the sociological and political aspects of the NT writings. Although occasionally an argument or theory of his is found wanting or misguided, we are in his debt for this excellent volume with much wisdom inside.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Helmut Koester hat sein Leben dem Studium der Welt des Neuen Testaments gewidmet. Diese Sammlung, die aus mehr als zwei Dutzend Aufsätzen aus einer Spanne von fast einem halben Jahrhundert besteht, führt den Leser durch sein Lebenswerk. Koester ist am beeindruckendsten, wenn es um Fragen der Methodologie und des angemessenen Gebrauchs von Werkzeugen und Materialien geht,

die oft von Neutestamentlern benutzt werden – insbesondere Textkritik, Epistelverfassung und Archäologie. Zusätzlich ist er an den soziologischen und politischen Aspekten der neutestamentlichen Schriften interessiert. Obwohl zum Teil eine seiner Argumentationen oder Theorien unzulänglich oder irregeleitet erscheint, stehen wir für diesen exzellenten Band, der viel Weisheit enthält, in seiner Schuld.

RÉSUMÉ

Helmut Koester a consacré sa vie à l'étude du monde dans lequel est né le Nouveau Testament. Cet ouvrage reprend plus de deux douzaines d'articles qui proviennent de près d'un demi siècle de recherche et donnent un aperçu de l'œuvre d'une vie. Koester est à son meilleur lorsqu'il traite des questions de méthodologie, de l'usage approprié des outils et documents sur lesquels les spécialistes du Nouveau Testament prennent souvent appui, notamment la critique textuelle, la rhétorique épistolaire et l'archéologie. En outre, il s'intéresse aux aspects sociologiques et politiques des textes du Nouveau Testament. Bien qu'on rencontre à l'occasion chez cet auteur un argument déficient ou une théorie erronée, on doit saluer ici un ouvrage excellent offrant beaucoup de sagesse.

* * * *

This collection of essays by New Testament scholar Helmut Koester, of Harvard Divinity School, is remarkable in many ways. First of all, the various journal articles and endowed lectures from which the chapters are derived span over half of a century. Second, Koester's interests and expertise are manifold and include epistolography, archaeology, classics, textual criticism, pauline theology, and early Christianity. The chapters are broken down into three main sections: 'Reading Paul: His Letters and Their Interpretation', 'Reading Paul's World: The Cultural and Religious Environment', and 'Reading Early Christianity'. The first section (on Paul) is made up of nine essays and is almost entirely dominated by discussions of the Thessalonian epistles. He demonstrates such hermeneutical acumen and methodological shrewdness that his forthcoming commentary on these letters (for the Hermeneia series) is eagerly anticipated. In chapter five he exposes the numerous errors and conclusions made by New Testament scholars who misuse/misunderstand ostensibly relevant archaeological materials. In particular, he makes a case out of Robert Jewett's 'chilastic movement' theory (based on materials about the Kabiroi) in Thessaloniki and demonstrates that Jewett works from too little evidence which often is *later* than Paul's time and/or *outside* of Thessaloniki. Koester, time and time again, pleads for methodological acuity and eschews exaggeration or *non sequiter* conclusions. However, one wonders if he does not commit the same fallacy in his hypothesis (in chapter seven) that the book of Philippians is a compilation of three authentically pauline letter fragments that were edited together into its canonical form as a 'testimony' to the Apostle's death – a death Koester thinks may have actually taken

place in Philippi (77)?

One distinctive aspect of Koester's theological work is an interest in the social and political dimensions of Christianity – both at Paul's time and its implications for today. He admits that K. Stendahl's contra-Bultmannian approach has been very influential in his thinking on the impact of the gospel on the community. In the first essay of the book, 'Paul's Proclamation of God's Justice to the Nations' (first appearing in print in 2004), Koester repeatedly asserts that Paul's language of 'righteousness' should not be related primarily to 'piety and morality' (4) at the individual or existential level, but was intended to 'create righteousness and justice for people, for communities, and for nations' (8) – 'the building of the community of the new age' (11). Though a sociological focus aligns with other pauline scholars, Koester makes the mistake of drawing Paul's community boundaries so wide that the only criteria for inclusion is mutual love, respect and reciprocal servitude (13-14). This appears to gloss over some of the more weighty ethical injunctions (Gal. 5.19-21; 1 Cor. 6.9-10) in Paul and the seriousness of adherence to particular theological beliefs (1 Cor. 12.2-3). At the very least, though, Koester is right to emphasise that Paul frequently used political terms to (re-)describe theological realities offering a 'story of salvation' and testimony to a 'political vision of a new ecumenical community' (233). One wonders, though, precisely what Koester means by 'ecumenical'.

The reader will find the final essay most interesting as it is Koester's personal reflections on his academic journey beginning with his interest in training to become a Lutheran ministry following his release from an American POW camp in Marburg (1945) to his doctoral tutelage under Bultmann, to his research post at Heidelberg with Bornkamm, to his current post at Harvard. As Koester finishes his recollections, he notes that he has come a long way from his early intensive interest in 'demythologizing' the NT to his most worthwhile contributions – 'bringing archaeologists and students of early Christianity together' (289). This collection of over twenty essays is a demonstration of Koester's lifelong dedication to the field of New Testament scholarship and is loaded with numerous insights that will aid those who wish to understand Paul and his world better.

Nijay K. Gupta, Durham, England

***Paul and Conflict Resolution:
An Exegetical Study of Paul's Apostolic Paradigm
in 1 Corinthians 9***
(Paternoster Biblical Monographs)

Robinson Butarbutar

Milton Keynes, England: Paternoster, 2007, xviii + 275 pp., £19.99, pb, ISBN 1-84227-315-9

SUMMARY

The author aims to reconstruct the dispute over idol-food in Corinth and to interpret the function of Paul's defense in 1 Cor 9 within the larger context of 8.1-11.1. He argues that the dispute was provoked by the development of disproportionate societal boundaries, which were especially difficult to maintain in Corinth because of the pressure of the Imperial Cult. Set within this dispute, Paul's defense is integral to the coherence of 8.1-11.1 and primarily served as a pattern of self-denial to be imitated and applied in the existing Corinthian dispute. He also demonstrates that Paul's paradigm maintains the potential today for disassembling conflict in the contemporary church.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der Autor beabsichtigt, den Disput über Götzenopferfleisch in Korinth zu rekonstruieren und die Funktion der Verteidigung des Paulus in 1. Kor. 9 innerhalb des größeren Zusammenhanges von 8,1-11,1 zu interpretieren. Er argumentiert, dass der Disput durch die Entwicklung unverhältnismäßiger sozialer Grenzen provoziert wurde, die wegen des Drucks des imperialen Kultes in Korinth besonders schwer aufrecht zu erhalten waren. In diesen Disput eingeordnet ist Paulus' Verteidigung ein integraler Bestandteil der Kohärenz von 8,1-11,1 und dient primär als Beispiel der Selbstverleugnung, das im existierenden korinthischen Disput imitiert und angewendet werden sollte. Der Autor zeigt auch, dass Paulus' Paradigma immer noch das Potential hat, heute Konflikte in der gegenwärtigen Kirche auseinanderzuidividieren.

RÉSUMÉ

L'auteur tente de déterminer les circonstances et le contenu de la controverse sur les viandes sacrifiées aux idoles à Corinthe et s'interroge sur la fonction du chapitre 9 de la première épître, où Paul défend son ministère, dans son contexte discursif. Il considère que la controverse avait surgi à cause de l'émergence de barrières sociales disproportionnées que l'on avait du mal à maintenir à Corinthe suite aux pressions résultant de la propagation du culte de l'empereur. Dans ce cadre, la défense de l'apostolat paulinien fait partie intégrante du développement de 1 Corinthiens 8.1-11.1 : il sert essentiellement à donner un modèle de renoncement à soi que Paul invite ses lecteurs à imiter dans leur manière de gérer le conflit existant. L'auteur montre aussi que ce texte offre une voie d'approche capable de désamorcer les conflits au sein de l'Église aujourd'hui.

* * * *

This volume is the author's revised doctoral thesis com-

pleted at the South East Asia Graduate School of Theology. Butarbutar's primary objectives are to reconstruct the dispute over idol-food in Corinth and to interpret the function of Paul's 'defense' in 1 Cor 9 within the larger context of 8.1-11.1. Butarbutar also intends to demonstrate that the paradigm of self-denial presented in 1 Cor 9 maintains the potential today for disassembling any conflict in the contemporary church.

The book begins by considering the cause of the idol-food dispute in Corinth. Extensively interacting with Corinthian scholarship both past and present, Butarbutar rejects those interpretations which suggest the dispute was instigated by the entrance of extraneous doctrine or economic polarization. Instead Butarbutar attributes the impetus behind the dispute to the development of disproportionate societal boundaries. Thus, the 'weak' and 'strong' identified degrees of acculturation. Whereas the 'strong' recognized the insignificance of man-made idols and God's neutrality toward the consumption of idol-food at public feasts, the 'weak' resisted eating such meat, participating at such meals and preferred that the 'strong' abstain as well.

But such was no easy task for the Corinthians. Indebted largely to Bruce Winter's reconstruction of the Corinthian dispute, Butarbutar astutely argues that the maintenance of boundaries by Christians in Corinth was especially difficult due to the presence of the Imperial Cult and its prominence during the celebratory events surrounding the Isthmian Games, when idol-food was frequently on the menu. Moreover, because public honor depended largely upon patron-client ties, and support of the Imperial Cult affected one's patronage, refusal to participate in the cult and at related meals had severe social ramifications for the 'well to do'. As Butarbutar explains, 'Although [the Corinthians] may not have been forced to participate in the worship of the Imperial Cult... they themselves must have thought about their role in the city where the cult was being promoted. This would surely have caused them to think about their involvement in the activities associated with the worship of the cult, including dining, and about any food associated in one way or another with the worship of idols' (82-83).

Following from this reconstruction, Butarbutar investigates the purpose for Paul's 'defense' in 1 Cor 9. Whereas Butarbutar recognizes that Paul was rebutting (or anticipating) criticism for his refusal to receive financial support, he principally emphasizes the illustrative purpose of Paul's apologia; Paul's defense is primarily a paradigm to be imitated, rather than an argument for legitimacy and therefore is integral to the coherence of 8.1-11.1. Paul's analogy consisted of three components: 'forgoing rights' (9.4-18), 'self-enslavement' (9.19-23), and 'self-control' (9.24-27). Thus, Paul desired that the 'strong' Corinthians apply these virtues in their existing dispute. The book ends with a helpful example of the application of Paul's paradigm in a contemporary dispute within the Batak Christian Protestant Church, Indonesia. Herein Butarbutar testifies to the (re)unifying potential

of Paul's self-denying model for congregations today.

There is much to applaud in the book. Throughout Butarbutar demonstrates disciplined scholarship satisfactorily responding to his predecessors, while persuasively arguing his thesis. The book is very well researched, meticulously footnoted, and contains an impressive bibliography consisting of most influential works regarding 1 Corinthians. Moreover, in somewhat rare fashion Butarbutar manages to demonstrate the direct applicability of exegesis to the contemporary church.

Butarbutar's most original idea, however, is also his most unclear. Concerning the basis for Paul's refusal of support, Butarbutar explains, '[I]t is the kind of attitude that Paul brings to his gospel preaching that causes his refusal to exercise his rights to live off the gospel. It is therefore strictly a matter of perspective towards the gospel itself that makes Paul conduct his gospel proclamation in the way he has done' (163-164). Precisely what Butarbutar intends by 'attitude' and 'perspective' remains blurred; nowhere does he elaborate for the reader what it is that Paul perceived the gospel to be that would require its free proclamation. Presumably, Butarbutar suggests that Paul preached without recompense in order to experience self-denial and suffering firsthand. These features comprise the very nature of the cross and, for Butarbutar, the messenger must imitate the message. Although an intriguing theological insight, Butarbutar must expound here, especially concerning why Paul accepted support from some churches but not others, which Butarbutar comments upon only briefly (207-208).

Very few typos exist in the manuscript, but it should be mentioned that parts of the book read more smoothly than others. Awkward sentence constructions run throughout and Butarbutar frequently omits the definite and indefinite article when one or the other should appear (see the first paragraph, p. 30). But these criticisms in no way impede the overall strength of the book. Any scholar or student interested in the idol-food dispute, or any pastor seeking a biblical model for conflict solution, will find this volume a helpful companion.

John K. Goodrich, Durham, England

The Pauline Canon

Stanley E. Porter

Pauline Studies 1. Leiden: Brill, 2004.

XIII + 254 pp. cloth. 68 EUR. ISBN 90-04-13891-9

SUMMARY

This collection of eight essays provides a fine introduction to the nature of the collection of Paul's letters in the New Testament. It examines the origin, the composition, the extent and the significance of the *Corpus Paulinum*. The nature of the questions addressed becomes apparent from the first quotation below. The essays reflect evangelical and non-evangelical approaches. It is the first volume in

a promising new series called Pauline Studies (PAST).

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Diese Sammlung von acht Aufsätzen bietet eine gediegene Einführung in das Wesen der Sammlung der neutestamentlichen Paulusbriefe. Untersucht werden der Ursprung, die Komposition, der Umfang und die Bedeutung des *Corpus Paulinum*. Das Wesen der angesprochenen Fragen ist aus dem ersten Zitat unten ersichtlich. Die Aufsätze spiegeln evangelikale und nicht-evangelikale Ansätze wider. Der Band ist der erste in einer verheißungsvollen neuen Reihe namens Pauline Studies (PAST).

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage contient huit études et constitue une bonne introduction à la nature du recueil des lettres de Paul dans le Nouveau Testament. Il traite de l'origine, de la composition, de l'étendue et de la valeur du corpus paulinien. Les études reflètent des points de vue évangéliques et non évangéliques. C'est le premier volume d'une série sur Paul qui s'annonce prometteuse.

* * * *

The present volume is the first in a new series called *Pauline Studies* (PAST). Volume two is devoted to *Paul and His Opponents* (ed. S. E. Porter; PAST 2; Leiden: Brill, 2005; cf. my review in *Religion & Theology*, in print). Volume three addresses *Paul and His Theology* (PAST 3; Leiden: Brill, 2006). Further projected volumes will cover *Paul's World* (PAST 4, 2007) and *Paul: Jew, Greek, Roman* (PAST 5, 2008). Another series of five volumes has already been planned to extend the series further.

The exact number of letters of Paul in the New Testament has been a disputed issue in New Testament studies. While the canon contains thirteen letters ascribed to Paul and some scholars up to this date have defended the authenticity of all of them, most scholars only accept about seven of these letters as letters of Paul the apostle. But much more than that is at stake.

At the beginning Porter provides a short 'Introduction to the Study of the Pauline Canon' (1-3) starting with a list of the questions involved:

Did Paul write all of the letters ascribed to him in the NT? If he did, can we account for how these letters were preserved and compiled into the corpus that we now have? Did he write any other letters, of which we still have direct or indirect evidence, that are not in the canon but that bear examination? If we think that he did not write all of the letters, which ones did he write? How do we know that he did or did not write these letters? What criteria can we use to discuss this issue? For those that he did not write, how do we account for their having been written and included in what is now our canonical collection as found in the NT? How do we account for some of the problematic juxtapositions of ideas in the letters that we do have? If we think that Paul may have written some parts

of individual letters, but not all of them, how do we differentiate the parts that he wrote from the others? If Paul did not write all of the letters ascribed to him, what are the canonical, historical and even theological, implications of such a conclusion? (1)

Porter also introduces the essays of the volume. J. W. Aageson discusses 'The Pastoral Epistles, Apostolic Authority, and the Development of the Pauline Scriptures' (5-26). R. W. Wall examines 'The Function of the Pastoral Letters within the Pauline Canon of the NT: A Canonical Approach' (27-44). He gives a brief overview of the formation of the Pauline canon and applies a canonical approach to describe the function of the Pastoral epistles within the Pauline collection. Wall argues that 'only in consideration of this thirteen-letter whole, and not a fraction thereof, is a complete understanding of the Pauline regula fidei possible for Christian nurture' (36). Wall then describes the significance of the inclusion of the Pastorals with their ecclesiology and emphasis on the character of the Christian for the reconstruction of Paul's theology. Wall argues that 'the interpreter must steadfastly avoid the current practice of setting aside the three-letter collection of Pauline Pastorals as 'inauthentic' and accept their teaching as complementary for a holistic Pauline theology that is, in fact, authorized by the church's Scriptures' (37). The Pastorals function

to correct what I think is a dangerous tendency of the (especially) Protestant misreading of Paul, which demonizes good works as somehow subversive of the sinner's dependency on Christ's death for salvation. Further, the Pastorals' stress on the formation of a 'godly' character as the distinguishing mark of the faithful believer, who is then morally competent to perform 'good works', corrects another tendency of a (especially) Protestant misreading of Paul: namely the emphasis on teaching a saving orthodoxy to the exclusion of any instruction in a practical divinity that embodies confessed truth in the hard work of Christian charity and virtue. In this regard, too, the emphasis of the Pastorals brings a necessary balance to the whole of Scripture's Pauline teaching (44).

M.-É. Boismard's, 'Paul's Letter to the Laodiceans' (45-57, for the later extant Latin version see Harding's essay, 138f) suggests on the basis of many doublets in Colossians that the now lost letter to the Laodiceans of Col 4:16 has been incorporated into Colossians. The editor of the Pauline letter collection did not forget the letter to the Laodiceans, 'but combined it with the letter to the Colossians; consequently, it still exists, but in the form of *membra disiecta*, in a letter (Colossians) which we still possess. It was all the easier to do this since... the two letters were in part parallel and dealt with similar themes. The compiler thus fulfilled at the same time the wish expressed by Paul in Col 4:16: both letters were to be read by the same readers; that would be easier if they were combined to form a single letter' (45f). Boismard considers his reconstruction on the basis of Colossians as

an authentic letter of Paul.

In 'The Hellenistic Letter-formula and the Pauline Letter-scheme' (59-93), D. Dormeyer 'utilizes recent work in letter-form and rhetorical analysis (60-64) to explore issues of canon. He outlines several types of rhetorical techniques that are found in the individual letters and uses the criterion of these techniques to address questions of authorship and authenticity, and hence canonicity' (2f).

In 'When and How was the Pauline Canon Compiled?: An Assessment of Theories' (95-127) Porter surveys four theories on the origin of the Pauline canon. He distinguishes 'gradual collection' (argued by Zahn and Harnack), a 'lapsed interest' or Goodspeed-Knox's theory, a 'composite anti-Gnostic' or Schmithal's theory and a 'personal involvement' theory (Moule, Guthrie). Next Porter presents and critiques D. Trobisch's theory of the origin of the Pauline canon (*Paul's Letter Collection: Tracing the Origins*; Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1994). Finally he describes the common ground between such suggestions (the gathering of the Pauline corpus required personal involvement at some level, theories that require the least dissection of the individual letters have a better chance of being accepted as probable; the letters were probably gathered in a particular place):

In the light of the travelling possible during that time... it is not unlikely that someone could have gathered the letter collection that resulted (missing out some letters that were either no longer extant or thought not to be of value, perhaps because of their particularistic nature). It appears that such a process would have occurred early, resulting in the relative fixity of the contents of the manuscripts that contained Paul's letters and their order (123).

Porter suggests that Luke or Timothy could have been that compiler. Therefore, 'there is reasonable evidence so see the origin of the Pauline corpus during the latter part of Paul's life or shortly after his death, almost assuredly instigated by a close follower if not by Paul himself, and close examination of the early manuscripts with Paul's letters seems to endorse this hypothesis' (127).

In 'Disputed and Undisputed Letters of Paul' (129-68) M. Harding surveys a wider range of possible Pauline letters and writings, such as Hebrews, that have been suggested in the time of the ancient church as coming from Paul (129-36). Then Harding concentrates on the dispute over the thirteen-letter canon as we have it now. There are three categories of Pauline letters: undisputed, disputed and spurious letters. All Pauline letters outside the NT canon belong to this last category and they might be further categorised as non-canonical Pauline Pseudepigrapha. They consist of Laodiceans, 3 Corinthians and the collection of six letters of Paul to Seneca (138-44). Next Harding discusses pseudepigraphy in the early church (145-50); for a challenge of his claims see A. Baum, *Pseudepigraphie und literarische Fälschung*

im frühen Christentum, WUNT II, 138 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001; cf. my review in NT 47, 2005, 91-93) and T. L. Wilder, *Pseudonymity, the New Testament and Deception: An Inquiry into Intention and Reception* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2004). Baum's volume seems to be unknown to Harding. Harding then describes the literary and theological integrity of the undisputed and disputed letters of Paul (150-61, for Harding their authors have moved away appreciably from the hermeneutic, theology, and vocabulary of the homologoumena, 167) and asks whether there are pseudepigrapha in the NT. He next presents and critiques the objections to the presence of pseudepigrapha in the NT. Unfortunately, Harding fails to interact with a number of evangelical contributions that argue the contrary with sound historical arguments.

The last two contributions argue that there are later interpolations in the extant letters of Paul. 'Rather than positing a disjunction between the letters being Pauline or not, they contend that criteria can be found by which it is possible to discuss individual interpolations within each of the letters' (3). The late J. C. O'Neill argues that 'Paul Wrote Some of All, but not All of Any' (169-88). W. O. Walker examines 'Interpolations in the Pauline Letters' (189-235). Walker distinguishes text-critical evidence, contextual evidence, linguistic and ideational, situational and comparative, motivational and locational evidence for interpolations and uses 1 Corinthians 14:34f as a test-case as it exhibits all eight of the possible types of evidence for interpolation. Walker emphasizes that 'any case for interpolation must be based upon the convergence of different lines of evidence, and conclusions must be qualified in light of the consistency and strength of the evidence' (235). The stimulating and well produced volume closes with an index of ancient sources and of modern authors (237-54).

Some issues related to the question of the Pauline canon and the authenticity of its letters are not (or not sufficiently) addressed: what are legitimate criteria for assessing authenticity? How convincing are arguments based on such a vague category as style? What influence did the secretaries and co-workers of Paul have on his letters? Does their influence account for some of the noticeable differences? Can different vocabulary and style in part be accounted for by traditions on which Paul drew? What differences may one expect between letters addressed to a community and letters addressed to individuals? Are any of Paul's letters addressed to individuals only?

Christoph Stenschke, Bergneustadt, Germany

Nonconformist Theology in the Twentieth Century Alan P.F. Sell

Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2006, xi + 239
pp., \$35.99, pb, ISBN 978-1-84227-471-2.

SUMMARY

At its title indicates, this book, which comprises Alan Sell's 2006 *Didsbury Lectures*, seeks to outline and examine the landscape and rich contribution of nonconformist theology in the twentieth century, particularly in England. Divine providence, the New Theology, baptism, Feminist Theology, Natural Theology, Process Theology, Calvinism, God's Fatherhood, merely-Incarnational theology, the reception of Karl Barth into British theological conversation, and contemporary theological education all receive due and meticulous attention. Sell's interweaving of history, theology, and anecdotal stories – ever with an eye on the contemporary and future scene – make this volume an indispensable study for those interested in the shape that theology took in twentieth-century Britain and the role that British non-conformists played in that shaping.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce livre reprend les conférences de Didsbury donnée par Alan Sell en 2006. Il présente et examine la riche contribution de la théologie non conformiste au xx^e siècle, en particulier en Angleterre. Il traite de façon méticuleuse de la question de la providence divine, de la Nouvelle Théologie, de la question du baptême, de la théologie féministe, de la théologie naturelle, de la théologie du process, du calvinisme, de la question de la paternité divine, de la théologie de l'incarnation, de l'influence de Karl Barth sur les discussions théologiques en Grande Bretagne, et de la formation théologique contemporaine. Sell mêle l'histoire, la théologie et les anecdotes, en gardant toujours un œil sur la scène contemporaine et future. Cet ouvrage est indispensable pour ceux qui s'intéressent à la tournure prise par la théologie en Grande Bretagne au XX^e siècle et à l'apport des non conformistes.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Wie der Titel anzeigt versucht dieses Buch, das Alan Sells *Didbury Lectures* aus dem Jahre 2006 umfasst, die Landschaft und den reichhaltigen Beitrag zu skizzieren und zu untersuchen, den die nonkonformistische Theologie im 20. Jahrhundert insbesondere in England geleistet hat. Den folgenden Themen wird gebührend und sorgfältig Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt: Göttliche Vorsehung, die Neue Theologie, Taufe, feministische Theologie, natürliche Theologie, Prozesstheologie, Calvinismus, Vaterschaft Gottes, ausschließlich inkarnatorische Theologie, die Rezeption Karl Barths im britischen theologischen Gespräch und die gegenwärtige theologische Ausbildung. Sells Verknüpfung von Geschichte, Theologie und anekdotischen Erzählungen – immer mit einem Blick für die heutige und zukünftige Szene – macht diesen Band zu einer unverzichtbaren Studie für diejenigen, die an der Gestalt interessiert sind, die die Theologie in Großbritannien im 20. Jahrhundert

erhielt sowie an der Rolle, die britische Nonkonformisten bei dieser Gestaltung spielten.

* * * *

With the publication of Professor Alan P.F. Sell's 2006 *Didsbury Lectures*, Sell deservedly joins the distinguished ranks of biblical scholars, historians and theologians who have also accepted the invitation by Nazarene Theological College to give these annual lectures.

Despite significant works by historians Clyde Binfield, Dale Johnson, David Bebbington, Mark Hopkins, and Jim Gordon, and the wonderful four-volume series of *Protestant Nonconformist Texts* (Ashgate), Paternoster's 'Studies in Evangelical History and Thought' series, and numerous other works by Sell himself, it could still be argued that too little ink has been spilt in recent years exploring the enormously rich contribution that non-conformist theologians have made, and continue to make, to theological conversation and Church life. Sell's book needs to be considered among the best that continue to fill a gap in this area.

Nonconformist Theology in the Twentieth Century is broad in its scope, offering a well-textured balance of historical contextualisation, theological grappling, contemporary application, and anecdotal stories. Areas of divine providence, the New Theology (associated with R.J. Campbell), baptism, Feminist Theology, Natural Theology, Process Theology, Calvinism, God's Fatherhood, merely-Incarnational theology, the reception of Karl Barth into British theological conversation, and contemporary theological education all fall under Sell's discerning gaze.

In the first lecture, Sell provides an erudite survey, a 'bird's-eye-view of the landscape' (p. 38) of Protestant nonconformist theology in the twentieth century, particular the century's first half. The historical terrain, theological motifs, and ecclesiological realities, and their ongoing relevance for understanding and informing contemporary theological thought, debate and practice are all well covered in this chapter, which sets the tone for the remaining three.

Sell then turns in Lecture Two to the 'doctrinal peaks' of Christology (pp. 41-66), Pneumatology (pp. 66-71), the Trinity (pp. 71-84), and confessions of faith (pp. 84-89), attending fruitfully to each within their historical context while harnessing contributions from an enormous range of nonconformist theologians. Just one example:

No Nonconformist theologian did more in the last two decades of the twentieth century to place the Trinity in the centre of theological debate than Colin Gunton. So all-embracing is his Trinitarian vision (an analogy might be drawn with the centrality of the Cross in the writings of P.T. Forsyth) that it is difficult to place him in a study of this kind. (p. 81)

In the third chapter, Sell turns to discuss one of his great passions: ecumenism. Herein he seeks to address a number of questions: How did the mainline Noncon-

formist traditions understand themselves in the twentieth century? How did they reach out to one another and to more distant communions during the so-called 'ecumenical century'? Is their traditional witness as Free Churchpeople still required, or even viable? Sell provides an at times provocative discussion on the relationship between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism (pp. 91-96), wherein he cites favourably the Congregationalist historian Bernard Lord Manning: 'Protestantism... is not the opposite of medieval Catholicism: it is simply an improved kind of catholicism. Protestantism is not a negative thing. It is a positive re-statement of catholic truth' (p. 93). True catholicity, Sell argues, is not found in a book, nor in a Church, but in that true authority over book, Church and conscience – Jesus Christ, and the effectual word of his Cross, who and which is, as Forsyth noted, that 'to which the conscience owes its life' (p. 92).

Sell then accents the many published nonconformist studies on ecclesiology. It is a breathtaking reminder of the central place that ecclesiology has played in informing nonconformist theology, from John Oman to R. Newton Flew to Leslie Newbigin and Daniel Strange. He notes that while all these contributors were not singing the same part, and 'occasionally a faintly discordant note was struck', they were 'clearly singing in the same choir' (p. 99), which is a fresh reminder of the breadth within the tradition. In more than one way were these theologians non-conformists.

With a newly sharpened pencil, the author turns our attention to 'an abiding issue of global significance' (p. 136): that of the historic episcopate. After noting that nonconformists are not simply Protestants but 'Free Church people', and as such have played significant roles in various ecumenical councils, he suggests that 'the question for us now is whether there is any theological topic distinctive of Free Churches as a whole and not of one denomination only, on which the Nonconformists of England might be expected to speak with a united voice? Living alongside the only remaining Anglican established Church as they do, the obvious candidate is the establishment question' (p. 136). Sell recalls that nonconformists have not been those who have denied the necessity of the state recognition of religion; 'it was, after all, the state which accorded religious toleration' (p. 137). Nonconformists have well understood the appropriateness of proper Church-state relations, but have (rightfully) questioned the very principal of a national church. Again, he cites Forsyth: 'What we protest against is not the abuses but the existence, the principle, of a national church'. The very existence of a state church denies the Church's catholicity. Again, Forsyth: 'However Establishment may seem to work at a given time, *the thing is wrong*... For my own part, any doubt of the truth of our Nonconformist principles would mean doubt of the truth of what is most distinctive in Christianity itself – free faith, free action, and free giving, as the response of men who have been moved and changed

and controlled by the free gift of God and grace in Jesus Christ' (p. 137). A state church is, as Congregationalist John Whale once noted, a 'contradiction in terms' (p. 139). Rightly suspicious of past attempts towards dialogue based on purely pragmatic principles, Sell looks hopefully towards the future, and towards those Anglicans and Free Church folk who are currently engaged in discussion about issues of establishment. He pleads: 'May their outlook be ecumenical and their thoughts in the first place be theological' (p. 144).

The final chapter, entitled 'Rivers, Rivulets – and Encroaching Desert?', turns our attention to eschatology, the atonement, and a collection of other themes that Sell identifies as important for understanding nonconformist theology, but have largely been overlooked in the preceding chapters. He recollects that debates concerning the final fate of the impenitent were hotly contested, not least by Unitarians. Sell's focus here is mainly on notions of universalism, annihilationism and the possibility of post-mortem probation. The discussion is fascinating, revealing again that there really is nothing new under the sun. For example, Sell introduces us to Sydney H. Mellone, Principal of Manchester Unitarian College, and his 1916 work *Eternal Life Here and Hereafter*, who writes,

The assertion, sometimes made, that Universalism means in effect 'it does not matter what we do, for we shall be all right in the end' is unworthy of discussion. Universalism rests on the same foundation on which rests our belief in the eternity of goodness and truth in God... The ethical motive of belief in immortality means that compensation and retribution, to be real, must be redemptive. The religious motive means that final communion with God is the destiny of every soul, and not alone of those who know in this present by living experience what such communion is. The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him for ever (cited on p. 150.)

The chapter, and the book, concludes with Sell offering some hard hitting words as he critically reflects on the demise of the Church's vocabulary, the integrity-eroding effects of political correctness on inter-faith dialogue, the revival of interest in the Trinity during the last 30 years, the side-lining of the atonement in the Church's proclamation, the necessity for theologians to not merely speak 'from faith to faith' but to commend the faith to others, and the current state of theological education, particularly in England. On the latter Sell argues that the Church desperately needs a more thoroughly trained clergy than it is currently receiving.

As a devoted churchman who served two pastorates in the United Kingdom from 1959 to 1968, and who has served internationally as a theological educator since, and so not unaware of the practical and financial hurdles that pastoral ministry candidates, their families, their churches and their colleges are often forced to jump, Sell urges churches to take steps to 'ensure that their younger

candidates at least receive a full and rigorous academic course. If this means fewer visits to hospitals and prisons during a candidate's college years, so be it; required in-service training for licensed probationers prior to ordination is not impossible to provide, and it is never more readily received than by those at the pastoral "coal face". He continues,

I see no viable substitute for practitioners' having a solid grounding in the Bible, a thorough acquaintance with the history of Christian thought (which is broader than historical theology, but includes both it and the linguistic competence to read salient texts), and sufficient philosophical-analytical skills to probe presuppositions, analyse arguments and avoid the writing of incoherent gobbledegook. None of this is achieved without real time and effort; and the churches would do well to encourage in all possible ways those ministerial candidates whose gifts take them in these directions, and whose academic lungs can withstand prolonged immersion in extensive and sometimes choppy waters (p. 191).

Disappointingly, Sell pays relatively little attention to the second half of the twentieth century. Apart from infrequent and brief discussions of the contributions of Paul Fiddes and Colin Gunton, by and large the lectures are heavily weighted towards the century's first half which, to be fair, reflects the greatest volume of non-conformist material published in the twentieth century. As a consequence, the relatively slight contributions from within Pentecostalism, the Brethren, Black churches, and independent evangelical churches are all but ignored. This, however, most certainly says more about the dearthly state of more recent nonconformity than it does about Sell's treatment of the material. Congregationalist (receiving the most attention), Baptist, Methodist and Unitarian contributions are, however, well represented. Some readers may also be disappointed that Sell limits his discussion to the nonconformist scene in England and, to some extent, in Wales. While a treatment that seriously took in any more would expand the book's length considerably, and perhaps with little profit, the title of the book could have been more revelatory here. That said, the volume is no poorer for this limitation of scope.

The volume includes a helpful list of biographical references of some of the major personalities discussed in the lectures, as well as an impressive bibliography. Those concerned with the life and theological contribution of the nonconformist family specifically, and those interested in the shape that theology took in twentieth-century Britain more generally (and may be taking in this century) will be prodigiously served by reading this book. It is an encyclopedic, but accessible, study!

Jason Goroncy, St Andrews, Scotland

*A Theology of Work:
Work and the New Creation*

Darrell Cosden

Paternoster Theological Monographs; Nottingham:
Paternoster Press, 2004,

xvi + 207 pp., £19.99. pb, ISBN 1-84227-332-9

The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work

Darrell Cosden

Nottingham: Paternoster Press, 2006, vii + 149 pp.,
£8.99. pb, ISBN 1-84227-417-1

SUMMARY

In this pair of books Darrell Cosden aims to remind us that human work is both essentially part of what it means to be human and contributes to the building of the eternal kingdom. This is a welcome attempt to revalorize contemporary Christian thinking about work, though conflating an appropriate discussion about what we ought to aim for in our work with an evaluation of its actual goodness.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In diesen beiden Büchern beabsichtigt Darrell Cosden, uns daran zu erinnern, dass menschliche Arbeit sowohl ein wesentlicher Teil dessen ist, was es heißt, Mensch zu sein, als auch, dass sie einen Beitrag zum Aufbau des ewigen Königreiches leistet. Dies ist ein willkommener Versuch, gegenwärtiges christliches Denken über Arbeit neu zu bewerten, auch wenn eine angemessene Diskussion darüber, wonach wir mit unserer Arbeit streben sollen, mit einer Bewertung der tatsächlichen Güte der Arbeit verschmolzen wird.

RÉSUMÉ

Dans ces deux ouvrages, Darrell Cosden rappelle que le travail joue un rôle essentiel dans la vie de l'être humain et contribue en même temps à la construction du royaume éternel. L'auteur revalorise ainsi la pensée chrétienne contemporaine sur le travail de façon heureuse, en réfléchissant sur les objectifs que nous devrions viser par notre travail ainsi qu'en cherchant à apprécier ce que le travail a présentement de bon.

* * * *

In this pair of books Darrell Cosden presents the fruit of his doctoral work (St. Andrews) in academic and popular formats. The title of the popular work, *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work*, aptly summarizes the project as a whole, which aims to remind us that human work is both essentially part of what it means to be human and contributes to the building of that eternal kingdom which will not be burned away in the judgment. This is a welcome attempt to revalorize contemporary Christian thinking about work, though the solution proposed is not without problems of its own. The books target a mainly evangelical audience, and *Heavenly Good* presents a readable and engaging set of criticisms of the terribly

thin accounts of work among evangelical Christians. As the intellectual heavy lifting of the project takes place in *A Theology of Work*, and as the general flow of the argument is parallel in both books, I will concentrate on the academic form of the argument.

As an opener, Cosden traces the theology of modern Roman Catholic encyclicals on work. Here he concludes that *Laborem Exercens* is overly foundationalist in its anthropology and conception of work, and so underplays the doctrines of nature (understood as a subject in its own right) and eschatology. An equally brief survey of Protestant conceptions of work is read as expressing an overemphasis on vocation and protology. These criticisms function primarily as ground clearing for Cosden's introduction of Moltmann's theology of work with its emphasis on human work's 'correspondence' to divine activity. Here Christ's 'labour' on the cross brings about the eschatological realization of creation, and (perhaps counter intuitively) grounds Moltmann's emphasis on the joyful and gratuitous nature of work over against its utility. Cosden's criticism of Moltmann is that he overplays justification and inconsistently explicates the cross as either play or labour, so rendering problematic the nature of work as actually satisfying in this life.

Cosden suggests that what is needed is a more detailed and appropriate ontology of work. He begins to construct such a theology in dialogue with Oliver O'Donovan, who allows him to validate creation as having a teleological order, though Cosden thinks O'Donovan still lets protology do more work than it should. An appropriate theological anthropology can have a more eschatological teleology, contends Cosden. In this quest Cosden draws together the insights of what he calls substance and function conceptions of the *imago dei* by imbedding them in a relational ontology. Here Colin Gunton is his main dialogue partner, despite his worry that Gunton draws the analogy between human and divine persons too tightly and so is not always able to sustain a proper place in anthropology for human stewardship of non-human creation.

The treatment culminates with an extended discussion of Moltmann's anthropology, which adds to these points a stress that work is not just a task commanded at creation, but is part of what humans are ontologically meant to be, as part of God's redeeming and eschatological purposes. The thrust of the whole book becomes clear when Cosden points to Isaiah 40:3-5 as the heart of a properly theological ontology of work: '...prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God...'

This theology of work raises at least two questions. First, Cosden is surely right that thinkers like Gunton so focus their reasoning about proper human relationality on the immanent trinity that it becomes difficult to imagine what light is shed on ethical questions in a broken world. Cosden's attempt to develop a more robust anthropology (ontology) with the condition of the ecological crisis in view seems a plausible response

to this deficit. Yet the question remains: How much work in the real world is done by getting one's ontology right? Cosden answers, 'what this concept of work's essential nature primarily guarantees is resistance to any reductionistic ethical prescriptions related to work. It provides a set of checks and balances that will simply not allow one particular concern, as legitimate as it may be in its own right, to run roughshod over other important concerns' (180). But is this avowal of 'balance' as an ethical prescription either practically illuminating or reflective of biblical examples? Here the avowal of 'Christian realism' and 'flexibility' further complicates matters. 'Practically, a work ethic may initially need to legitimatise a host of economic activities and structures necessary for the provision of resources for basic life support for the greatest number of people. In so doing it may even legitimatise certain kinds of work which under less extreme circumstances would be deemed unethical' (181). An ontology which legitimatizes the unethical is a relatively exotic beast requiring much more explanation than Cosden supplies.

The second point follows from the first. It is clear that this type of ontological account of work, especially when emphasising eschatology over protology, easily embraces activist or progressivist programs. What is missing is the idea that there is a rather large gap between our working and its success, a view which appears so clearly in places like Psalm 127. On Cosden's view, work is not a discipline that is good and from which we can learn whether it is met with success or not, but is concerted to show that our work 'matters in the grand scheme of things.' Here, by 'matters', Cosden does not mean as a sanctifying discipline, nor as a living out of an appropriate vocation (which he misunderstands in *Heavenly Good*) but as *actually* advancing the kingdom, or in his terms, heaven on earth. Cosden seems to conflate an appropriate discussion about what we ought to *aim* for in our work with an evaluation of its *actual* goodness, which Protestant theology at least, has been properly keen to keep distinctly separate.

Brian Brock, Aberdeen, Scotland

Nietzsche and Theology: Nietzschean Thought in Christological Anthropology

David Deane

Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006, x + 195pp., £50, hb, ISBN 978-0-7546-5767-5

SUMMARY

This book assesses and responds to the use of Nietzsche's critique of modernity by Radical Orthodox theologians Milbank and Pickstock. Based on a close reading of the biological underpinning of Nietzsche's concept of the will-to-power, Deane shows how Milbank and Pickstock draw on Nietzsche in a manner that undermines the coherence of their own constructive proposals. Deane proposes that

Barth's christological appropriation of the semiotic polysemy of Nietzschean insights is superior to that of proponents of Radical Orthodoxy, and that Nietzsche's concept of the will-to-power lends important concretion to Barth's concept of the 'lordless powers'.

RÉSUMÉ

L'auteur évalue la pensée de Milbank et de Pickstock, théologiens de l'orthodoxie radicale qui reprennent à leur compte la critique nietzschéenne de la modernité, et leur répond. En se basant sur une lecture attentive des fondements biologiques de la notion de volonté de puissance chez Nietzsche, Deane montre que Milbank et Pickstock ont utilisé Nietzsche d'une manière qui mine la cohérence de leur propre construction. Deane soutient que la reprise christologique par Barth de la polysémie sémiotique qui caractérise les apports nietzschéens est supérieure à celle des tenants de l'orthodoxie radicale, et que la notion nietzschéenne de volonté de puissance donne une consistance importante au concept barthien des « puissances sans domination ».

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieses Buch bewertet und antwortet auf die Verwendung von Nietzsches Kritik der Moderne durch die radikal orthodoxen Theologen Milbank und Pickstock. Auf der Grundlage einer sorgfältigen Wahrnehmung der biologischen Untermauerung von Nietzsches Konzept des Willens zur Macht zeigt Deane, wie Milbank und Pickstock Nietzsche auf eine Weise benutzen, die die Kohärenz ihrer eigenen konstruktiven Vorschläge unterminiert. Deane schlägt vor, dass Barths christologische Verwendung der semiotischen Vieldeutigkeit der Einsichten Nietzsches der Nutzung Nietzsches in der Radikalen Orthodoxie überlegen ist, und dass Nietzsches Konzept des Willens zur Macht dem Konzept Barths von den „herrschaftslosen Mächten“ Konkretion verleiht.

* * * *

Nietzsche and Theology is a revision of a thesis written at Trinity College, Dublin under Lewis Ayres and James Mackey. In it, David Deane utilizes the semiotic theories of Nietzsche and the Christology of Barth to offer a sympathetic but critical response to some basic claims of the proponents of Radical Orthodoxy.

The book opens by revisiting the old chestnut of Nietzsche interpretation, his assertion of the truth that there is no truth. Deane examines the most influential philosophical attempts to 'straighten' this contradiction (of Heidegger, Kaufmann, Sadler, Danto) and finds that each illegitimately accomplishes this straightening by reading Nietzsche through conceptual moves he explicitly opposes. Deane thinks Derrida's attempt to draw out Nietzsche's understanding of writing as a performative act rather than a straight expression of the author's identity moves in the right direction by illustrating how Nietzsche's outlandish contradictions are an expression of his desire to utilize the *form* of writing to deconstruct the content, the hallowed antithesis of western meta-

physics. By creatively misusing those concepts (most notably the law of non-contradiction) he locates himself within the metaphysical tradition to dynamite it from within. Yet Deane does not think Derrida fully grasped the full range of resources Nietzsche brings to the destabilizing semiotic functioning.

Those resources, Deane suggests, are found in Nietzsche's notion of the will-to-power. Deane shows how this concept develops out of inconsistencies in Schopenhauer's definition of the self, which unsuccessfully tries to hold together Kantian epistemology and modern physiological theories. In order to elucidate Nietzsche's conception of the self as an expression of multiple drives and cultural inputs (as Nietzsche puts it, 'the body has wisdom'), he compares Nietzsche's anthropological presuppositions with the biological and cultural theories of Dawkins and Dennett. His aim is to illustrate that Nietzsche writes texts that destabilize and attack the certainties of the western philosophical tradition from the relatively stable launching pad of a pseudo-mechanistic account of the self as a body comprised of multiple, conflicting, drives overseen by multiple, conflicting, cultural ideas, above which hovers an only apparently unified consciousness.

This account of Nietzsche's will-to-power draws more from certain Anglo-American versions of Nietzsche than the French post-structuralist Nietzsche who has become a standard-bearer in the modernity critique of Radical Orthodoxy. Deane's fore-grounded target of criticism of Milbank, with Hart in the background. On Deane's account, Milbank's approach is to rely on Nietzsche's genealogical method, but then to accuse him of relying on a conception of 'nature' which his perspectivism makes it impossible to provide. Nietzsche can then be dismissed as yet another modern voluntarist. This allows Milbank to snip out the violence of Nietzsche's will-to-power as grounded in its voluntarist underpinnings, which he supposes are structurally distinct from his non-voluntarist ontology of divine charity. Having argued for the 'biological foundations' (here Deane's language is revealing) of Nietzsche's critique of nihilism, Deane attempts to force Milbank to come up with more sophisticated reasons for dismissing the thinker who has so advanced his own project.

Deane shores up his account of Nietzsche's biological foundations by showing how, far from being an opponent of Darwin, Nietzsche felt the empiricist Darwin needed only to universalize his theory to see that struggles for supremacy are going on at every level inside and outside the human organism. Deane's point is that it is patently untrue that in Nietzsche the 'I' is voluntaristically chosen, because any 'I' we can name is an expression of this myriad of, ultimately biological, struggles. Milbank's dismissal of Nietzsche therefore elides the 'inextricable interdependence of genealogical method and the ontology it claims to unveil' (105). Nietzsche's will-to-power is inescapably an ontology of the *physical* world, with its appetites and metabolism, not just a 'mythos' we

can choose, reject, or 'outnarrate'. 'Nietzsche's understanding can no more be opposed by simply rejecting it, or out narrating it any more than Darwin's understanding of evolution through natural selection can' (107). Theology, therefore, cannot bypass serious engagement with 'the basic truth of Darwinian principles,' but must directly face their ontological implications.

The focus now turns back to semiotics, and here Deane trains his sights on Catherine Pickstock. Like Milbank, she also relies heavily on Nietzsche's criticism of semiotic nihilism (the idea that words have no meaning outside sole reference to us, the knowing subjects) only to discard him. Pickstock's *After Writing* points to the medieval Roman mass as the historical moment when modern and ancient metaphysical dichotomies were simultaneously overcome: between language and speech, space and time, signifier and signified, etc. In this perfectly balanced mass, all these dichotomies are united in doxological practice. Deane protests that this unification is understood as sacralising language, following the logic of transubstantiation. By sacralising language any appropriation of Nietzschean insights about the instability of language becomes impossible. Again, Deane concludes, you can have Nietzsche, or you can have the Radical Orthodox ontology of peace, but you can't have both.

Deane's counterproposal looks to Karl Barth's christologically-mediated appropriation and overcoming of Nietzsche as a preferable approach. In maintaining that fallen humans are in the ontological position of being both justified and sinner Barth is able to retain notions that our language is at once a mix of meaningful and meaningless references. Beginning in this manner allows us to account for the solipsism (the theory that self is the only object of real knowledge) of semiotic nihilism as an artefact of our being severed, not from liturgical practices, but from God's self-revealing presence. Barth's ontology is preferable to that of Radical Orthodoxy because his account of reconciliation, which is grounded in the conflict of the cross, explicitly bears a multiplicity of meanings and so can take Nietzsche seriously. It does not strive, as do proponents of Radical Orthodoxy, for a homogenous ontology. Homogeneous ontologies, in Deane's view, are pernicious in leading to weak accounts

of interpersonal and political reconciliation.

Because Barth's account of sin is thoroughly christological it is linked to the doctrine of election and has the conflict of the cross at its heart. Fallenness is that situation of rebellion that has been transcended in the cross, which establishes the conditions of human freedom. Barth seeks an account of the universality of sin that does not rest on a biological genealogy nor an account of concupiscence as causal. His main move is to frame the fall as humanity's turning away from God's Word toward the flesh, at once a free choice and a choice for unfreedom. In so choosing to follow the flesh the biological, intellectual and cultural forces which are given to humans are set free, becoming, in the language of *The Christian Life*, 'lordless powers'. Barth's analysis of these predatory human drives set free thus meets and is enriched by the Nietzschean anthropology outlined above, and has the additional advantage of flanking problematic accounts of sin in the Christian tradition.

Having shown Barth's superior capacity to keep essential Nietzschean insights in play, Deane concludes by (implicitly) comparing his approach to the strategies of Radical Orthodoxy. Barth and Nietzsche agree that perspectival epistemologies with all their problems stem from fundamental human drives to self-assertion. They also agree on the violence this creates and the necessity of a lordliness or nobility that can overcome it. Where they differ is in Nietzsche's validation of commonsense notions of power and overcoming, and in Barth's inversion of these in the figure of the royal man whose task is to serve 'the least of these'. This royal man is not idea, but concretely confronts and meets us in the configurations of our bodies and signs in order to invest himself in turning them towards himself. Deane concludes that the concreteness of this Christology is dynamic and dangerous, propelling Christians into active engagement with the world, and so Christian ethics and political theology.

Though rarely reaching the clarity or economy of expression of Nietzsche himself (or even Barth for that matter), Deane has made an important contribution to understanding the import of Nietzsche's philosophy for contemporary theology.

Brian Brock, Aberdeen, Scotland

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Editorial

Jamie Grant

How do you write an editorial? Never having written one before, I begin my oversight of the *European Journal of Theology* at something of a loss. However, I guess that every editor of a journal has had to start somewhere. So let me start by looking back and offering my grateful thanks to Dr Mark Elliott for all of his hard work with *EuroJTh* over the last seven years. Mark has done an excellent job as editor of the journal and has moved *EuroJTh* forward in many ways. *EuroJTh* has become a 'refereed' journal in recent months and we have seen participation expand to include contributions from many of the countries of the 'new Europe'. Mark has done an excellent job in providing leadership for the journal over these years and we are grateful to him.

As always, however, we want to look forward as well as back. Where will *EuroJTh* go from here? Well, the aim is to continue the progress that the journal has made over the last number of years. We will continue to strive after academic excellence in our discussion of theology in the European context. *EuroJTh* seeks to promote good-quality, theological research written by Europeans or addressing those issues that the Church and academy face in Europe today.

EuroJTh will also continue to celebrate its roots in the Fellowship of European Evangelical Theologians and seek to serve the aims of that organisation. From its outset some 30 years ago, the aim of FEET as an organisation was to combine scholarship of the highest academic standards with a commitment to the authority of Scripture and to orthodox, biblical theology. We will strive to continue to reflect this aim in *EuroJTh* in the years to come. So, I will be looking for contributions to the journal that reflect the very best that contemporary, evangelical theology in our part of the world has to offer.

As Europe is expanding, we want to continue the trajectory of growth in terms of breadth of participation. This journal includes contributions from Holland and Germany – written in both Eng-

lish and German. However, it is also a delight to include three articles from Italy on ethics, the internet and cyberculture. These articles are published in Italian with translation into English. Traditionally, the countries of North-Western Europe have been well represented in *EuroJTh* and we are thankful for the regular contributions that we receive from Germany, France, Holland, Belgium and the UK and hope very much that they will continue. However, Europe is changing and we hope to see *EuroJTh* change with it. There is much creative work going on in theological circles in Southern, Central and Eastern Europe and we want to tap these rich resources for the benefit of the rest of the continent and beyond. So can I encourage colleagues in Spain and Portugal, Italy and Greece, the Balkans and the so called 'accession states' of Central and Eastern Europe to contribute fully to the life of the journal by offering their research for publication in *EuroJTh*.

There is probably much more that could be said at this stage, but I trust that our vision for the *European Journal of Theology* will continue to grow and develop in the years to come. Let me finish my first editorial (so that's how you write an editorial!), by commending to you this issue of the journal. *EuroJTh* 17:2 shows something of the diversity of theological study in Europe at present. We begin in the early days of Christianity by considering the Pauline nature of the Pastoral Epistles before moving on to consider the mission history of Germany in the context of Europe's missionary experience throughout the centuries. A return to the present day then ensues with consideration of Christian, ethical responses to the challenges of the internet age and these short articles are followed by the continuation of a debate begun in *EuroJTh* last year (see the preceding articles by Thomas Gerold in *EuroJTh* 16:1 and Lydia Jaeger's response in *EuroJTh* 16:2). This latter debate is an important one, as it focuses on the question of what constitutes 'saving' faith, so I would encourage you to look out the previous articles if you have not read

them already. While we will not always agree on every issue, it is good for our thoughts to be challenged as this will help us to refine our beliefs and come to clearer statements of the doctrines that we hold.

As I write I am aware that the biannual FEET conference will be held in Woltersdorf (near Berlin), 22-26 August. However, by the time this issue of *EuroJTh* is in print the conference will already have

passed. I trust that this conference will have been a challenge and an encouragement to many theologians throughout Europe. Let us remember that *EuroJTh* is, first and foremost, the journal of *a fellowship*. So in all that we do over the coming weeks and months, let us 'spur one another on' through the rigorous study of the Bible and theology for mutual edification across the boundaries of language, country and culture.

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Jason A. Whitlark is a Professor in Religion, Baylor University, Waco, Texas, USA.

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Barry C. Joslin is Assistant Professor of Christian Theology, Boyce College, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY, USA.

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The Pastoral Epistles: authentic Pauline writings

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SUMMARY

The Pastoral Epistles are mostly assumed to be inauthentic letters. That is, few scholars believe these letters to be genuinely Pauline, however, not many of those commentators who reject the authenticity of the PE take the trouble to investigate the arguments. However, the arguments against authenticity are not solid. This article presents an

overview and a short evaluation of the important topics in the debate: their relation to the book of Acts, their language and style, their theology and church development. On a surface level it appears that the 'data' does not lead inexorably to the conclusion of lack of authenticity. The article also indicates why it matters for current Pauline debate, theology and Christianity whether or not the Pastoral Epistles are Pauline.

* * * *

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Oft wird angenommen, die Pastoralbriefe seien nicht authentisch. Nur wenige Theologen machen sich die Mühe, die Argumente zu prüfen. Diese Argumente sind jedoch nicht unerschütterlich. Dieser Aufsatz bietet einen Überblick und eine kurze Bewertung der wichtigsten Fragen dieser Debatte: Die Beziehung zur

Apostelgeschichte, Sprache und Stil, Theologie und die Entwicklung der Kirche. Schon oberflächlich betrachtet wird klar, dass die 'Fakten' nicht zwingend gegen die Authentizität sprechen. Der Aufsatz deutet auch an, warum es für die gegenwärtige Diskussion um Paulus, für die Theologie und für das Christentum nicht egal ist, ob die Pastoralbriefe paulinisch sind oder nicht.

* * * *

RÉSUMÉ

Les épîtres pastorales sont généralement considérées comme n'étant pas de Paul. Peu de théologiens se donnent cependant la peine de passer au crible les arguments conduisant au rejet de leur authenticité. Pourtant, ces arguments manquent de solidité. Cet article présente un tour d'horizon des points importants dans le débat et une courte évaluation : le problème de l'harmonisa-

tion avec les données du livre des Actes, les questions de langue et de style, ainsi que celles qui touchent à la théologie et au stade d'élaboration de l'organisation des Églises. Une première approche montre déjà clairement que les données ne conduisent pas inexorablement à la conclusion que ces épîtres seraient inauthentiques. L'auteur fait aussi apparaître les enjeux de la question de l'authenticité de ces lettres pour les études pauliniennes actuelles, la théologie et le christianisme.

* * * *

The authenticity of the Pastoral Epistles [PE] has been vigorously debated for two centuries. During the nineteenth century the debate was lively,¹ but, in the twentieth century the debate seemed settled in favour of the inauthenticity hypothesis. Nevertheless, proponents of authenticity continue to

argue their case.²

Although the debate is still going on, few exegetes are aware of this. Mainstream theology assumes the inauthenticity of the PE.³ Few scholars take the trouble to investigate the original arguments. The pseudonymous character of the letters

is simply taken for granted. Some scholars however join the debate in an attempt to move away from a simple either/or discussion. They are interested in the precise nature of the claim of Pauline authorship by asking *to what extent* these letters are Pauline. Unfortunately, their research has led to diverging results.⁴ These differing views on the one hand and the general unawareness on the other hand are both good reasons to take yet another look at the arguments for and against Pauline authorship of the PE.

This article presents an overview of the arguments for and against the authenticity of the PE. The first part of this article will concentrate on listing the arguments for inauthenticity. In the second part these arguments are investigated to see if they are solid and lead inexorably to a conclusion of inauthenticity. Before the general conclusion, the third part of the article will briefly indicate why it matters for current Pauline debate, theology and Christianity whether or not the PE are Pauline.

A. Arguments for the Inauthenticity Hypothesis

Four arguments support the hypothesis of inauthenticity: the historical argument; the argument of language and style; the argument of theology and the argument of church development.

1. The historical argument

One of the difficulties regarding the authenticity of the PE is historical.⁵ The historical data found in the PE do not seem to match the historical data in the book of Acts. As a consequence, the historical framework of Acts does not provide a fitting time and place during which the PE could originate. All other Pauline letters however do fit the historical framework of Acts.

2. The argument of language and style

The language and style of the PE differ from the language and style of the so-called authentic letters. This deviation from the 'normal' language and style register found in the *corpus Paulinum* is decisive in making scholars reject the authenticity of the PE. For example Oberlinner concludes: 'Diese Unterschiede in Sprache und Stil zwischen den Past und den anerkannten Paulinen sprechen deutlich gegen paulinische Verfasserschaft'.⁶

In 1921 Harrison published a pioneering work regarding the language of the PE.⁷ He noticed the huge amount of *hapax legomena* in the letters and

concluded that they belong rather to the vocabulary of the second century literature than to the vocabulary of the Pauline literature. Furthermore, 'typical Pauline' usage of particles, prepositions and pronouns was found to be absent from the PE. In 1959 Grayston and Herdan refined Harrison's method and their statistical analysis confirmed the results Harrison had published earlier.⁸

Concerning the style of the letters a few examples are sufficient to illustrate the problem. Structural analysis of the letters, for instance, shows that the typical opening of the Pauline letter is absent from 1 Timothy and Titus and, although an opening is present in 2 Timothy, it is unusually short. Furthermore, there appears to be a lack of personal notes in 1 Timothy and Titus. Next, regarding the method of argumentation the PE seem to invert the rather usual 'ethic-follows-doctrine' pattern into a 'doctrine-follows-ethic' pattern. Also typical of the PE is the remarkable expression πιστός ὁ λόγος ('here/this is a trustworthy saying,' 1 Tim. 1:15, 3:1, 4:9 etc.) This expression occurs frequently in the PE and is exclusive to these letters. Last but not least, the monotone and colourless style of the PE catches one's attention.

3. The argument of theology

Not only the language and style, but also the theology in the PE differs from the so-called authentic letters. More specific, the theology of the PE is said to reflect a later period of origin than the authentic Pauline literature.⁹ First, the PE seem to be strongly oriented toward orthodoxy. The word διδασκαλία ('teaching' or 'doctrine') is mentioned 19 times in the *corpus Paulinum*, 15 times in the PE. Occasionally the thought is even stressed by speaking of the ὑγιαίνουσα διδασκαλία ('sound doctrine,' 1 Tim. 1:10; Tit. 1:9, 2:1). Besides, the usage of the word πίστις ('the faith') seems to point to a 'closed doctrine' rather than to a 'living reality' (see, e.g., 1 Tim 5:8, 6:12 etc.). Further, rather than articulating this doctrine in the PE, the author wants it to be handed down (e.g. 2 Tim. 1:13-14; 2:2). Second, the orthodoxy in the PE goes hand in hand with an emphasis on orthopraxy. Lexemes from the *euvsebeia* word-group occurs 13 times in the *corpus Paulinum*, all instances of which are in the PE. Besides, the requirements for bishops and deacons mentioned in these letters are of a 'bourgeois' character (i.e. apparently more concerned with ideas of citizenship and participation in society than with holiness and abstract ethical standards). For example, these persons are to

live a sober and steady lifestyle, and they should be hospitable and moderate. Furthermore, the Christian life is described in terms of certain stoic virtues (Tit. 2:12). This so-called 'bourgeois' character of the PE contradicts the more usual ethics of Pauline literature and is viewed as an attestation of a late origin. Third, the PE strongly oppose false teachers and 'heresy'. In the past this heresy was identified as *gnosis*, especially because of the occurrence of the word γνῶσις in 1 Tim. 6:20.¹⁰ This identification also indicates a late time of origin. Fourth, the theology of the PE differs from the Pauline theology in its colourlessness and in the absence of important Pauline themes such as the emphasis on the Spirit. Other concepts seem to be used in a different way or even in opposition to Pauline theology. For example the PE present the concept of δικαιοσύνη ('righteousness') as a virtue that has to be attained (1 Tim. 6:11 and 2 Tim. 2:22, δίωκε δὲ δικαιοσύνην 'pursue righteousness'), rather than as a gracious gift of God.

4. The argument of church development

The PE (especially 1 Timothy and Titus) seem to be very concerned with church order. The letters contain a surprising number of rules for community life and for leaders of the community: elders/bishops and deacons. This tendency to organisation with a strong focus on leadership reflects, according to most scholars, a post-pauline stage of church development.¹¹ They state that it contradicts the 'charisma' of the original Pauline community. The PE reveal the beginnings of the institutionalisation of the early church.

5. Main Question

After listing the arguments in favour of the inauthenticity hypothesis, the possibility of an alternative view will be considered. Hence the main question for the following part of the article: *do these four arguments demand the assumption of inauthenticity?*

B. An Alternative View

Each of the arguments for inauthenticity will be investigated with respect to their probability. Are they built on clear observations? Do these observations admit other lines of argumentation?

1. The historical problem

The historical problem concerning the incompatibility of Acts and the PE has generated several

proposed solutions. First, as noted above, the common assumption nowadays is the inauthenticity of the letters. If the PE are inauthentic letters, then, because of their late origin it is not surprising that they do not fit the historical framework of Acts. Second, some proponents of the authenticity hypothesis state that the letters may have been written in the period after the closing chapter of Acts.¹² They argue Paul was released from prison and restarted missionary activities in the east of the Roman Empire. In that period the apostle wrote 1 Timothy and Titus. The second letter to Timothy was written during a second Roman imprisonment.¹³ If this hypothesis is accurate then the incompatibility of the PE with the historical framework of Acts is also not surprising. Third, other proponents of the authenticity hypothesis tend to place the origin of the PE during Paul's third missionary journey and during the Caesarean or Roman imprisonment as described in the book of Acts.¹⁴ This last proposal argues explicitly that there is no historical incompatibility of the PE and Acts.

With respect to the proposals in favour of authenticity, although the second option is not impossible, the third option deserves more consideration for at least two reasons. First, this proposal shows that the book of Acts and the PE are not incompatible as is often stated. Second, this proposal demands less speculation than the second option since it can be checked against the data in Acts. A full discussion of the details of the different proposals is not possible within the limits of this article. It is important to notice, however, that a comparison of data between Acts and the PE need not lead to a hasty conclusion of inauthenticity.

2. The problem of language and style

A remark about the data is in order here. As mentioned above, scholars arguing for inauthenticity generally refer to the work of Harrison (1921) and the statistical analysis of Grayston and Herdan (1951). Although the statistical analysis is clearly an important method for quantifying the language of the PE, it nonetheless has its limitations.¹⁵ First, the PE do not deliver enough material for a reliable statistical analysis especially given the fact that the three letters are not one document, something many scholars tend to forget.¹⁶ Second, the method assumes a rigid consistency in use of vocabulary and style. Third, the extant statistical models end up with different results. In 1986 Kenny presented a revised and more advanced statistical analysis of

the PE. He came to the following conclusion: 'It is only Titus which is shown as deserving the suspicion cast on the Pastorals (...) on the basis of the evidence in this chapter for my part I see no reason to reject the hypothesis that twelve of the Pauline Epistles are the work of a single, unusually versatile author'.¹⁷ Fourth, the mathematical character of the method creates an illusion of exactness and objectivity – wrongly so, because the method ignores the complexity of the phenomenon 'authorship' completely.

This last remark needs some explanation. Statistical analysis can easily cause one to lose sight of some factors that may have influenced the language and style of the PE. These factors are connected to issues of authorship on the one hand (a), and the audience on the other hand (b).

(a) With regard to authorship: Did Paul use a secretary? Rom. 16:22 indicates that he sometimes did. In what way did his co-workers influence his writings? Both letters to the Thessalonians, for instance, mention three senders and are written in the first person plural. The possibility of co-authorship must not be ignored.¹⁸ M. Prior offers a very different, but intriguing explanation: 'Since Timothy is named as co-author with Paul in 2 Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, and with Paul and Silvanus in 1 and 2 Thessalonians, it must be the case that Timothy's role in the composition of the Paulines was quite significant. And since two of the Pastorals are written by Paul alone to Timothy, it could well be the case that some of the differences between the Pastorals and the Paulines can be attributed to the fact that the Pastorals are written by Paul alone, while most of the Paulines were written with some degree of co-authorship, particularly that of Timothy'.¹⁹ Other proposed explanations include the possibility that Paul's imprisonment influenced his language.²⁰ Or that his language register changed with age.²¹ Or that the *hapax legomena* belong to traditional material.²²

(b) With regard to the audience. It is not only the author who is responsible for the language and style of a letter; the intended reader(s) can also – even if only indirectly – influence its vocabulary and style. The question arises if these letters were meant for Timothy and Titus only, or implicitly for the communities they worked for as well. Some scholars believe the latter to be the case.²³ R. Fuchs, a proponent of the authenticity hypothesis, has shown some interesting differences in content and language between 1 Timothy and Titus. In his

opinion these particularities perfectly fit the two different communities the letters were sent to.²⁴ Certainly Fuchs's observations are of great value, contributing as they do to the recognition of the separate identities of the three letters that is usually overlooked.²⁵ However, the assumption that communities constitute the intended audience does not seem very helpful in explaining the specific characteristics of the PE compared to other letters of the Pauline *corpus*. On the contrary, interpreting the openings of the letters as they stand (Παῦλος ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ (... Τιμοθέω and Παῦλος δοῦλος θεοῦ (... Τίτῳ) seems more helpful in explaining the distinctiveness of these three letters. These letters, unlike all other Paulines, were written to individuals, more specifically co-workers of Paul.²⁶ It is to be expected that these letters would be more concerned with regulations of a specific kind than the usual community letters and that, as a result, Paul's language and style would differ from the other letters of the *corpus Paulinum*.

The above mentioned factors with regard to authorship and audience are not all of equal significance to the question of the authenticity of the PE. A thorough discussion of all possibilities is not needed, however, to notice that the results of a 'simple' statistical analysis are not sufficient to conclude in favour of inauthenticity.

3. The problem of theology

Some remarks need to be made with respect to the so-called orthodoxy of the PE. First, nowhere in the PE is the *didaskalia*,^a is presented as a 'totally closed doctrine'. To be sure the word is not without content. The reference, however, could equally be 'the Pauline gospel' as originally preached in Ephesus/Crete. With respect to this possibility Mounce points to an interesting parallel in the letter to the Galatians: 'It (i.e. the gospel) is sufficiently coherent and consistent that teachings can be measured against it and shown to be true or false, as Paul also says in Gal. 6:6-11'.²⁷ Second, the word *διδασκαλία* is not totally absent from the so-called authentic Pauline letters (Rom. 12:7).²⁸ Third, the more frequent use of the word *didaskalia*,^a when compared to the other Pauline letters, is not surprising when one remembers that, as pointed out above, the PE differ from the other Pauline letters in that they were explicitly written to co-workers of Paul. It is only natural that these letters would speak about *διδασκαλία* in a formal sense rather than explaining its theological content. Timothy and Titus must have been well aware of the content of Paul's

gospel. Thus the absence of the so-called 'vivid Pauline theology' in these letters requires no explanation.

How is the so-called orthopraxy of the letters to be evaluated? Do the PE attest a 'bourgeois' character? With respect to the word εὐσέβεια ('godliness') Wainwright states that it need not support the idea of a bourgeois ethic in the PE: 'Regardless of the authenticity of the PE, the occurrence of *eusebeia* in the PE does not support a *christliche, bürgerliche* ethic in the PE, nor does it merely indicate reverence for the established orders; but instead, *eusebeia* exhorts the Christian community to devote itself to God in every sphere of life, so that both beliefs and behavior are centered in Him'.²⁹ Furthermore, regarding the requirements for bishops and deacons, Fee points out that these requirements do not express distinctively Christian virtues for these functions. Rather they aim to establish a good reputation of the church over against outsiders.³⁰

Another purported indication of late origin of the PE is the so-called Gnostic heresy of the false teachers mentioned in them. Gnosticism, however, does not seem to be easily defined.³¹ Some scholars assume that the heresy was proto-gnostic, others identify it as pre-gnostic.³² In any case, the use of the word γνῶσις ('knowledge') in 1 Tim. 6:20 does not necessarily indicate a Gnostic heresy. Paul's use of the same word in the context of 1 Cor. 8, for instance, shows that γνῶσις had a broad range of possible meanings.

Do the PE contain a theology that contradicts the more usual Pauline theology? The above cited example whereby δικαιοσύνη is seen as a virtue that has to be attained rather than a gracious gift of God is not convincing. A clear characteristic of Pauline theology, namely, is the eschatological tension in which indicative and imperative (gift and demand) go together (e.g. Gal. 5:1). This applies *a fortiori* to the theme of justification. Naturally, different aspects will be stressed in different contexts. This does not, however, indicate contradictory theology.

4. The problem of church development

Some remarks about the alleged post-Pauline church development in the PE are also necessary. It is undeniable that the PE show a tendency toward more complex organisation. This is unremarkable, however, when one considers that the PE were explicitly written to co-workers of Paul with specific tasks in the Pauline communities. Fur-

thermore, the strong focus on leadership does not necessarily reflect a late, post-charismatic, stage of church-development. On the contrary, a polarisation of charisma and organisation leads to a rather simplistic construction of early church history: the charisma of the original Pauline communities would have diminished in favour of a solid, hierarchical organisation during the second and the third generation. Van Bruggen has quite rightly pointed out the superficiality of this construction.³³ Furthermore, most of the functions mentioned in the PE also occur in the so-called authentic Pauline literature.

5. No solid ground

The question as to whether the four arguments mentioned in the first part of the article demand the assumption of inauthenticity must be answered negatively. First, the historical incompatibility of the PE and Acts does not seem to be the incontrovertible fact that some regard it to be. Second, the problem of language and style, is so complex that statistical analysis alone cannot adequately account for it. Factors connected to authorship or to readership may have influenced the distinctive language and style of these letters. For instance, the fact that the PE were written to co-workers of Paul and differ in this regard from the more usual community letter must not be ignored. Third, the problem of the orthodoxy and 'bourgeois' ethics in the PE is clearly relativized by the argumentation above. The argument with regard to Gnosticism in the PE is also not convincing, nor is the alleged un-Pauline theology. Fourth, the PE's tendency toward organisation with a strong focus on leadership is perfectly explicable in term of the nature of these letters. It does not reflect a post-Pauline stage of church development at all. In short, the four arguments do not provide a solid ground for the inauthenticity hypothesis.

C. Authenticity: Benefits for Current Debate

If the PE are considered to be authentic documents current Pauline debate could benefit from that fact. The 'old' perspective of authenticity could provide for 'new' insights regarding at least four topics. First, the current view on Pauline language and theology could be nuanced. Second, in the socio-historical domain new insight could be gained concerning the outlook of Pauline communities in the late fifties of the first century. Third, it

would clearly be an enrichment for the study of the Pauline literature to have three letters written to direct co-workers in addition to the more common letters written to communities.

For theology in general, the authenticity of the PE could be of great importance with respect to the ongoing discussion concerning pseudepigraphy within the canon. Furthermore, it could alter the current reconstruction of the history of early Christianity and of the development of its theological, ethical and ecclesiological thinking.³⁴ As David A. deSilva admits: 'Debates about authorship have, in many circles, effectively relegated the deuterio-Pauline epistles and other texts deemed pseudepigraphic to the margins of theological and ethical inquiry.'³⁵ The PE coming out of these fringes could also benefit Christianity, for example, by contributing more fully to the concept of discipleship and ministry in the modern context.

General Conclusion: The Authenticity of the Pastoral Epistles

After two centuries of debate mainstream theology generally assumes the inauthenticity of the PE. However, the relationship between pseudonymity and canon is very unclear as the ongoing discussion and the diverging results in the debate reveal. Furthermore the basic arguments against authenticity are not altogether solid: the distinctive features of the PE can easily be explained by other factors than pseudonymity. Finally, the 'old' perspective of authenticity could provide for 'new' insights regarding Pauline studies and theology in general.

The literal acceptance of the author's claim seems to be the more attractive position, not at least because it seems to create the fewest problems. There are, therefore, plenty of reasons for reconsidering the authenticity of these unique letters.

Notes

- 1 Schleiermacher vs. Planck. See also Eichhorn vs. Berthold, Hug, Böhl. See also Baur vs. Baumgarten, Wieseler.
- 2 For example, J. van Bruggen, *Die geschichtliche Einordnung der Pastoralbriefe* (Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 1981); D.P. Moessner and I. Reicke, eds., *Re-examining Paul's Letters, the History of the Pauline Correspondence* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2001); R. Fuchs, *Unerwartete Unterschiede* (Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 2003) and the commen-

taries by Fee (1988), Knight III (1992), Mounce (2000), Johnson (2001), Towner (2006), Witherington III (2006).

- 3 For example, J. W. Aageson, *Paul, the Pastoral Epistles, and the Early Church*, (Peabody Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2008) and the commentaries written by Brox (1969), Roloff (1988), Quinn (1990), Oberlinner (1994), Quinn & Wacker (1999), Fiore (2007).
- 4 This is mainly due to the much debated relationship between pseudepigraphy and canon. An important study in the field is David G. Meade's *Pseudonymity and Canon*. According to Meade the PE are pseudonymous writings. These letters were rightly called 'Pauline' however because attribution was primarily an assertion of authoritative tradition in the process of *Vergegenwärtigung* of Pauline tradition, either than an assertion of literary origins. David G. Meade, *Pseudonymity and canon* (WUNT 39; Tübingen: Mohr – Siebeck, 1986), 122-139. In his commentary I. Howard Marshall also regards the PE as posthumous writings: 'fresh formulations of Pauline teaching to take account of the changing situation' (p. 92). Against Meade though Marshall prefers the term 'allonymity' above 'pseudonymity' because the latter still contains an element of intentional deceit in it. (I. H. Marshall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999), 79-92. The German study of Armin D. Baum presents yet another picture. Baum argues that in antiquity authentic documents at least needed to be authorised by the person they were attributed to, otherwise they were looked at as literary forgeries. 'Analog galt in der frühen Kirche ein nicht von einem Apostel verfasster Apostelbrief als echt, sofern er von diesem als sein eigenen Schreiben autorisiert war. Daraus folgt andererseits, dass etwa die Pastoralbriefe nach antikem Urteil literarische Fälschungen waren, wenn sie nicht von Paulus autorisiert, sondern erst nach seinem Tod unter seinem Namen verfasst wurden.' (p. 93). Baum argues also that forgeries were 'kanonunfähig' (pp. 95-148). Already these few examples illustrate the complexity of the relationship between pseudepigraphy and canon. A full discussion of the problem is not possible within the limits of this article. See for example David A. deSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament: Context, methods and ministry formation* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 685-689.
- 5 See for example J. Roloff, *Der erste Brief an Timotheus* (EKKNT xv; Zürich / Neukirch-Vluyn: Benzinger Verlag/Neukirchener Verlag, 1988), 26-27. L. Oberlinner, *Die Pastoralbriefe* (Herders theologischer Kommentar xi/2; Freiburg: Herder, 1994), xxxiv-xxxv.
- 6 L. Oberlinner, *Die Pastoralbriefe*, xxxvii. See also J. Roloff, *Der erste Brief an Timotheus*, 28-31.

- 7 P.N. Harrison, *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles* (Oxford: University Press, 1921). In German literature Holtzmann is regarded as the founder of the statistical analysis. H.J. Holtzmann, *Die Pastoralbriefe, Kritisch und Exegetisch Behandelt* (Leipzig: Engelmann, 1880).
- 8 K. Grayston and G. Herdan, 'The Authorship of the Pastoral Epistles in the Light of Statistical Linguistics,' *NTS* 6 (1959): 1-15. Grayston and Herdan denote the amount of non-Pauline vocabulary by the letter 'C'. For the PE they registered a C-value of 46%, whereas the normal C-value of a Pauline letter varies between 32% and 34%.
- 9 See for example N. Brox, *Die Pastoralbriefe*, 50. See also L. Oberlinner, *Die Pastoralbriefe*, xxxvi-xxvii.
- 10 See M. Wolter, *Die Pastoralbriefe als Paulustradition* (FRLANT 146. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1988) 265f.
- 11 See for example: L. Oberlinner, *Die Pastoralbriefe*, xxxviii-xxxix.: 'Im Vergleich zu den Gemeinden, an die die authentischen Paulusbriefe gerichtet sind, hat die Gemeindeordnung der Past ein neues Stadium erreicht, welches v.a. gekennzeichnet ist durch das Hervortreten verschiedener Amtsträger' See also: N. Brox, *Die Pastoralbriefe*, 42. 'Zweifelloos zeigt diese Kirche Züge eines gegenüber dem sonstigen Bild der Paulusbriefe fortgeschrittenen Stadiums der Institutionalisierung und Konsolidierung'.
- 12 See for example Ridderbos (1967), Fee (1988) and Mounce (2000).
- 13 This is the way the *subscriptio* found in some manuscripts (Majority-text) accompanying the second letter to Timothy is usually interpreted: Προς Τιμόθεον β της Εφεσιων εκκλησιας επισκοπον πρωτον χειροτονηθεντα εγραφη απο Ρωμης οτε εκ δευτερου παρεστη Παυλος τω καισαρι Ρωμης Νερωνι.
- 14 See for example S. de Lestapis, *L'énigme des Pastorales* (Paris : Gabalda, 1976) ; Van Bruggen, *Geschichtliche Einordnung* (1981); Johnson (2001) ; Moessner and Reicke, *Re-examining Paul's Letters* (2001).
- 15 For a clear overview of methodological problems: see W.D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles* (Word Biblical Commentary 46; Nashville: Nelson, 2000), cxiii-cxvii.
- 16 See therefore Robinson's criticism of Grayston and Herdan. He showed that this bias highly influenced their results. T.A Robinson, 'Grayston and Herdan's "C" Quantity Formula and the Authorship of the Pastoral Epistles', *NTS* 30 (1984): 282-288.
- 17 A. Kenny, *A Stylometric Study of the New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 100.
- 18 See P.H.R. van Houwelingen, *Tessalonicenzen, voortgezet basisonderwijs* (Commentaar op het Nieuwe Testament; Kampen: Kok, 2002) 18-23. See also D.P. Moessner and I. Reicke, eds., *Re-examining Paul's Letters, the History of the Pauline Correspondence* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2001), 30-32.
- 19 M. Prior, *Paul the Letter-Writer*, 45.
- 20 See the remarkable thesis of Hitchcock about the occurrence of Latinisms in the PE: F.M. Hitchcock, 'The Latinity of the Pastorals', *Expository Times* 39 (1927-8) 347-352.
- 21 Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, cii: 'Bernard emphasizes that in Paul's letters in general the number of unique words increases as Paul increases in age (...). Spicq observes the same development in the aging Plato (...), and the similar observation by Wohlenberg (55) concerning Schille and Goethe and by W.P. Workman concerning Shakespeare.'
- 22 See E. E. Ellis, *The Making of the New Testament Documents* (BIS 39; Leiden: Brill, 1999) 327-329; 418-422 for the implications of preformed traditions for the nature of authorship.
- 23 They regard the letters as based on the *mandata principis* known in late imperial times. R. Fuchs, *Unerwartete Unterschiede*, 15-16, and L.T. Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, 96-97. Both scholars refer to the study of M. Wolter, *Die Pastoralbriefe als Paulustradition* (FRLANT; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988), 165, 'Gerichtet waren die Mandata principis in der Form der direkten Anrede an die jeweils für einen bestimmten Bereich verantwortlichen einzelnen Amtsträger, vor allem an die Statthalter der keiselerlichen Provinzen. Die Empfänger der Mandata hatten deren Vorschriften durch eigene Edikte bekanntzumachen oder (...) in Übersetzung zu publizieren.'
- 24 R. Fuchs, *Unerwartete Unterschiede* (Bibelwissenschaftliche Monographie 12; Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 2003).
- 25 See J. Herzer, 'Abschied vom Konsens? Die Pseudepigraphie der Pastoralbriefe als Herausforderung an die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft' in *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 129 (2004): 1280. See also P. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus* (NICNT; Grand Rapids / Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2006), 88-89.
- 26 The letter to Philemon was also sent to an individual person. Philemon, however, was not a co-worker of the apostle.
- 27 W.D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, xcv.
- 28 In this verse also the word *dida,skwn* occurs. Besides, Rom. 16:17 may be interesting for comparison. Also the expression *παρὰ τὴν διδασκίαν ἣν ὑμεῖς ἐθαύρατε* seems to point to a coherent normative Christian 'doctrine'.
- 29 J.J. Wainwright, 'Eusebeia: Syncretism or Conservative Contextualization?' *EQ* lxx (1993): 223.
- 30 G.D. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 18.
- 31 See R. Roukema, *Gnosis en geloof in het vroege christendom. Een inleiding tot de gnostiek* (Zoetermeer: Meinema, 1998).
- 32 I.H. Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 49-50.
- 33 J. van Bruggen, *Die geschichtliche Einordnung der*

- Pastoralbriefe* (Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 1981), 13-14.
- 34 B. Witherington III, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians. Vol.1: A socio-rhetorical commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy and 1-3 John* (Downers Grove Illinois: InterVarsity Press/Nottingham: Apollos, 2006) 23-24.
- 35 DeSilva, *Introduction*, 689 (n. 16).

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Die Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands im Kontext der europäischen Missionsgeschichte

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands umfasst ein ganzes Jahrtausend und hat Anteil an den verschiedenen *Missionsepochen* der frühchristlichen und der mittelalterlichen Missionsgeschichte. Insbesondere sind die Konstantinische Wende, die Mission der irschottischen Mönche, die angelsächsische Mission unter Bonifatius und die Skandinavienmission Ansgars von Bedeutung. Die Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands kennt auch unterschiedliche *Missionsmotive* und *Missionsmethoden*. Hier sind die

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SUMMARY

The mission history of Germany covers a whole millennium and belongs to a number of epochs of mission through early Christian and Medieval mission history. The Constantinian change, the mission of the Scottish-Irish monks, the Anglo-Saxon mission under Bonifatius and the Scandinavian mission of Ansgar are of particular importance. The mission history of Germany also displays different motives for mission and methods of

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RÉSUMÉ

L'histoire des missions chrétiennes en Allemagne couvre tout un millénaire et s'inscrit dans les diverses époques missionnaires qui ont jalonné les premiers siècles de l'Église et le moyen âge. La christianisation de l'empire à partir de Constantin, l'œuvre missionnaire des moines écossais et irlandais, l'œuvre anglo-saxonne avec Boniface et l'œuvre missionnaire scandinave de Ansgar revêtent une importance particulière. L'histoire des missions en Allemagne fait aussi apparaître des motivations pour la mission et des méthodes missionnaires différen-

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Ausbreitung des Christentums im Römischen Reich, das Staatskirchentum in Folge der Konstantinischen Wende, Mission als persönliches (Iroschotten), kirchliches (Bonifatius), politisches (Karl d. Gr.) und visionäres (Ansgar) Projekt zu nennen sowie Mission durch Migration (deutsche Ostsiedlung). Die Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands ist schließlich geprägt von der Interaktion mit allen *Kulturreisen* Europas, dem griechisch-romanischen, westgermanischen, keltischen, skandinavischen, slawischen und ungarischen.

* * * *

mission. The propagation of the Christianity in the Roman Empire, and the establishment of the Church as a result of the Constantinian change, leads to a variety of types of mission: personal (Scottish-Irish), church (Boniface), political (Charlemagne) and visionary (Ansgar), as well as mission by migration (German settlement in the East). The mission history of Germany is, when all is said and done, marked by interaction with all of the cultures of Europe: the Graeco-Roman, Western Germanic, Celtic, Scandinavian, Slavonic and Hungarian.

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tes. L'expansion du christianisme dans l'empire romain et la position influente acquise par l'Église en conséquence ont favorisé l'émergence d'entreprises missionnaires de divers types : œuvre individuelle (celle des moines écossais et irlandais), œuvre placée sous l'égide de l'Église (Boniface), action politique (Charlemagne), œuvre visionnaire (Ansgar), à quoi s'ajoute l'évangélisation qui a résulté de la migration de certaines populations comme l'établissement germanique à l'est. L'histoire des missions en Allemagne a donc été marquée par l'interaction avec toutes les cultures européennes : gréco-romaine, germanique orientale, celte, scandinave, slave et hongroise.

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Die Geschichte der Ausbreitung des Christentums auf dem Gebiet des heutigen Deutschlands umfasst einen Zeitraum von nicht weniger als einem Jahrtausend. Dabei ist nicht nur die Länge des Zeitraums erstaunlich, welche die Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands umfasst. Die lange Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands besitzt neben ihrem Anteil an den verschiedenen Epochen der Missionsgeschichte Europas auch einen direkten Bezug zur Geschichte der Ausbreitung des Christentums in allen großen europäischen Kulturkreisen. Darüber hinaus kommen in der Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands die verschiedensten Missionsmethoden und Missionswege zur Anwendung, von der persönlichen Evangelisation bis hin zu einer Perversion der Mission, wie sie etwa der sogenannte „Wendenkreuzzug“ darstellt.

(1) Der Anteil der Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands an der Geschichte der Ausbreitung des Christentums im Römischen Reich vor Konstantin

Die ersten beiden Epochen der Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands gehören zur Geschichte der Ausbreitung des Christentums im Römischen Reich. Der Beginn der Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands stellt also den Bezug zum romanischen Kulturkreis her. Diese Feststellung ist insofern berechtigt, als es in Teilen der in der Antike zum Römischen Reich gehörenden Gebiete Deutschlands eine Kontinuität des Christentums gegeben hat und bis zur Gegenwart gibt.

Die zum Römischen Reich gehörenden Gebiete des heutigen Deutschlands haben Anteil schon an der vorkonstantinischen Ausbreitung des Christentums im Römischen Reich. Zwar ist die Aussagekraft sowohl der literarischen, als auch der archäologischen Zeugnisse über das Christentum dieser frühen Zeit in Deutschland sehr begrenzt. Aber es gibt doch genügend Hinweise dafür, dass es schon im dritten, evtl. sogar schon Ende des zweiten Jahrhunderts einzelne christliche Gemeinden gegeben hat, und zwar in den Metropolen der beiden „germanischen“ Provinzen Germania Superior und Germania Inferior, Köln und Mainz, sowie vor allem in Trier, das zu Gallien gehörte. Herausragendes, aber in seiner Deutung auch umstrittenes Zeugnis dafür ist die Bemerkung des Irenäus von Lyon in seinem Werk *adversus haereses*, das etwa um das Jahr 180 entstanden ist: „Die in den Germanien gegründeten Kirchen glauben und

überliefern nichts anderes als die in Spanien oder bei den Kelten, die im Orient und in Ägypten, die in Libyen oder in der Mitte der Welt.“¹ Auch legen die kürzlich publizierten Ergebnisse der Grabungen unter der Trierer Dominformation nahe, dass hier nicht nur Überreste der ersten Trierer Bischofskirche, eines Vorgängerbaus des Trierer Doms, nachgewiesen werden können – diese wird als ältester nachgewiesener Kirchenbau nördlich der Alpen bezeichnet² –, sondern dass diese ihrerseits aus einer kleinen Hauskirche hervorgegangen ist, die ihren Ursprung in der zweiten Hälfte des dritten Jahrhunderts hat.³ Diese dürfte in der Zeit der diokletianischen Verfolgung unter Constantius Chlorus, dem Vater Konstantins, zerstört worden sein.⁴

Was Wege und Methoden der Ausbreitung des Christentums im Römischen Reich anbetrifft, ist die Forschung seit dem Werk Adolf von Harnacks⁵ nicht wirklich vorangekommen.⁶ Klaus Koschorke stellt fest: „Institutionalisierte Missionsanstrengungen waren die Ausnahme, anonyme Ausbreitung die Regel.“⁷ Wir werden also von einem Weg der Ausbreitung des christlichen Glaubens ausgehen können, den wir persönliche Evangelisation nennen. Dabei kam es vor allem zu Einzelbekehrungen.

Gerade im Blick auf den sehr frühen Weg des Christentums nach Trier und Köln gibt es sogar Anzeichen für Einflüsse des griechischen Kulturkreises.⁸ So waren es vermutlich griechisch-orientalische Kaufleute, die über den Weg des Rhonetales als erste das Christentum nach Trier brachten.⁹ Auch trägt der erste für Trier sicher bezeugte Bischof Eucharisius einen griechischen Namen.¹⁰ Auch weilte mit Athanasius einer der bedeutendsten Kirchenführer und Theologen der griechisch-sprechenden Kirche während seiner Verbannung in Trier.¹¹ Sein Wirken in Trier spielte eine wichtige Rolle für die Verbreitung des Mönchtums im Westen.¹²

(2) Die Missions- und Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands als Schauplatz der Konstantinischen Wende

Nicht nur von den Zeitgenossen wie etwa dem Kirchenvater Eusebius von Cäsarea¹³ ist die *Konstantinische Wende* als epochemachende Umwälzung wahrgenommen worden. Bis heute werden ihre Ursachen und Auswirkungen heftig und kontrovers diskutiert, wie etwa die Ergebnisse des Symposiums zeigen, das im Zusammenhang mit

der Trierer Konstantin-Ausstellung von 2007 veranstaltet wurde.¹⁴

Die Kirchen- und Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands war ein wesentlicher Schauplatz dieses Geschehens, war Trier doch zur Zeit der Entscheidung Konstantins für die Förderung des Christentums kaiserliche Residenz, nachdem es zunächst „Metropole der neugeschaffenen Provinz *Belgica I*“ und dann Sitz der Prätorianerpräfektur Galliens geworden war.¹⁵ Sichtbar ist dies in Trier nicht nur durch archäologische Zeugnisse, sondern auch durch monumentale Bauwerke, die heute noch in sichtbaren Teilen auf das 4. Jahrhundert zurückgehen, z. B. die sog. Palastaula, den kaiserlichen Thronsaal des 4. Jahrhunderts, und den in Teilen noch bis zur Höhe von über 20 Metern stehenden, einzigartigen Quadratbau des frühchristlichen Trierer Domes, ebenfalls aus dem 4. Jahrhundert.¹⁶ Der Trierer Dom gehört mit der Jerusalemer Grabeskirche, den römischen Kathedralen Alt-St. Peter und Lateran zu den bedeutendsten Kirchenbauten der konstantinischen Zeit¹⁷ und stellt einen der größten, wenn nicht den größten frühchristlichen Kirchenbau überhaupt dar.¹⁸ Augenfalliger als in Trier konnte der Umschwung kaum deutlich werden, den die Konstantinische Wende für das Gemeindeleben bedeutete. In Trier finden wir das Nacheinander einer kleinen Hauskirche aus der Verfolgungszeit, der wenige Jahrzehnte später entstandenen Bischofskirche und der schließlich aus ihr erwachsenen monumentalen Kathedrale der konstantinischen Zeit.¹⁹ Waren die Christen in Trier zu Anfang des 4. Jahrhunderts vermutlich eine kleine Minderheit, so dürften sie einige Jahrzehnte später, wie etwa eine Nachricht des Kirchenvaters Athanasius über die große Zahl der Gottesdienstbesucher in der noch im Bau befindlichen Trierer Kathedrale nahe legt,²⁰ die Mehrheit der Trierer Bevölkerung gestellt haben.

Mit dem großen Wachstum der christlichen Gemeinden dürften zwei Probleme verbunden gewesen sein. Zum einen brachte es nun gesellschaftliche Vorteile ein, Christ zu werden, so dass sich die Frage nach der Motivation für den Übertritt zum Christentum stellt.²¹ Zum anderen verloren die christlichen Gemeinden, die bisher klein und durch die persönliche Begegnung geprägt waren, weitgehend ihren Gemeinschaftscharakter.²²

Die Ausbreitung des Christentums im ländlichen Raum dürfte langsamer als in den Städten vor sich gegangen sein.²³

Als Konsequenz und Weiterführung der Entscheidung Konstantins kann die Erklärung des

Christentums zur Staatsreligion durch Kaiser Theodosius um das Jahr 380 gelten. Das Konzept des christlichen Reiches bestimmte von nun an für lange Zeit die Kirchengeschichte Europas und hat damit auch für die Missionspraxis einschneidende Folgen. Bedeutete doch nun die Ausdehnung der Grenzen des christlichen Reiches die politische Verpflichtung zur Christianisierung der neu hinzugewonnenen Untertanen. Christianisierung stellte sich nun oft als politische Unternehmung dar. Dennoch sollte es in der Missionsgeschichte Europas auch immer wieder andere Ansätze geben.

Hatte das Gebiet des heutigen Deutschlands in der ersten, vorkonstantinischen Missionsepoche an der Peripherie gelegen, so war es mit Konstantin unvermittelt ins Zentrum nicht nur des kirchenpolitischen Geschehens und der sichtbaren Manifestation der Konstantinischen Wende etwa durch den monumentalen Kathedralbau gerückt. Trier, Konstantins Residenz während der Zeit der Wende, ist auch verbunden mit einer Reihe von Namen bedeutender christlicher Persönlichkeiten.²⁴ Durch den Aufenthalt des nach Trier verbannten Alexandriner Bischofs Athanasius „hatte die Trierer Kirche direkte Beziehung zu den großen Kontroversen und den bewegenden Themen der Zeit.“²⁵ Athanasius dürfte auch Nachrichten vom neu entstandenen ägyptischen Mönchtum in den Westen gebracht haben.²⁶ Hieronymus weilte in jungen Jahren ebenfalls in Trier.²⁷ Ambrosius von Mailand ist in Trier geboren.²⁸ Zusammen mit Ambrosius weilte Martin von Tours im Zusammenhang des Prozesses gegen die Priszillianer in Trier, bei dem sich beide vergeblich für ein milderes Urteil einsetzten.²⁹ Den christlichen Rhetor und Meister der lateinischen Sprache, Laktanz, bestimmte Konstantin in Trier zum Erzieher seines ältesten Sohnes Krispus.³⁰

Die Bedeutung Triers wird auch daran deutlich, dass es eine wichtige Münzstätte wurde.³¹ Für die Bedeutung Triers für die Geschichte des frühen Christentums spricht der Befund, dass „die Trierer Sammlung an frühchristlichen Inschriften... außerhalb Roms die umfanglichste“ ist.³²

(3) Der Rückschlag in der Zeit der Völkerwanderung

Nach diesem Höhenflug stellt sich die dritte Epoche der Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands als ein ausgesprochener Niedergang dar. Die ehemals römischen Gebiete des heutigen Deutschlands rücken in der Völkerwanderungszeit nicht

nur wieder an die Peripherie der christlichen Welt, in weiten Gebieten verschwand das Christentum wieder und es kam zu einer offensichtlichen *Repa-ganisierung*. Dies betrifft die linksrheinischen Gebiete südlich von Worms und weite Teile der Gebiete südlich der Donau.³³ In den anderen Gebieten wurde das Christentum entscheidend geschwächt und stand als Minderheit einer heidnischen, die Herrschaft an sich reißen den zugewanderten Bevölkerung gegenüber.³⁴ Wenigstens im Rheinland und an der Mosel ist in den größeren und auch in den kleineren Städten jedoch mit einer Kontinuität der christlichen Gemeinden zu rechnen,³⁵ wobei das Moselland noch lange romanisch sprach,³⁶ und es in Trier auch eine Kontinuität der überlieferten Bischofsliste gibt.³⁷ Gert Händler geht auch von einer „Kontinuität der Kirche im Donau-Alpen-Gebiet“ aus.³⁸

Als entscheidend für die weitere Entwicklung sollte sich erweisen, dass es auf dem Gebiet des heutigen Deutschlands zur Herausbildung des einzigen der zahlreichen Germanenreiche der Völkerwanderungszeit kam, das dauerhaft Bestand hatte. Darüber hinaus haben wir eine Vorentscheidung darin zu sehen, dass die heidnischen Franken der christlichen romanischen Restbevölkerung ihre Existenz ließen, d. h. das entstehende, noch heidnisch geprägte Fränkische Reich verfolgte die Kirche nicht. Die bestehende Kirche konnte ihre Existenz wahren und diese Kontinuität sollte sich dann als entscheidend für die Zukunft erweisen.³⁹

(4) Die Hinwendung des Frankenreiches zum römisch-katholischen Christentum

Es schien nun so, als wäre das staatskirchliche Verständnis des untergehenden Weströmischen Reiches abgelöst worden durch einen ethnischen Gegensatz zwischen verbliebener romanischsprachiger christlicher und zugewanderter fränkisch-germanischer heidnischer Bevölkerung. Die Situation für die Kirche und die Ausbreitung des Christentums änderte sich grundlegend mit einer erneuten Wende: Der merowingische König Chlodwig entschied sich, ähnlich wie Kaiser Konstantin, für das Christentum.⁴⁰ Im Zusammenhang der germanischen Stammeskultur werden wir hier von einer Entscheidung über die Religionszugehörigkeit als Stammesentscheidung sprechen können, ließ sich Chlodwig doch zusammen mit einer großen Zahl Adliger taufen.⁴¹

Zwei wesentliche Motive sind bei der Entscheidung Chlodwigs zu erkennen: Der Einfluss seiner

katholischen Gemahlin und, wie schon bei Konstantin, das Motiv des den Sieg in der Schlacht verleihenden Gottes.⁴²

In den Zentren christlicher Kontinuität an Mittel- und Niederrhein und Mosel lässt sich an Hand der Namen auf christlichen Grabinschriften seit dem 5. Jahrhundert eine zunehmende Zahl germanischer Namen nachweisen.⁴³ Mit der Christianisierung des Frankenreiches ist der Übergang der germanischen Volksgruppen unter fränkischer Herrschaft zum Christentum vorgezeichnet.

Dabei spielten kulturelle Unterschiede eine bemerkenswerte Rolle. Entsprechend dem größeren romanischen Bevölkerungsanteil war die Kirche im Süden Galliens stärker als im Norden. Viele Impulse zur Christianisierung des Frankenreiches kamen daher aus dem romanischen Süden.⁴⁴ Das Frankenreich entwickelte sich zudem kulturell nicht einheitlich. Aus dem Nebeneinander von Romanen und Germanen in einem Gebiet wurde das Nebeneinander zweier Kultur- und Sprachräume. Während im Westen die Assimilierung der Germanen durch die Romanen erfolgte (das spätere Frankreich), passten sich im Osten die Romanen den Germanen an (das spätere Deutschland).⁴⁵ Auch war die Entscheidung Chlodwigs für die katholische Form des Christentums von epochaler Bedeutung für die Zukunft Europas, kamen doch nun der Katholizismus und der germanische Kulturkreis endgültig zusammen. Insgesamt spielte nach dem Urteil Lutz von Padbergs beim Christianisierungsprozess des Merowingerreiches die seit der Spätantike bestehende Kontinuität des Christentums eine wichtige Rolle: „Die Christianisierung der Franken profitierte von der Kontinuität der Kirchenorganisation im provinzialrömischen Gebiet auch nach deren Landnahme.“⁴⁶ An Mosel und Rhein begann eine begrenzte Missionsbewegung, deren Ablauf sich aber nicht nachzeichnen lässt.⁴⁷

Zwar dürften Unterweisung und Lehre in der Volkssprache stattgefunden haben, während die Sprache der Liturgie das Latein blieb,⁴⁸ der Kontextualisierungsprozess also unvollkommen blieb. Gleichzeitig haben wir mit synkretistischen Elementen zu rechnen⁴⁹ und den bekannten Elementen der Wertschätzung der Werke, Hochachtung für Askese, Heiligen- und Reliquienverehrung. Ein besonderes Kennzeichen der Kirchen im germanischen Raum stellte das Eigenkirchenwesen dar.⁵⁰

(5) Die Bedeutung der iroschottischen Mission für die Kontextualisierung des Christentums in Deutschland

Mit der nächsten Epoche der Christianisierung des Gebiets des heutigen Deutschlands kommt ein weiterer europäischer Kulturkreis in den Blick, der keltische. Nicht nur, dass die frühe Christianisierung der keltischen gebliebenen Gebiete an der Peripherie Europas zu den erstaunlichsten Erscheinungen der Missionsgeschichte Europas gehört. Von hier, von der Peripherie Europas, ging auch eine Missionsbewegung aus, die das Christentum Mitteleuropas nachhaltig geprägt hat, die iroschottische Mission.

Das irische Christentum hat durch einen intensiven Kontextualisierungsprozess eine charakteristische Prägung erfahren.⁵¹ Zu dieser gehörten sowohl das Mönchtum mit seiner strengen Askese, als auch die Bußpraxis, zu der eine genutzende Leistung gehörte und die die Bußpraxis der gesamten römisch-katholischen Kirche geprägt hat.⁵² Während der Völkerwanderungszeit haben Gelehrsamkeit und Bildung der irischen Mönche entscheidend dazu beigetragen, Sprachkenntnisse und Bildungsgut der Antike für das christliche Abendland zu bewahren.⁵³

Iroschottische Mönche suchten die Askese durch Leben in der Fremde auch auf dem Kontinent zu verwirklichen; dadurch wurden sie zu Missionaren und haben zur Christianisierung des heutigen Frankreichs, Thüringens, des südwestdeutschen Raumes und Bayerns beigetragen.⁵⁴ Mission kann man hier als persönliches Projekt verstehen.

Entsprechend zu dem intensiven Kontextualisierungsprozess in ihrer Heimat scheinen die iroschottischen Mönche einen wesentlichen Beitrag zur Einheimischmachung des christlichen Wortschatzes in der im Entstehen begriffenen deutschen Sprache geleistet zu haben, wie Peter von Polenz erläutert: „Die erstaunliche Lebenskraft und Überlegenheit des süddt. Kirchenwortschatzes erklärt sich wohl daraus, daß die Angelsachsen zwar die erfolgreicherer Organisatoren eines geordneten Kirchenwesens waren, die Iroschotten aber in tiefer Frömmigkeit und Gelehrsamkeit ein strengeres Verhältnis zum missionarischen Sprachproblem hatten.“⁵⁵ So erstrecken sich die Wortentlehnungen aus dem Lateinischen oder Griechischen auf äußerliche Sachbereiche des kirchlichen Lebens wie Kirche, Glocke, Priester Bischof, Kloster, Zelle, Mönch, Messe, Kreuz. Demgegenüber sind für die Begriffe von Glaubenslehre und -leben „einheimische Wörter verwendet oder neu gebildet worden:

Gott, Schöpfer, Heiland, Gnade, Glaube, beten, Seele, Demut, Beichte, Buße, Gewissen, Erlösung.“⁵⁶ Gleichzeitig brachten die iroschottischen Mönche aber ein sehr gesetzliches Verständnis des Evangeliums.

(6) Die prägende Bedeutung der angelsächsischen Mission für das Christentum in Deutschland: persönliche Glaubensentscheidung und Bindung an Rom

Als noch bedeutender als die iroschottische Mission erwies sich die zweite Missionsbewegung von der Peripherie her, die angelsächsische Mission. Sie sollte die Kirche Mitteleuropas nachhaltig prägen. Die angelsächsische Missionsbewegung stellt sich als kirchliches Missionsprojekt dar und erscheint als Konsequenz aus der Entstehungsgeschichte der angelsächsischen Kirche, die ja ihrerseits aus einer planvollen Missionsunternehmung hervorgegangen ist.⁵⁷

Die herausragende Gestalt der angelsächsischen Mission auf dem europäischen Kontinent war Wynfret/Winfrid-Bonifatius.⁵⁸ Das Wirken des Bonifatius umfasst sowohl die eigentliche pioniermissionarische Tätigkeit, wie auch organisatorische Aufbauarbeit und die Reform der Kirche des Merowingerreiches. Bemerkenswert im Blick auf seine Missionstätigkeit in Hessen und Thüringen sind das Ziel der persönlichen Glaubensentscheidung,⁵⁹ die Motivierung und Ausbildung von Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeitern für die Missionsarbeit⁶⁰ und die Gebetsbruderschaft im Hintergrund der Arbeit.⁶¹ Die Gründung bzw. Reorganisation von Bistümern wie Bistum, Erfurt, Würzburg, Eichstätt, Regensburg, Augsburg, Freising und Salzburg, und Klöstern wie Amöneburg, Ohrdruf und Fulda,⁶² galt sowohl der Konsolidierung des Erreichten, als auch dem weiteren Aufbau der bisher ansatzweise organisierten Kirche unter den Bajuwaren.⁶³ Auch wird hierin ein bestimmender Zug der Wirksamkeit des Bonifatius sichtbar: Er band die Kirche des Merowingerreiches eng an das römische Papsttum.⁶⁴ Im Hintergrund steht die gerade für die Germanen typische Hinneigung zu dem Verwalter des Petrusamtes, der die Vollmacht über die Schlüssel des Himmelreiches in Anspruch nahm – ein Anspruch, der mit religiösen Vorstellungen der Germanen korrespondierte und von diesen gestärkt wurde.⁶⁵

(7) Christliches Reich – Christianisierung und Mission unter Karl d. Gr. als politisches Projekt

Die nächste Epoche der Christianisierung des heutigen Deutschlands führt uns in einen gänzlich anderen Zusammenhang. Nicht mehr die individuell ausgerichtete Missionsarbeit einzelner Missionare, die zudem von den britischen Inseln stammten, war nun bestimmend, sondern der alte römische Reichsgedanke in dem unter Karl dem Großen erstarkten Frankenreich. Mission wurde hier zum politischen Projekt.

Das Fränkische Reich verstand sich als Erbe des Weströmischen Reiches, und so war die Erneuerung der (west)römischen Kaiserwürde durch die Krönung Karls d. Gr. durch Papst Leo III. im Jahr 800 und damit die Wiedererrichtung des christlichen Reiches im Sinne der Interpretation des Eusebius von Cäsarea nur konsequent.⁶⁶

Ausbreitung des Christentums bedeutete demnach, mit politischen oder militärischen Mitteln die Grenzen des christlichen Reiches auszudehnen. Die Kirche in den alten Reichsteilen hatte nun die Pflicht, die in den neu hinzugewonnenen Gebieten lebenden zunächst nichtchristlichen Einwohner zu christianisieren, diese ihrerseits wurden als dazu verpflichtet angesehen, als (neue) Untertanen des christlichen Kaisers den christlichen Glauben anzunehmen.⁶⁷ Diesem Verständnis entsprechend ist die Christianisierung der Sachsen und Friesen durch Karl d. Gr. gewaltsam verlaufen.⁶⁸ Die erste Phase der Christianisierung ging dann über in die kirchliche Aufbauarbeit, bei der die neugegründeten Missionsbistümer im sächsischen Gebiet Bistümern im altfränkischen Gebiet zugeordnet wurden,⁶⁹ Zuordnungen, die z. T. noch heute bestehen.

(8) Der Visionär Ansgar: Die Mission Skandinaviens und der Anteil der Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands an der Missionsgeschichte Skandinaviens

Nach der Christianisierung der Sachsen und mit der Herausbildung des Deutschen Reiches nach der Teilung des Frankenreiches entfaltete sich die Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands in drei – jedenfalls in der Zielvorstellung – weit ausgreifenden Missionsinitiativen.

Als erstes ist das visionäre Projekt Ansgars zu nennen: die Missionierung ganz Skandinaviens. Während Ansgar in seiner eigenen Missionsarbeit

wenig erfolgreich war,⁷⁰ wirkte seine Vision nach und bestimmte ganz stark die zukünftige Entwicklung des Christentums in Skandinavien mit.

Das Anfang der dreißiger Jahre des 9. Jahrhunderts gegründete Missions-(Erz)Bistum Hamburg sollte der Ausgangspunkt für Ansgars Skandinavienmission werden.⁷¹ Doch die hochfliegenden Pläne konnten nicht ausgeführt werden. Beraubte schon die Teilung des Reiches im Jahr 843 Hamburg seines Hinterlandes,⁷² so war mit der Zerstörung Hamburgs durch Wikinger aus Dänemark im Jahr 845 den Plänen Ansgars endgültig die Grundlage entzogen.⁷³

Ansgars geistliche Ausrichtung,⁷⁴ die von Ludwig dem Frommen unterstützt wurde,⁷⁵ wirkte aber in den folgenden Jahrhunderten in der Christianisierung Skandinaviens weiter. Die bedeutende Rolle, die seine neue Wirkungsstätte Bremen später dabei hätte haben können, wurde aber gerade durch die hochtrabenden Pläne Erzbischof Adalberts, die vor allem kirchenpolitisch motiviert gewesen zu sein scheinen, nach anfänglichen Erfolgen zunichte gemacht. Adalberts Pläne, sein Erzbistum zu einem Patriarchat des Nordens erheben zu lassen, das die Herrschaft über die Kirche im gesamten skandinavischen Raum innegehabt hätte, wurden von Papst Alexander II. abgewiesen.⁷⁶ Statt dessen kam es im Jahr 1104 zur Gründung des Erzbistums Lund, dessen Jurisdiktionsbereich Dänemark, Norwegen, Schweden und Island umfasste.⁷⁷

In einer merkwürdigen Umkehrung der weit ausladenden Missionsvision Ansgars und der hochtrabenden Pläne Adalberts hat dann in einer späteren Phase der Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands Skandinavien seinerseits Anteil an der Christianisierung von Regionen des heutigen Deutschlands. Nicht nur, dass ein großer Teil des heutigen Schleswig-Holsteins lange Zeit zu Dänemark gehörte und damit Anteil an der Christianisierungsgeschichte Dänemarks hatte.⁷⁸ Die dänische Missionsinitiative trug auch wesentlich zur Christianisierung der norddeutschen Küstengebiete der Ostsee bei. Der dänische König Alexander III. betrachtete in der zweiten Hälfte des 12. Jahrhunderts die Eroberung bisher heidnischen Gebietes als Mission.⁷⁹ Die Christianisierung dieser dänischen Gebiete des heutigen Norddeutschlands ging von Klöstern aus, die zu diesem Zweck gegründet wurden, Dargun, Kolbatz, Bergen, Belbuck und Eldena.⁸⁰

(9) Otto d. Gr., Magdeburg und die Slawenmission: Der Anteil der Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands an der Missionsgeschichte der slawischen Völker

Die zweite große Missionsinitiative ging von Otto dem Großen (936-973) aus. Ähnlich wie Karl d. Gr. verstand Otto d. Gr. Mission als Aufgabe des Herrschers, für die dieser politische und ggf. auch militärische Mittel einzusetzen habe.⁸¹ Dieses theokratische Konzept wurde von der Kirche ausdrücklich gebilligt, wie die Gründungsurkunde des als Missionsbistums gegründeten Erzbistums Magdeburg zeigt.⁸² Missionsgebiete sollten zunächst die dem damaligen Deutschland im Osten angrenzenden Gebiete nördlich des Erzgebirges sein; die politischen und missionarischen Ziele waren aber wesentlich weiter gesteckt, wie die zunächst teilweise gelungene Einbeziehung des polnischen Bistums Posen in den Magdeburger Metropolitanbereich zeigt.⁸³

In der Gründungsurkunde des Erzbistums Magdeburg mit den fünf ihm unterstellten Suffraganbistümern Havelberg, Brandenburg, Meißen, Merseburg und Zeitz beanspruchten Papst und Kaiser „allein die Autorität zur Organisation der einen umfassenden Slawenkirche“ zu haben.⁸⁴ Dauerhaften Erfolg hatte diese umfassend geplante Slawenmission aber nur in den in dieser Zeit gegründeten Marken an der Saale und mittleren Elbe. Bemerkenswerterweise ging die Christianisierung der slawischen Bevölkerung von den Burggemeinden aus, die in den zur Sicherung der Herrschaft in den Marken errichteten deutschen Burgen gegründet wurden.⁸⁵ Während die deutsche Herrschaft und die Christianisierung dieser südlichen Gebiete Bestand hatten, wurden die Missionsansätze im Norden im Jahr 983 durch den Aufstand der slawischen Liutizen und Abodriten zunichte gemacht, die Missionsbistümer Havelberg und Brandenburg zerstört.⁸⁶ Magdeburg geriet für lange Zeit in eine Randlage.⁸⁷ Mit der Gründung des polnischen Staatswesens war das Anliegen verbunden, weder politische, noch kirchlich in den deutschen Einflussbereich zu kommen. Bei diesem Bemühen war die Gründung eines eigenständigen polnischen Erzbistums Gnesen im Jahr 1000 ein entscheidender Erfolg.⁸⁸

Wie bei der Skandinavienmission scheiterten auch bei der Slawenmission die weitreichenden deutschen Pläne. Die Christianisierung der weiter östlichen slawischen Völker ging einen von der deutschen Missionsinitiative unabhängigen Weg,

während die slawischen Völkerschaften, die damals die Gebiete des heutigen Nordostdeutschlands bewohnten, zu den an der Süd- und Ostküste der Ostsee lebenden heidnischen Völkern gehörten, bei deren noch Jahrhunderte andauernden Widerstand gegen die Christianisierung man von einer „Zone des Widerstandes“ sprechen kann – wurden doch fast alle anderen Völker Europas um die Jahrtausendwende oder bald danach christlich.⁸⁹

Und auch im Blick auf die missionarische Begegnung mit den slawischen Völkern haben wir es, wie bei der missionarischen Begegnung mit Skandinavien, mit einer Umkehrung der Missionsrichtung zu tun.

Bald nach der Gründung des polnischen Staatswesens und des polnischen Erzbistums ging nämlich von hier die Initiative aus, verschiedene Gebiete des heutigen Deutschlands zu christianisieren – nun in einer missionarischen Ost-West-Bewegung!

Herzog Boleslaw III. Krzywousty („Schiefmund“) hatte im Jahr 1122 Pommern erobert. Offensichtlich aus Sorge, das Erzbistum Magdeburg könnte seine Herrschaftsansprüche über die Kirche Polens erneuern, wandte er sich an das Erzbistum Bamberg um Hilfe bei der Mission in den neuerworbenen Gebieten. Erzbischof Otto von Bamberg selbst unternahm zwei ausgedehnte Missionsreisen, die erfolgreich verliefen.⁹⁰ Er legte damit den Grundstock für die Kirche unter den Pommern. Die von Osten nach Westen gerichtete Bewegung wird daran deutlich, dass Otto von Bambergs erste Reise Gebieten Pommerns östlich, die zweite Reise aber den Gebieten Pommerns westlich der Oder galt.

Etwa in die gleiche Zeit fiel eine weitere polnische Missionsinitiative, die nach Westen gerichtet war. Im Jahr 1124 wurde in Lebus links der Oder ein Missionsbistum gegründet, das dem Erzbistum Gnesen unterstellt war. Von dem Bistum Lebus aus sollte die kirchliche Organisation im angrenzenden Liutizengebiet, in den Landschaften Lebus, Sternberg und Küstrin bis zur Spree aufgebaut werden; es „hatte sehr wahrscheinlich auch die Missionierung der weiter westlich an Spree und Havel lebenden Slawen zur Aufgabe.“⁹¹

Der Raum des heutigen Deutschlands hat mit diesen Gebieten also auch am slawischen Missionsgebiet Anteil und zwar in dem Sinne, dass hier die Mission von einer christlich geprägten slawischen Nation ausging.

(10) Die bayerische Missionsinitiative – Mission unter Slawen und Ungarn

Die dritte Missionsinitiative ging vom bayerischen Raum aus. Die Bistümer Regensburg, Passau und Salzburg hatten schon im 9. Jahrhundert weitreichende Pläne zur Mission unter slawischen Völkern. Weder Regensburg, noch Passau gelang es, den böhmisch-mährischen Raum kirchlich unter seinen Einfluss zu bringen.⁹² Ebenfalls scheiterte der bemerkenswerte Versuch des Bistums Passau, Bulgarien zu missionieren.⁹³ Erfolgreich dagegen war die im Jahr 1007 erfolgte Gründung des bald zum exemten, dem Papst direkt unterstellten Erzbistums erhobenen Bistums Bamberg mit dem Ziel der Missionsarbeit unter den damals an Main und Regnitz auf dem Gebiet des heutigen Bayern lebenden, noch heidnischen Slawen.⁹⁴

Besonders bemerkenswert in unserem Zusammenhang ist eine weitere Missionsinitiative des Bistums Passau. Nach dem Sieg Ottos d. Gr. über die Ungarn im Jahr 955 auf dem Lechfeld bei Augsburg ergaben sich Missionsmöglichkeiten für die bayerische Kirche bis hin nach Ungarn. So leitete Bischof Pilgrim von Passau durch seine Reise im Jahr 971 die Ungarnmission ein,⁹⁵ die dann bald mit der Errichtung der Erzbistümer Eszergom (Gran) und Kalocsa und weiterer acht Bistümer im Jahr 1000 zur Gründung einer eigenständigen ungarischen Kirche führte.⁹⁶ Diese Missionsunternehmung stellte somit die Beziehung zwischen der Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands und dem ungarischen Kulturkreis her.

(11) „Mission“ als „Glaubenskrieg“: der „Wendenkreuzzug“

Ein besonders dunkles Kapitel der Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands stellt der sogenannte „Wendenkreuzzug“ dar. Schon vorher hatte es das Nebeneinander von solchen Missionsinitiativen gegeben, die die friedliche Verkündigung in den Mittelpunkt stellten, und solchen, die die Mission auch politisch verstanden, bis hin zum Einsatz militärischer Mittel. So spricht Hans-Dietrich Kahl von „indirekten Missionskriegen“ und etwa im Blick auf die Sachsenmission Karls d. Gr. von einem „direkten Missionskrieg“.⁹⁷

Im hohen Mittelalter trat neben das Konzept des politisch motivierten Missionskrieges das Extrem des Glaubenskrieges.

Nach dem Zusammenbruch der Mission unter den Abodriten und dem Märtyrertod Gottschalks

in Mecklenburg im Jahr 1066 hatte es bis zum Beginn des 12. Jahrhunderts gedauert, bis es im Nordosten des heutigen Deutschlands wieder zu Missionsansätzen gekommen war. Nach verschiedenen friedlichen, aber wenig erfolgreichen Missionsansätzen nahm die Mission unter den Slawen nordöstlich der Elbe eine dramatische Wendung. Sächsische Adlige, deren Herrschaftsgebiete an das Wendengebiet grenzten, zeigten keine Bereitschaft, dem Aufruf Bernhard von Clairvaux zum Zweiten Kreuzzug in den Orient Folge zu leisten.⁹⁸ Frühere Aufrufe zum Krieg gegen die Ungläubigen⁹⁹ mündeten nun in den Gedanken, „den Kampf gegen die Wenden mit dem Kreuzzugsunternehmen zu verschmelzen.“¹⁰⁰

Bernhard von Clairvaux griff diesen Gedanken auf und machte den Aufruf zum „Wendenkreuzzug“ zu einem mit dem Aufruf zum Kreuzzug in das Heilige Land gleichrangigen Anliegen.¹⁰¹ Es gelang ihm, Papst Eugen III. dazu zu bewegen, die Teilnahme am „Wendenkreuzzug“ als mit der Teilnahme am Kreuzzug ins Heilige Land gleichwertig anzuerkennen.¹⁰² Das Unternehmen des „Wendenkreuzzugs“ des Jahres 1147, bei dem auch Dänen und Polen mitwirkten,¹⁰³ scheiterte ebenso wie der gleichzeitige Zweite Kreuzzug ins Heilige Land.

Der „Wendenkreuzzug“ richtete für den Fortgang der Missionsarbeit großen Schaden an. „Um Missionsziele ging es in dem Kreuzzug kaum, sondern vor allem um die Durchsetzung politischer Interessen.“¹⁰⁴ Die Erbitterung unter den Slawen war verständlicherweise groß.¹⁰⁵ „Den... Wagiern erschien die Botschaft von der Liebe Gottes in Christus nun wie nackter Hohn.“¹⁰⁶

Es muss als eine vollständige Verirrung verstanden werden, wenn der Widerstand der in Europa verbliebenen nichtchristlichen Völker gegen das Evangelium durch einen Kreuzzug gebrochen werden sollte. Immerhin gab es auch damals Stimmen, die sich gegen den Kreuzzug und für eine friedliche Mission aussprachen.¹⁰⁷ Schon Zeitgenossen übten heftige Kritik an der Kreuzzugsbewegung und bezeichneten die Initiatoren des Zweiten Kreuzzuges und des „Wendenkreuzzuges“, Papst Eugen III. und Bernhard von Clairvaux, als falsche Propheten.¹⁰⁸

Der Weg für die friedliche Missionsarbeit unter den Elbslawen erschien nun fast nicht mehr möglich.¹⁰⁹ Die Christianisierung dieser Gebiete sollte in der Tat nicht durch direkte Missionsarbeit geschehen, sondern auf einem Weg, den wir „Mission durch Migration“ nennen können: „Auf Erfolg der Missionsarbeit war nicht mehr zu rechnen. Seit

dem Jahr 1147 stand es fest, daß die Wendenlande nicht christlich werden würden, wenn sie wendisch blieben. Nur durch deutsche Einwanderung konnte das Christentum gepflanzt werden.¹¹⁰

(12) Mission durch Migration: Christianisierung durch die deutsche Ostsiedlung

Das letzte Kapitel der Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands steht unter der Überschrift „Mission durch Migration.“ Das Gebiet der Elbslawen, das heutige Ostholstein, Mecklenburg und Brandenburg bildeten nach dem Slawenaufstand von 983 einen Teil der an der Ostsee gelegenen „Zone des Widerstandes“ gegen die Christianisierung. Weder friedliche Missionsversuche von außen, noch die Initiative einheimischer, zum Christentum übergetretener Herrscher, noch gewaltsame Missionsversuche änderten hieran etwas. Waren durch die dänische und die polnische Missionsinitiative immerhin Randgebiete christianisiert worden, so war es erst die deutsche Ostkolonisation des Mittelalters, die zur dauerhaften Christianisierung dieser Gebiete führte.

Für die deutsche Ostsiedlung spielten neben demographischen Ursachen auch politische Motive und das Anliegen der Mission eine Rolle.¹¹¹ Während die deutsch besiedelten Gebiete des Westens eine große Bevölkerungsdichte aufwiesen, waren die slawisch besiedelten Gebiete östlich der Elbe nur dünn besiedelt. Das einsetzende starke Bevölkerungswachstum im Westen – zwischen 1000 und 1300 hat sich die Bevölkerung Deutschlands mehr als verdoppelt¹¹² – gehört zu den Voraussetzungen der deutschen Ostsiedlung. In einem meist friedlichen, über mehrere Jahrhunderte andauernden Prozess haben deutsche Siedler bisher siedlungsarme oder siedlungsleere Räume besiedelt oder aber Dörfer in der Nachbarschaft bestehender slawischer Siedlungen gegründet. Dabei waren es in Sachsen die Burgen, von denen die Christianisierung ausging,¹¹³ in anderen Gebieten die Klöster.¹¹⁴ Bei den bedeutenden Stadtgründungen der deutschen Ostsiedlung waren es als solche gegründete Stadtkirchengemeinden, die die Christianisierung trugen.¹¹⁵ Kulturell waren meist die Einflüsse aus dem Westen bestimmend;¹¹⁶ schließlich kam es zur Verschmelzung der Volksgruppen, so dass Einheimische und „Neusiedler zu deutschen Neustämmen zusammengewachsen“ sind.¹¹⁷ Die Christianisierung des Gebietes des heutigen Deutschlands und der angrenzenden ehemals deutschen Gebiete Ost-

pommerns, Ostpreußens und Schlesiens fand also seinen Abschluss durch die Einwanderung bereits christlicher Bevölkerungsgruppen und den Übergang der einheimischen, bisher nichtchristlichen Bevölkerung zum Christentum im Zusammenhang mit einem Übergangs- und kulturellen Verschmelzungsprozess, der z. T. Jahrhunderte andauerte.

Dieser Prozess der Christianisierung durch Migration erscheint in vielem problematisch. So konnte etwa in Wagrien „die Christianisierung im Zeichen der Germanisierung“ stehen.¹¹⁸ Auch bleibt zu fragen, ob eine solche Christianisierung, die mit der Übernahme von deutscher Kultur und Sprache verbunden war, wirklich die Herzen erreichte und ob unter der Oberfläche nicht die alten heidnischen Vorstellungen lebendig blieben. Auch kam es etwa bei den Abodriten nicht zur Einbeziehung der Slawen in die Mitarbeit: „Der Umstand, daß die Abodriten keinen aus ihrem Volksstamm hervorgegangenen Klerus hatten, beschleunigte den Prozeß der Germanisierung.“¹¹⁹ Wie differenziert man aber die Vorgänge betrachten muss, zeigt das Beispiel der slawischen Sorben. Diese konnten in der Ober- und Niederlausitz bis heute ihren Charakter als eigenständige Volksgruppe bewahren.¹²⁰ Allerdings war deren Christianisierung etwa um das Jahr 1000, also schon vor dem Einsetzen der deutschen Ostsiedlung, im Wesentlichen abgeschlossen.¹²¹

(13) Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands: Epochen – Methoden – Kulturkreise

Die Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands stellt sich aus drei Blickwinkeln als ausgesprochen komplexes Geflecht dar.

Alle wichtigen *Epochen* der europäischen Missionsgeschichte sind auch für die Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands von Bedeutung. So hat die Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands schon Anteil an der ersten Epoche der Ausbreitung des Christentums, der frühchristlichen Ausbreitung der Kirche im Römischen Reich. Mit der kaiserlichen Residenz Trier rückte das Gebiet des heutigen Deutschlands von der Peripherie ins Zentrum des Geschehens, war es doch „die Kaiserresidenz Trier, von der Konstantins Siegeszug seinen Ausgang genommen hatte.“¹²² So ist die Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands aufs Engste mit der Konstantinischen Wende und ihren Folgen verbunden. Die Epoche der Völkerwanderung brachte dann einen großen Rückschlag, nicht aber das Abbrechen der christlichen Kontinuität. Ein weiterer Markstein war die Chris-

tianisierung des Frankenreiches, es folgten „klassische“ Missionsepochen wie die iroschottische und die angelsächsische Mission. Ein weiteres epochales Geschehen war die Wiedererrichtung des westlichen Kaiserreiches durch die Krönung Karls d. Gr. im Jahr 800. Es folgten schließlich die verschiedenen mittelalterlichen Missionsinitiativen, an deren Rand einerseits die Kreuzzugsbewegung, andererseits die Ostsiedlung auch im Kontext der Geschichte der Christianisierung zu nennen sind.

Vielfältig wie die Epochen waren auch die *Missionsmethoden*, die Anwendung fanden. Schon die beiden ersten Epochen zeigen ein gegensätzliches Bild. Stand am Anfang die persönliche Evangelisation im Mittelpunkt, so spielten dann die Entscheidung des Herrschers und die Herausbildung des Staatskirchentums die entscheidenden Rollen, Motive, die dann vielfältig wiederkehrten. In der Völkerwanderungszeit können wir von Stammesbekehrungen sprechen, während die iroschottische Mission als persönliches Projekt erscheint.

Die angelsächsische Mission zeigte ein vielfältiges Ineinander verschiedener Motive und Methoden. Standen im Hintergrund eine engagierte Heimatbasis und ein wirksame Gebetsbruderschaft, so erkennen wir in der Wirksamkeit des Bonifatius einerseits die Verkündigungsarbeit von geschulten Missionsteams, die auf eine persönliche Aneignung des christlichen Glaubens abzielte, andererseits sehen wir die methodische Aufbauarbeit mit einem breiten, auch kulturellen Programm durch die Klostergründungen. Abgesichert wurde die Christianisierung schließlich durch eine Reformierung der Kirche, durch den Aufbau der Kirchenorganisation in den Missionsgebieten und durch die enge Bindung der Kirche an das Papsttum in Rom.

Die Christianisierung der Sachsen durch Karl d. Gr. stellte das Beispiel einer politisch motivierten Mission dar, die auch die Anwendung militärischer Gewalt einbezog. Ein extremes Beispiel für die Einbeziehung von Gewalt in die Ausbreitungsgeschichte des Christentums zeigte die Verirrung des „Wendekreuzzugs“.

Ganz anders stellte sich vor allem das Wirken Ansgars dar, eines Missionsvisionärs.

Die mittelalterliche Mission wandte viele Methoden an, oftmals wurden Klöster als Zentren der Christianisierung gegründet, es gab regelrecht als solche gegründete Missionsbistümer, z. T. in der Weise, das schon bestehenden Bistümer für die Missionsbistümer Verantwortung übernahmen; andere Wege waren Stadtkirchen und als Sonder-

fall Burggemeinden.

Oftmals wurde der Aufbau der kirchlichen Organisation bis hin zur örtlichen Pfarhie als der entscheidende Weg der Mission angesehen.

Schließlich, und das ist neben der Dauer der Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands von einem ganzen Jahrtausend der erstaunlichste Befund, trat die Christenheit Deutschlands durch ihre Missionsgeschichte in Interaktion mit allen wichtigen *Kulturkreisen* Europas.

So sind die ersten beiden Epochen der Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands geprägt vom Einfluss des romanisch geprägten Christentums des Römischen Reiches, wobei es ganz zu Anfang sogar Anzeichen für einen Einfluss des griechisch geprägten Christentums gibt.

In der Völkerwanderungszeit wurde dann der germanische Einfluss bestimmend, und dies auf Dauer. Die iroschottische Mission brachte einen prägenden christlichen Impuls aus dem keltischen Kulturkreis, während die sich anschließende angelsächsische Mission die Christenheit Deutschlands wohl noch nachhaltiger geprägt hat. In den hochmittelalterlichen Missionsepochen trat die Christenheit Deutschlands in ein vielfältiges Beziehungsgeflecht mit zwei weiteren großen Kulturkreisen Europas ein. Dies gilt sowohl im gebenden, als auch im empfangenden Sinn für den skandinavischen und den slawischen Kulturkreis. Dabei hat, und dies mag durchaus überraschen, das Gebiet des heutigen Deutschlands Anteil an der Christianisierungsgeschichte sowohl Skandinaviens, als auch des slawischen Kulturkreises – und zwar ausgehend von Dänemark und Polen. Schließlich trat mit der Passauer Ungarnmission sogar der ungarische Kulturkreis in das Blickfeld der Christenheit Deutschlands.

Die Missionsgeschichte Deutschlands korrespondiert also in vielfältiger Weise mit den Epochen und Methoden der Missionsgeschichte Europas und lässt Beziehungen zu allen wichtigen Kulturkreisen Europas erkennen. Geographisch in der Mitte Europas gelegen, ist die Christenheit Deutschlands somit in ihrer Ausbreitungsgeschichte durch ein intensives Beziehungsgeflecht mit der Christenheit Europas verbunden.

Notes

- 1 Zitiert bei Ernst Dassmann, *Kirchengeschichte Bd. 1: Ausbreitung, Leben und Lehre der Kirche in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 2000), 265; vgl. Karl Baus, *Von der Urgemeinde*

- zur *frühchristlichen Großkirche*, Hubert Jedin (Hg.), *Handbuch der Kirchengeschichte Band 1* (Freiburg: Herder, 1985), 243.
- 2 In der Kulturdatenbank Region Trier heißt es: „Der Trierer Dom ist eine der ältesten Stätten der Christenheit, älteste Bischofskirche nördlich der Alpen und seit der Spätantike ein lebendiges Zentrum gelebten Glaubens.“ Kulturgüter in der Region Trier <http://bwpc08.fh-trier.de>. Eingewählt am 10. 7. 2007. Im Trierer Orgelpunkt heißt es: „Der Trierer Dom ist die älteste Bischofskirche und die älteste Kirche nördlich der Alpen überhaupt, die seit dem vierten Jahrhundert eine ununterbrochene Gottesdienst-Tradition besitzt.“ www.trierer-orgelpunkt.de Eingewählt am 10. 7. 2007.
- 3 Winfried Weber, „Neue Forschungen zur Trierer Domgrabung. Die archäologischen Ausgrabungen im Garten der Kurie von der Leyen,“ in: Sebastian Ristow (Hg.), *Neu Forschungen zu den Anfängen des Christentums im Rheinland*, Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum Ergänzungsband Kleine Reihe 2 (Münster: Aschendorff, 2004), 225-234; ders. „... dass man auf ihren Bau alle Sorgfalt verwende.“ Die Trierer Kirchenanlage und das konstantinische Kirchenbauprogramm,“ in: Michael Fiedrowicz, Gerhard Krieger, Winfried Weber (Hg.), *Konstantin der Große: Der Kaiser und die Christen – die Christen und der Kaiser*, 2. Aufl. (Trier: Paulinus, 2007), 69-96; Heinz Heinen, *Frühchristliches Trier: von den Anfängen bis zur Völkerwanderung* (Trier: Paulinus, 1996), 111;
- 4 Heinz Heinen, „Trier als Bischofssitz,“ in: Alexander Demandt und Josef Engemann, *Konstantin der Große: Ausstellungskatalog* (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 2007), 318-326, 319.
- 5 Adolf [von] Harnack, *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten*. (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1902).
- 6 Vgl. Norbert Brox, „Zur christlichen Mission in der Spätantike,“ in: Karl Kertelge (Hg.), *Mission im Neuen Testament*, Quaestiones Disputatae 93 (Freiburg: Herder, 1982), 190-237, 190; Georg Schelbert, „Zur frühen Missionsgeschichte,“ *NZM* 57 (2001/1): 3-14.
- 7 Klaus Koschorke, „Christentum, Ausbreitungsgeschichte I. Alte Kirche (1.-6. Jh.),“ *RGK* 4. Aufl. Bd. 2, 239.
- 8 Heinen, *Frühchristliches Trier*, 11-23; Brox, „Zur christlichen Mission in der Spätantike,“ 225; in Trier sind auch frühchristliche Grabinschriften in griechischer Sprache gefunden worden. „Diese Inschriften stehen für eine besondere Bevölkerungsgruppe aus dem griechisch-sprachigen Osten des Römerreiches und spiegeln den multi-ethnischen und -kulturellen Hintergrund des Lebens in der spätantiken Residenzstadt Trier wider.“ Lothar Schwinden, „Christliche Bestattungen und Grabinschriften,“ in: Alexander Demandt und Josef Engemann, *Konstantin der Große: Ausstellungskatalog*, 263-274, 274.
- 9 Ernst Dassmann, *Die Anfänge der Kirche in Deutschland: Von der Spätantike bis zur frühfränkischen Zeit* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1993), 68; vgl. Wolfgang Spickermann, *Germania Superior: Religionsgeschichte des römischen Germanien I*, Religion der Römischen Provinzen Band 2 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 504-508; vgl. auch die Kartendarstellung in Hermann Kinder und Werner Hilgemann, *dtv-Atlas zur Weltgeschichte Band 1: Von den Anfängen bis zur Französischen Revolution*, 37. Aufl. (München Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag), 2004, 106: „Die Ausbreitung des Christentums.“
- 10 Dassmann, *Die Anfänge der Kirche in Deutschland*, 69; vgl. Heinen, *Frühchristliches Trier*, 16-22.
- 11 Heinen, *Frühchristliches Trier*, 121.122.125.145. 151.
- 12 Dassmann, *Die Anfänge der Kirche in Deutschland*, 72; Heinen, „Trier als Bischofssitz,“ 326.
- 13 Heinrich Kraft, Einleitung: Eusebius von Cäsarea, in: ders. (Hg.) Eusebius von Cäsarea, *Kirchengeschichte*, 3., unveränderte Aufl. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1989), 11-74.
- 14 Klaus Martin Girardet, „Konstantin und das Christentum: die Jahre der Entscheidung 310-314,“ in: Josef Engemann (Hg.), *Konstantin der Große: Geschichte – Archäologie – Rezeption: Internationales Kolloquium vom 10. – 15. Oktober 2005 an der Universität Trier* (Trier: Rheinisches Landesmuseum, 2006), 69-81; ders. „Konstantin – Wegbereiter des Christentums als Weltreligion,“ in: Alexander Demandt und Josef Engemann, *Konstantin der Große: Ausstellungskatalog*, 232-242; Alexander Demandt, „Konstantin der Große in seiner Zeit,“ in: *ibid.*, 74-84; vgl. auch Josef Rist, „Gottesgeschenk oder Sündenfall? Realität und Mythos der sogenannten Konstantinischen Wende,“ in: Michael Fiedrowicz, Gerhard Krieger, Winfried Weber (Hg.), *Konstantin der Große: Der Kaiser und die Christen – die Christen und der Kaiser*, 2. Aufl. (Trier: Paulinus, 2007), 31-67; vgl. auch Alan Kreider, „Violence and Mission in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries,“ *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* Vol. 31, No. 3 (Juli 2007): 125-133; Stuart Georg Hall, „Konstantin I., der Große (306-337),“ *TRE* 19, 489-500; Alexander Demandt, *Geschichte der Spätantike: Das Römische Reich von Diocletian bis Justinian 284 – 565 n. Chr.* (München: C. H. Beck, 1998), 44-59; Manfred Clauss, „Konstantin,“ *RGK* 4. Aufl., 4, 1618-1619; ders., *Konstantin der Große und seine Zeit* (München: C. H. Beck, 2005); Bernhard Kötting und Alfred Schindler, „Die Reichskirche bis zum Ausgang der Antike,“ in: Bernd Moeller (Hg.), *Ökumenische Kirchengeschichte Band 1: Von den Anfängen bis zum Mittelalter* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2006), 101-109;

- Hartwin Brandt, *Konstantin der Große: Der erste christliche Kaiser: Eine Biographie* (München: C. H. Beck, 2006).
- 15 Lukas Clemens und Wolfgang Schmid, „Traditionen der Konstantinischen Familie in Trier,“ in: Alexander Demandt und Josef Engemann, *Konstantin der Große: Ausstellungskatalog*, 488-497, 488; Klaus-Peter Goethert und Marco Kiessel, „Trier – Residenz in der Spätantike,“ in: *ibid.*, 304-311, 304.
 - 16 Eduard Sebald, Die Basilika in Trier, DKV-Kunstführer Nr. 620/4 (München, Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag o. J.); Franz Ronig, *Der Dom zu Trier*, 19. Aufl. (Trier: Paulinus, 1999); Barbara Weber-Dellacroce und Winfried Weber, „Dort, wo sich Gottes Volk versammelt“ – die Kirchenbauten konstantinischer Zeit,“ in: *Konstantin der Große: Ausstellungskatalog*, 244-255, 255.
 - 17 Vgl. die Abbildungen der Kirchenmodelle, die dem Beitrag Winfried Weber, „Trier – kaiserliche Residenz und kirchliche Metropole,“ Bistum Trier (Hg.), *Konstantin und Europa* (Trier: Paulinus, 2007), 19-27, auf S. 26 und 27 beigegeben sind; Barbara Weber-Dellacroce und Winfried Weber, „Dort, wo sich Gottes Volk versammelt“ – die Kirchenbauten konstantinischer Zeit,“ in: *Konstantin der Große: Ausstellungskatalog*, 244-255; Weber, „... dass man auf ihren Bau alle Sorgfalt verwende.“...“, 88-91; Andreas Heinz, „Die Bedeutung der Zeit Konstantins (306-337) für die Liturgie der Kirche,“ in: Michael Fiedrowicz, Gerhard Krieger, Winfried Weber (Hg.), *Konstantin der Große: Der Kaiser und die Christen – die Christen und der Kaiser*, 139-182, 141. Der ersten Bischofskirche, der „Agritius-Basilika“, gebührt insofern „ein besonderer Stellenwert, da sie mit ihrer Entstehung im 2. Jahrzehnt des 4. Jahrhunderts mit den Bauten in Rom den Beginn des christlichen Kirchenbaus unter Konstantin markiert.“ (Weber, „... dass man auf ihren Bau alle Sorgfalt verwende.“...“, 93; vgl. Heinz, a. a. O., 141). Friedrich Gerke stellt die Trierer Kathedrale in eine Reihe mit den monumentalen Kirchenbauten von Rom, Konstantinopel und Jerusalem. Drei Generationen nach Konstantins Edikt von Mailand habe sich das Bild römischer Städte total verwandelt: „Kaiserliche Städte wie Trier und Rom, Konstantinopel und Jerusalem wurden nicht mehr durch Tempel, sondern durch christliche Kirchenfamilien in ihrer Struktur bestimmt.“ Friedrich Gerke, *Spätantike und Frühes Christentum*. Kunst der Welt: Ihre geschichtlichen, soziologischen und religiösen Grundlagen, > Die Kulturen des Abendlandes < (Baden-Baden: Holle, 1967), 61.
 - 18 Weber-Dellacroce/Weber, „Dort, wo sich Gottes Volk versammelt,“ 254; vgl. Dassmann, *Anfänge der Kirche in Deutschland*, 89.
 - 19 Heinen, *Frühchristliches Trier*, 98-117; Weber, „Neue Forschungen zur Trierer Domgrabung.“
 - Die erste Basilika des Trierer Kirchenkomplexes steht damit ganz am Anfang der Architekturgeschichte des christlichen Kirchenbaus: „Ihre Zeitstellung rückt dieses Gebäude an den Anfang des christlichen Kirchenbaues und verleiht ihm eine besondere Bedeutung.“ (Weber, „... dass man auf ihren Bau alle Sorgfalt verwende.“...“, 85). „Es ist bislang der älteste nachweisbare Kirchenbau nördlich der Alpen und somit ein einzigartiges Denkmal kirchlicher Baukunst.“ (Weber, „Trier – kaiserliche Residenz und kirchliche Metropole,“ 22).
 - 20 Heinen, *Frühchristliches Trier*, 116; Weber-Dellacroce/Weber, „Dort, wo sich Gottes Volk versammelt,“ 255; Weber, „... dass man auf ihren Bau alle Sorgfalt verwende.“...“, 91.
 - 21 „Im aufblühenden Trier und im Sog des christlich gewordenen Hofes waren viele Einwohner Christen geworden, ohne eine innere *conversio* zu vollziehen.“ Dassmann, *Die Anfänge der Kirche in Deutschland*, 79; „im Volk blieben heidnische Lebensweise und Aberglauben weiter lebendig.“ *ibid.*, 76; Kreider, „Violence and Mission,“ 125-126.
 - 22 Vgl. Rist, „Gottesgeschenk oder Sündenfall?“, 57; Heinz, „Die Bedeutung der Zeit Konstantins... für die Liturgie der Kirche.“ Alan Kreider stellt fest: „In Constantine’s empire there would be no ‚house churches‘.“ Kreider, „Violence and Mission,“ 126.
 - 23 Vgl. Dassmann, *Die Anfänge der Kirche in Deutschland*, 56-65.102; Spickermann, *Germania Superior*, 506.511.
 - 24 „Trier war in dieser Zeit auch der Mittelpunkt des geistigen Lebens für den Westen.“ Christa Schug-Wille, *Byzanz und seine Welt*. Kunst im Bild (Baden-Baden: Holle, 1969), 56.
 - 25 Heinen, *Frühchristliches Trier*, 120.
 - 26 Dassmann, *Die Anfänge der Kirche in Deutschland*, 72; Heinen, „Trier als Bischofssitz,“ 326.
 - 27 Dassmann, *Die Anfänge der Kirche in Deutschland*, 77.
 - 28 Adalbert Hamman, *Die Kirchenväter: Kleine Einführung in Leben und Werk* (Freiburg i. Br.: Herder, 1967), 141.
 - 29 Dassmann, *Die Anfänge der Kirche in Deutschland*, 74.
 - 30 J. Moreau, „Lactantius,“ *RGG*, 3. Aufl., Bd. 4, 196-197.
 - 31 Karl-Josef Gilles, „Münzprägungen im römischen Trier,“ in: Demandt/Engemann (Hg.), *Konstantin der Große: Ausstellungskatalog*, 313-317; ders., „Das Geldwesen im späten 3. und 4. Jahrhundert,“ in: *Konstantin der Große: Ausstellungskatalog*, 197-199; so erfolgte die erste Prägung des Solidus, der zur zweiten Standardgoldmünze der römischen Kaiserzeit wurde, in Trier. *ibid.*, 197; ders., „Reformen des Münzwesens in konstantinischer Zeit unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Münzstätte Trier,“ in: *Konstantin der Große: Kolloquiumsband*, 189-194.
 - 32 Lothar Schwinden, „Christliche Bestattungen und

- Grabinschriften,“ in: Demandt/Engemann (Hg.), *Konstantin der Große: Ausstellungskatalog*, 263-274, 269; „Trier hat im 4. Jahrhundert im Nordwesten des römischen Reiches eine Sonderstellung, wie bereits E. Le Blant bemerkte. Die Inschriften weisen der Stadt einen herausragenden Rang als frühchristliches Zentrum zu.“ *ibid.*, 272. Dabei zeigt das Rheinland eine eigene frühchristliche Entwicklung. „Das Trierer Inschriftenmaterial zeichnet sich... dadurch aus, dass es mit einem großen Teil einer sehr frühen Epoche des Christentums angehört.“ *ibid.*, 271.
- 33 Matthias Simon, *Evangelische Kirchengeschichte Bayerns*, 2. überarbeitete und fortgeführte Aufl. (Nürnberg 1952), 23. S. auch Dassmann, *Die Anfänge der Kirche in Deutschland*, 164.
- 34 Vgl. Arnold Angenendt, *Das Frühmittelalter: Die abendländische Christenheit von 400 bis 900* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1990), 266.
- 35 Gert Haendler, *Die abendländische Kirche im Zeitalter der Völkerwanderung*. Kirchengeschichte in Einzeldarstellungen I/5 (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1980), 126-128; vgl. Arno Rettner, „Eine vergessene Minderheit,“ in: Matthias Knaut und Dieter Quast, *Die Völkerwanderung: Europa zwischen Antike und Mittelalter*, Sonderband der Zeitschrift *Archäologie in Deutschland* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2005), 67-71.
- 36 Knut Schäferdieck, „Franken,“ *TRE* 11, 330-335, 331.
- 37 Vgl. die ausführlichen Darstellungen bei Dassmann, *Die Anfänge der Kirche in Deutschland*, 69-75, 80-85, bes. 82; Heinen, *Frühchristliches Trier*, 53-59.
- 38 Gert Händler, *Die abendländische Kirche im Zeitalter der Völkerwanderung*, 134-135.
- 39 Lutz E. von Padberg, „Germanenmission,“ *RGG* 4. Aufl. Bd. 3, 746-748; Rudolf Lorenz, *Die Kirche in ihrer Geschichte: Das vierte bis sechste Jahrhundert Westen*, Die Kirche in ihrer Geschichte Band 1 Lieferung C1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970), 88; Heinen, *Frühchristliches Trier*, 271; Dassmann, *Die Anfänge der Kirche in Deutschland*, 82.
- 40 Karl Müller, *Die Weltmission der Kirche*. Der Christ in der Welt: Eine Enzyklopädie XII. Reihe 12. Band (Aschaffenburg: Pattloch, 1960), 18-19.
- 41 Schäferdieck, „Franken,“ 332; „Das Volk war weniger durch christliche Predigten, Glaubensunterweisungen und Katechumenat aufgrund einer persönlichen Entscheidung zum Glauben gekommen als vielmehr durch das Beispiel König Chlodwigs und anderer Großer des Reiches, die sich hatten taufen lassen.“ Dassmann, *Die Anfänge der Kirche in Deutschland*, 83.
- 42 Lutz E. von Padberg, *Die Christianisierung Europas im Mittelalter* (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam jun., 1998), 48-50; Haendler, *Die abendländische Kirche im Zeitalter der Völkerwanderung*, 128-129.
- 43 Eberhard J. Nikitsch, „Neue, nicht nur epigraphische Überlegungen zu den frühchristlichen Inschriften aus Boppard,“ in: Ristow (Hg.), *Neue Forschungen*, 209-223; Winfried Schmitz, „Der neidische Tod und die Hoffnung auf das Paradies: Die frühchristlichen Inschriften als Zeugnisse der Christianisierung des Rhein-Mosel-Raums,“ in: *ibid.*, 51-70.
- 44 Haendler, *Die abendländische Kirche im Zeitalter der Völkerwanderung*, 132.
- 45 Karl Moersch, *Geschichte der Pfalz: Von den Anfängen bis ins 19. Jahrhundert* (Landau: Pfälzische Verlagsanstalt, 1987), 56; Bernhart Jähniß und Ludwig Biewer, *Kleiner Atlas zur deutschen Territorialgeschichte* (Bonn: Kulturstiftung der Deutschen Vertriebenen), 19.
- 46 Lutz E. von Padberg, „Germanenmission,“ *RGG* 4. Aufl. Bd. 3, 746-748, 746.
- 47 Eugen Ewig und Knut Schäferdieck, „Christliche Expansion im Merowingerreich,“ in: Knut Schäferdieck (Hg.), *Kirchengeschichte als Missionsgeschichte* Band II Erster Halbband *Die Kirche des frühen Mittelalters* (München: Chr. Kaiser, 1978), 116-145, 128-129; Dassmann, *Die Anfänge der Kirche in Deutschland*, 85.166.
- 48 Haendler, *Die abendländische Kirche im Zeitalter der Völkerwanderung*, 132; von Padberg, *Die Christianisierung Europas im Mittelalter*, 200.
- 49 Von Padberg, „Germanenmission,“ 746.
- 50 Vgl. Georg Denzler und Carl Andresen, *dtv-Wörterbuch der Kirchengeschichte*, 4. aktualisierte Aufl. (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1993), 194; vgl. genehmigte und aktualisierte Lizenzausgabe (Wiesbaden: Marix, 2004), 194.
- 51 Brendan Bradshaw, „Irland,“ *TRE* 16, 273-287.
- 52 Angenendt, *Das Frühmittelalter*, 204; Gustav Adolf Benrath, „Buße V. Historisch,“ *TRE* 7, 452-473, 458-459.
- 53 Vgl. Thomas Cahill, *How the Irish saved the Civilization: The Untold Story of Ireland's Role from the Fall of Rome to the Rise of Medieval Europe* (New York: Doubleday, 1995); dt. Ausgabe: ders., *Wie die Iren die Zivilisation retteten...* (München: Goldmann, 1998); Wilfried Stroh, *Weltsprache Latein*, www.klassphil.uni-muenchen.de/~stroh/weltsprache.htm, Punkt 7, eingewählt am 10. 7. 2007.
- 54 Ewig / Schäferdieck, „Christliche Expansion im Merowingerreich,“ 135-137, 141-142; *Putzger Historischer Weltatlas*, 101. Aufl. (Berlin: Cornelsen, 1991), Karte 41 I, „Iroschottische und angelsächsische Mission.“
- 55 Peter von Polenz, *Geschichte der deutschen Sprache*. 8. Aufl. (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1972), 43.
- 56 Von Polenz, *Geschichte der deutschen Sprache*, 43-44.
- 57 Von Padberg, *Christianisierung Europas im Mittelalter*, 23.
- 58 Lutz E. von Padberg, *Wynfret-Bonifatius*. R. Brock-

- haus Bildbiographien (Wuppertal und Zürich: R. Brockhaus, 1989); ders., *Bonifatius: Missionar und Reform* (München: C. H. Beck, 2003).
- 59 Erich Schnepel, *Jesus im frühen Mittelalter: Der Weg des Evangeliums unter den Germanen*, 4. Aufl. (Bad Liebenzell: Verlag der Liebenzeller Mission, 1978).
- 60 Von Padberg, *Bonifatius: Missionar und Reform*, 41; Armin Sierszyn, *2000 Jahre Kirchengeschichte Band 2 Das Mittelalter* (Neuhausen-Stuttgart: Hänssler, 1997), 88.
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Etica E Internet A Partire Dalla Teologia

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Cosa ha da spartire Gerusalemme con Google? La Bibbia con Wikipedia? La comunione fraterna con le chat-lines? A partire da Tertulliano che si chiedeva cosa avesse a che fare Gerusalemme con Atene, ogni generazione deve porsi una domanda simile, attualizzata al proprio tempo. In gioco c'è la capacità della fede cristiana di interagire in modo significativo e costruttivo con la cultura del tempo, per evitare di subirla in modo passivo o di sposarla in modo acritico. Oggi questa cultura porta anche il nome di Internet. La rivoluzione tecnologica nel campo della comunicazione obbliga ad interrogarci su quale sia, se c'è, il rapporto tra la fede cristiana ampiamente intesa e la cultura dei nuovi media.

La questione interessa la teologia in quanto anche Internet ha una propria teologia. Ogni volta che ci si connette si compie un atto teologico in cui si professa una visione del mondo imperniata su degli assoluti. Qui interessa solo impostare in modo schematico e selettivo il confronto tra le due teologie ed elaborare un abbozzo di etica per Internet sulla scia dell'analisi comparativa.

La teologia di Internet è un costrutto abbastanza complicato e non potrà che essere descritta facendo ricorso ad evidenti semplificazioni. Dal canto suo, il cristianesimo è trinitario, incarnazionista, comunitario e trasformatore. Non è solo questo, ma non può non essere questo. Vediamo per ordine alcuni termini del confronto.

1. Trinità ed Internet

La dottrina cristiana della Trinità sposa la pluralità dei linguaggi, dei soggetti comunicanti, dei codici espressivi e dei contenuti. Il cristianesimo trinitario autorizza e richiede la molteplicità e la pluriformità della comunicazione. Il cristiano impaurito dalle possibilità plurime offerte da Internet denuncia una scarsa assimilazione della dottrina trinitaria e mani-

festa un'attrazione problematica verso una versione eretica del cristianesimo: quella di un monoteismo appiattito sulla ripetizione monotona e sulla comunicazione unidirezionale. D'altra parte, la dottrina trinitaria riconduce la realtà ad una sua unità di fondo. Ciò significa che i linguaggi devono poter essere traducibili e comunicanti tra loro, i soggetti devono rendere conto a qualcun altro del loro operato, l'*ethos* della comunicazione deve rispondere a dei criteri che salvaguardino la dignità, l'onestà e la partecipazione. La dottrina trinitaria non incoraggia una selvaggia "deregulation" della comunicazione, ma obbliga a coniugare in modo creativo le possibilità mediatiche diverse con la promozione della "shalom" di Dio per il mondo intero.

Il pensiero pagano oscilla costantemente tra l'esaltazione della molteplicità (politeismo) e la sottolineatura dell'unicità (monoteismo). Forse Internet è figlio più di una teologia politeista che monoteista. Il suo sviluppo coincide con una congiuntura culturale (la postmodernità) in cui la variabile della molteplicità sembra essere impazzita e appare refrattaria a qualsiasi discorso unitario. Questo, però, è solo un lato della medaglia. Il rovescio non può essere sottaciuto. Da un altro punto di vista, infatti, Internet è un unico grande spazio in cui, a dispetto della diversità, le fila vengono tirate da pochi, se non proprio da uno solo. Basti pensare alla realtà inquietante di un "grande fratello" che, disponendo anche del potere di Internet, controlla e dirige il sistema, lasciando che i "connessi" percepiscano solo in parte la sua presenza. Si pensi poi ai potentati economico-finanziari che, anche tramite Internet, promuovono il "pensiero unico" di una religione del consumo omogeneizzata e conformista. Internet è prevalentemente politeista, ma il pendolo non è fermo. L'attrazione monoteista è fortissima e non si rassegna all'esplosione della molteplicità.

La sfida per un'etica di Internet è di pensare trinitariamente al proprio compito e di impostare la questione in modo radicalmente diverso.

2. Incarnazione e Internet

Il cristianesimo, oltre ad essere trinitario, è anche imperniato sull'incarnazione di Gesù Cristo. Il Figlio di Dio si è fatto carne, è diventato uomo. Il Secondo Adamo è venuto nel mondo disastrato lasciategli dal Primo Adamo, si è cimentato con la realtà della creazione decaduta nel peccato diventandone parte integrante e agendo per la sua reale trasformazione. Il cristianesimo è sempre stato contestato da varie forme di "gnosi" che, alla base, sono versioni dis-incarnate del cristianesimo. Il punto controverso è la concretezza corporale dell'incarnazione: l'essere Dio dell'uomo Gesù Cristo e l'essere uomo di Dio il Figlio. La "gnosi" propende per versioni "leggere", spiritualiste, apparenti dell'incarnazione. Il cristianesimo scommette, invece, sul mistero della piena umanità del Figlio di Dio e, quindi, sulla piena, incarnata, fisica umanità della fede dei suoi discepoli. La fede nell'incarnazione del Figlio di Dio si incarna in forme culturali diversificate, ma sempre impastate di sudore della pelle, vicinanza di corpi, comunicazione *vis-à-vis*.

La teologia di Internet è molto dipendente dalla categoria del "virtuale", più che da quella del "reale" incarnato. Virtuale è ciò che trascende il reale concreto; è una modalità dell'essere che non può essere ricondotta al sofferto vissuto della realtà corporale. Non voglio dire che il virtuale di Internet corrisponda meccanicamente alla "gnosi". Ha, tuttavia, un'evidente propensione gnostica se non stimolata da una robusta teologia dell'incarnazione. Nell'ambito della teologia cristiana dell'incarnazione, infatti, c'è spazio per la dimensione della "virtualità" (si pensi alla comunione tra persone lontane, alla preghiera, alle figure retoriche della predicazione, ecc.), ma essa è sempre e in qualsiasi momento aperta alla realtà. Se Internet incoraggia un sistema virtuale chiuso, autoreferenziale, basato sulla "virtualità" delle connessioni e degli universi navigati, la tentazione gnostica è evidente con tutti gli effetti disumanizzanti che ne discendono.

Un'etica di Internet non può prescindere dal rinnovamento della visione del mondo nel segno dell'incarnazione e a confronto con teologie della virtualità che subiscono il tragico fascino della gnosi anti-cristiana ed anti-umana.

3. Comunità ed Internet

Al centro della storia cristiana della salvezza, c'è la creazione di una comunità riconciliata con Dio e col mondo di cui è parte. Il progetto della creazione stessa prevedeva la coniugazione tra l'identità personale e quella comunitaria (famiglia, popolo, ecc.). Il peccato ha introdotto un virus disgregante che ha frantumato (ma non dissolto) la spinta comunitaria della vita e l'ha indirizzata verso squilibri oppressivi. La salvezza riannoda i fili delle relazioni e riconsegna alle creature la sfida della vita in comunità all'insegna della riconciliazione. Senza relazioni "incarnate" con gli altri, la vita si attesta su assetti gravemente deficitari e potenzialmente pericolosi. La chiesa è lo spazio comunitario per eccellenza in cui la persona re-impara a vivere insieme ad altri, ma vi sono altri spazi relazionali concreti da riacquisire alla vita riconciliata: la famiglia, le cerchie di amici, i colleghi, i rapporti associativi, ecc.

Una delle particolarità del profilo teologico di Internet è di favorire un tendenziale "isolamento" degli individui e una loro ricombinazione "virtuale" con altri individui connessi. Da un lato, Internet favorisce l'allentamento dei legami con la comunità concreta e vicina, esaltando l'identità individuale, la sua libertà di scelta e sganciandola dalla rete di relazioni incarnate e prossime. Dall'altro, mette in relazione gli individui su base virtuale e crea nuove tipologie di comunità basate su una diversa pratica della socialità. In queste comunità, ad esempio, si accede e si esce a piacimento, in genere con nomi identificativi diversi, sulla base di interazioni più "liquide" e sfuggenti che "solide" ed impegnative. Per il cristianesimo, il "prossimo" con cui si fa comunità può essere una persona connessa in modo vario (Paolo non conosceva di persona tutti i destinatari delle lettere, ma aveva sentito solo parlare di molti di loro), ma deve essere anche la persona che mi sta accanto, davanti, di dietro, nella sua umanità corporale e problematica. Alla messa in discussione gnostica dell'incarnazione, corrisponde anche una tentazione verso un'antropologia gnostica e, quindi, uno scivolamento verso un'ecclesiologia gnostica. Una chiesa virtuale riflette un'incarnazione virtuale ed un evangelo altrettanto virtuale. Il cristianesimo è in grado di articolare la "prossimità" all'insegna della comunità, mentre Internet in genere (ma non necessariamente) si accontenta di approssimazioni per difetto.

L'etica ha il compito d'interrogarsi sulle motivazioni che spingono le persone a connettersi in

forme virtuali e sulle ricadute comunitarie di Internet. La società virtuale è specchio di frustrazioni legate alle distorsioni della società reale. Per questo non può essere liquidata moralisticamente, ma deve essere presa sul serio agendo per trasformarla nel segno di una comunità che è pluriforme quanto si vuole, ma sempre intessuta di corporale realtà.

4. Autorità ed Internet

La teologia cristiana è innervata da un rapporto critico con l'autorità. Da un lato, riconosce l'autorità di Dio Creatore, Provveditore e Riconciliatore su tutta la realtà. Per questa ragione, riconosce altresì l'autorità della Parola scritta della Bibbia a cui il Signore attribuisce la propria autorità (*sola Scriptura*). Come conseguenza di questa sottomissione all'autorità divina, la fede riconosce centri di autorità derivata nelle sfere della realtà creata. Non li idolatra assolutizzandoli, non li denigra delegittimandoli. Li rispetta negli specifici ambiti di attribuzione. D'altro lato, il cristianesimo inocula gli anticorpi contro le degenerazioni dell'autorità quando essa fuoriesce dalla sfera di competenza e pretende di ampliare la propria giurisdizione in altri settori ad essa estranei. La sottomissione all'autorità di Dio e la vigilanza verso ogni centro di autorità forniscono anche dei criteri per discernere l'autorevolezza dell'autorità nel mare del conflitto delle rivendicazioni di autorità.

Si può dire che Internet abbia profondamente plasmato una propria teologia dell'autorità. In un certo senso, ha ridiscusso i centri di autorità del sapere basati sulla tradizione e sugli assetti consolidati del potere della conoscenza. Questa funzione sovversiva (per molti aspetti positiva e "anti-idolatrica") ha portato ad un vuoto di autorità, o meglio ad una sua rarefazione, o meglio ancora ad un processo di individualizzazione dell'autorità. Essere nella rete può scavalcare le autorità costituite, ma pone il problema dell'autorevolezza di quanto vi è inserito. Ogni informazione, per il fatto di essere in rete, è considerata alla pari di altre, senza filtri di autorevolezza che non siano quelle della scelta del singolo. L'insegnamento cristiano fa leva sull'autorevolezza delle fonti e sull'autorità delle persone che lo trasmettono, pur essendo aperto all'ispezione e all'interrogazione. Internet aiuta nel trattare criticamente l'autorità costituita, ma rischia di elevare l'autorità individuale a "idolo" tirannico o di creare uno spazio senza criteri sostenibili di credibilità.

Il discorso etico riguardante Internet è sollecitato a prendere atto dell'insofferenza della rete a

riconoscere l'autorità, pur non potendo liquidare il tema dell'autorità a mero guinzaglio da cui liberarsi. Si è sempre dentro uno spazio di autorità che deve essere circoscritta e responsabile.

5. Etica ed Internet

L'evangelo è la buona notizia che trasforma la realtà. L'azione di Dio nel mondo non è volta a distruggerlo o a crearlo ex-novo, ma a trasformarlo nei nuovi cieli e nella nuova terra. La dinamica del regno mira a modificare l'esistente che è soggetto alla rovina del peccato e a cambiarlo secondo il progetto rinnovatore di Dio. La vita cristiana ha senso se è inserita in questo movimento di trasformazione. Altrimenti, è a rimorchio della conservazione di assetti impastati di idolatria o della rivoluzione verso utopie altrettanto pagane. Di fronte e dentro alla rete, il cristiano non può accontentarsi di schierarsi tra gli scettici o tra gli entusiasti di Internet. Sarebbe un modo puerile di fraintendere la vocazione cristiana e di piegarla alla falsa polarizzazione tra favorevoli e contrari. Di quale etica ha bisogno Internet?

Etica di Internet necessita di un approccio critico all'esistente. La vigilanza morale impegna tutti i soggetti vivi a coltivare una visione che mantenga una distanza di prudenza. Essa, a sua volta, permette di non essere risucchiati nel vortice della rete e di mantenere uno sguardo sufficientemente lucido nei confronti dei movimenti della cultura virtuale. Come brevemente abbozzato, la teologia cristiana fornisce le misure di questa distanza e gli strumenti con cui esercitare il discernimento delle situazioni.

Etica abbisogna pure di modelli di riferimento cui ispirarsi. Nel pendolo culturale a cui è soggetto Internet, stretto com'è tra politesimo e monoteismo, tra gnosi e fiction, tra individualismo e virtualità, il cristianesimo propone una griglia normativa che è portatrice di una stabilità dinamica che "regge" il confronto con i flussi e i riflussi della rete senza annegare nei suoi flutti. Etica dovrà favorire la pluralità e la rendicontazione del sistema, dovrà essere personale ed interpersonale, condivisibile e correggibile.

Infine, per approntare un'etica di Internet, non bastano il discernimento delle situazioni diverse e nemmeno i modelli normativi di riferimento. Internet attende persone (cioè soggetti che vi operano a vario titolo) che abitino la rete, annunciando ed incarnando la "buona notizia" per trasformarla in un mondo accessibile, dignitoso e responsabile.

Soggetti che, avendo assimilato l'abc di una visione trinitaria, siano portatori della fecondazione tra unità e molteplicità. Soggetti che, avendo fatto i conti con l'incarnazione di Gesù Cristo, promuovano concretamente il bene ed il giusto. Soggetti

che, essendo stati riconsegnati alla comunità, testimonino della riconciliazione delle relazioni personali. Soggetti che, nell'ambito della rete, siano autorevoli nella loro sottomissione alla Parola di Dio e gli uni agli altri.

Ethics and the Internet, Starting from Theology

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SUMMARY

What has Jerusalem to do with Google? The internet has its own theology and surfing the net is a theological activity. Since theological neutrality does not exist, even in the realm of technology, this article explores the ways in which Christian theology shapes a sustainable ethic for approaching the internet responsibly. The Trinity, the

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Was hat Jerusalem mit google zu tun? Das Internet besitzt seine eigene Theologie, und das Surfen im Netz ist eine theologische Aktivität. Da es theologische Neutralität nicht gibt, auch nicht im Raum der Technologie, untersucht dieser Artikel Wege, auf denen christliche Theologie eine tragfähige Ethik für den verantwortlichen Umgang mit dem Internet gestalten kann. Die Trinität, die

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RÉSUMÉ

Quelle relation Jérusalem peut-elle avoir avec Google? L'Internet a sa propre théologie et surfer sur la toile est une activité théologique. La neutralité théologique n'existe pas, même dans le domaine des techniques. C'est pourquoi cet article aborde la question de savoir quelle éthique découle de la théologie chrétienne pour un usage responsable de l'Internet. Les doctrines de la

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How do Jerusalem and Google relate to one another? Or the Bible and Wikipedia? Brotherhood and chat-lines? Since the days when Tertullian wondered how Jerusalem related to Athens, every generation should have asked a similar question, once that question had been modified to reflect the current age. At stake is the ability of the Christian faith to interact in a significant and positive manner with the culture of a given epoch, so as to avoid being passively affected by, or uncritically subscribing to,

Incarnation, the communitarian nature of faith, claims of authority and the transformative force of the Gospel have massive ethical implications for the internet. The 'good news' for the internet provides a dynamic normative framework, a self-critical approach to the use of technology, and a powerful motivation for those who are involved in it.

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die Inkarnation, das gemeinschaftliche Wesen des Glaubens, Behauptungen zur Autorität und zur transformierenden Kraft des Evangeliums haben gewaltige ethische Implikationen im Hinblick auf das Internet. Die „gute Nachricht“ für das Internet bietet einen dynamischen normativen Rahmen, einen selbstkritischen Ansatz zum Umgang mit der Technik und eine kraftvolle Motivation für diejenigen, die damit zu tun haben.

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Trinité et de l'incarnation, la nature communautaire de la foi, l'autorité qui revient à Dieu et à sa parole, et la puissance de transformation de l'Évangile, tout cela a des implications éthiques considérables pour notre rapport à l'Internet. La « bonne nouvelle » pour l'Internet fournit un cadre normatif dynamique, une approche critique de l'usage des techniques, et une puissante motivation pour ceux qui l'utilisent.

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that same culture. Today, culture is also shaped by the internet. Technological strides in the field of communication require us to ask what is the nature of the relationship – if any – that exists between the Christian faith and this new media-based culture.

This issue involves theology in as far as the internet has its own theology as well; every time we connect to the internet, a theological action is performed whereby we profess a vision of the world which is centred on absolutes. It is my aim here

to simply lay out a schematic and selective comparison of the two theologies, as well as to propose an outline of an internet ethic in the wake of our comparative analysis.

Internet theology is a rather complicated construct, which can only be described by resorting to simplifications. As to Christianity, it is Trinitarian, incarnational and conducive to transformation. While it is clearly more than this, these characteristics do belong to its defining identity. Let us therefore consider in turn some of the terms of comparison.

1. Trinity and the internet

The Christian doctrine of the Trinity operates through a plurality of languages, communicating subjects, expressive codes, and contents. Trinitarian Christianity endorses and demands multiple as well as varied forms of communication. Some Christians are concerned with the numerous possibilities offered by the internet due to their inadequate assimilation of Trinitarian doctrine. They are therefore questionably attracted to a heretical version of Christianity – namely, a monotheism unimaginatively conforming to monotonous repetition and unidirectional communication. Instead, Trinitarian doctrine restores reality to its fundamental unity. This signifies that languages must be translatable and communicable within themselves, that individual behaviour must be accounted for and that, lastly, the prevailing ethos of communication should adhere to criteria which safeguard dignity, honesty and participation. Trinitarian doctrine does not encourage any extreme “de-regulation” of communication, but rather mandates that the various media possibilities be creatively mobilised to promote God’s *shalom* across the entire world.

Pagan thought can be seen to constantly oscillate from extolling multiplicity (polytheism) to underscoring uniqueness (monotheism). Perhaps in this regard the internet is more akin to a polytheist theology than a monotheist one. Its development coincides with a cultural juncture (the postmodern age) which is characterised by a seemingly rampant multiplicity and unresponsiveness towards any Unitarian discourse. However, this is only one side of the coin, of which the other side cannot be concealed. When looking at the internet from an alternative viewpoint, one sees a large unitary space where, despite the diversities, the strings are pulled by few if not only by one party. Suffice it to recall the disquieting scenario of

“big brother” who, having also added the internet to the powers at his disposal, controls and directs the system, letting his presence be only partially perceived by those online. Also to be recalled are the economic and financial powers that be which, likewise through the internet, promote a general consensus on a homogenised, conformist religion of consumerism. While the internet is presently predominantly polytheistic, the pendulum keeps swinging. Monotheism is still quite capable of attracting (and is far from resigned to accept) the current outburst of multiplicity.

The challenge for any ethic of the internet lies in the ability to offer a balanced Trinitarian appraisal of the task ahead whilst considering radically different approaches to the questions being posed.

2. Incarnation and the internet

Christianity, in addition to being Trinitarian, also hinges on Jesus Christ’s incarnation: “*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.*” The Second Adam came to the distressed world which the First Adam had bequeathed to him. He was made to cope with a created reality debased by sin and, becoming fully integrated within it, acted towards its real transformation. Christianity has always been questioned by various forms of *gnosis* which are in essence dis-incarnated versions of Christianity itself. The controversy revolves around the corporal factualness of incarnation: how Jesus Christ, as a man, could be God, and how God could be the “begotten Son”. Gnosticism tends to opt for “light”, spiritualist versions of incarnation. Christianity depends instead on the mystery of the Son’s full humanity, and therefore on the full, incarnated, physical humanity of the disciples’ faith. While the faith in the Son of God’s incarnation takes up diversified cultural forms, all of these manifestations include sweating skin, bodily proximity and face to face communication.

Internet theology depends more on the “virtual” dimension than on incarnated reality. The notion of “virtual” transcends factual reality; it is a mode of being which cannot be traced back to the suffering inherent in corporal reality. I do not imply by this that the internet’s virtuality mechanically equates to the gnostic position. Nevertheless, failing to be stimulated by a robust incarnation theology, the internet does betray an evident gnostic propensity. In fact, the scope of Christian incarnation theology allows for the “virtual” dimension (I need only mention the wide-ranging possibilities for long-

distance communication, prayer or access to specialised sermons etc.), but on the condition that it remains centred on reality throughout. Should the internet encourage a closed virtual system which is both self-referential and based on the “virtuality” of connections and navigated universes, then the gnostic temptation and ensuing de-humanising effects become evident.

An internet ethic cannot shy away from a renewed world vision based on the incarnation, and must confront those virtuality-infused theologies which allow themselves to be tragically fascinated by anti-Christian and anti-human *gnoses*.

3. Community and the internet

Central to Christianity’s history of salvation is the shaping of a community which is reconciled with God as well as the world God partakes in. The very project of creation was based on adapting one’s own personal identity to that of the community (family, fellow citizens etc.). A disruptive virus, sown by sin, has derailed (but by no means dissolved) the momentum originally intended to favour community-life and redirected it towards oppressive instability. Salvation works to restore this shattered network of relationships while renewing the prospect of community life under the banner of reconciliation. Without these “incarnated” relationships to bind us to others, life risks degrading into social structures which are not only seriously deficient, but potentially dangerous as well. While the church functions as the community ambit *par excellence* – where one is taught anew how to live with one’s own neighbours – other tangible relational ambits in need of restoration, which likewise are necessary for co-existence, include: family, circles of friends, colleagues, associative bonds, etc.

A peculiarity of the profile of internet theology is that, while encouraging the general “isolation” of each individual, it also fosters a “virtual” banding together of others who may be found online at any given time. On the one hand, the internet works towards loosening the ties to one’s neighbouring community of real people. This prioritises one’s own individual identity and allows for an increased freedom of choice which is now uncoupled from the conditioning influence of the individual’s incarnated, neighbouring relationships. On the other hand, it facilitates virtual relationships among individuals and promotes new community typologies which are based along different sociological lines on different socialisation praxes. These commu-

nities may, for example, be entered and exited at will, usually under different identities. This befits interactions which are more “liquid” and elusive rather than “solid” and binding. To Christianity, “neighbours” who make up one’s community may be connected to us in various forms (Paul was not personally acquainted with all of the addressees of his epistles, having learned about many of them only by hearsay). Yet, those who are physically near to us must by necessity be considered part of our community. The gnostic rejection of incarnation goes hand in hand with a temptation towards a gnostic anthropology and, by the same token, a gnostic ecclesiology. The notion of virtual church reflects a virtual incarnation and an equally virtual gospel. While Christianity has the capability to correlate community with “proximity”, most of the time (albeit not necessarily) the internet is unable to do so.

Ethics is expected to investigate the motivations which lead people to connect in a virtual form to the internet community as well as the ensuing repercussions of this. Virtual societies mirror the frustrations caused by the distortions of social reality. As such, they cannot be dismissed offhand on moral grounds, but need to be carefully considered with a view to transforming them into communities which, despite their diversity, function as part of corporal reality.

4. Authority and the internet

Christian theology is innervated by a critical sense of authority. On the one hand, it acknowledges the authority of God as Creator, Provider and the Reconciler of all reality. For this reason, Christian theology also recognizes the Bible as the written Word: that which is certified by God’s own authority (*sola Scriptura*). As a consequence of its submission to divine authority, faith also acknowledges authoritative bases which derive from the sphere of created reality. These are neither idolised as entirely worthy of obedience, nor denigrated and subsequently divested of their legitimate prerogatives. They are respected as long as they do not exceed their own limitations. On the other hand, Christianity provides antibodies which resist the degeneration brought about whenever authority exceeds its bounds of competence and claims jurisdiction over extraneous matters. Submission to God’s authority and close scrutiny of local bases of authority also supply the criteria which enable us to discern the status of a particular authority in

relation to competing authorities.

It is conceivable that the internet has profoundly shaped a "theology of authority" of its own. In a way, it has called into question authoritative schemas of learning which were anchored in tradition and in the consolidated assets which knowledge offers. Its subversive action (in many regards positive and against idolatry) has led to an authority vacuum or, more accurately, a power rarefaction or, still more accurately, a process of authority individualisation. Being on the internet, one may bypass official authoritative frameworks while, in turn, raising the issue of when they should be applied. Information, once displayed on the internet, is on a par with that presented by other media, with no screening standards in place other than each viewer's discretionary choice. Christian teaching sets much store by the authority of sources and persons conveying it, even though further inspection is by no means ruled out. While the internet is helpful when it comes to questioning vested authority, the risk remains that individual authority may step in as a tyrannical "idol", or that the internet becomes devoid of sustainable criteria for assuring credibility.

Any ethical discourse regarding the internet is bound to take into account its reluctance to submit to authority, which however stops short of seeing authority itself as an undue restraint bound to be eventually removed. By necessity, we shall always find ourselves within a space ruled by an authority of sorts, which must be circumscribed and accountable.

5. Ethics and the internet

The Gospel is the good news which transforms reality. God's deeds are not directed at destroying the world nor creating it anew, but rather at transforming it into the new heaven and earth. The dynamics of the Kingdom aims to modify what exists (affected as it is by sin) and to alter it according to God's renovation project. Christian life makes sense if it conforms to this process of transformation. Otherwise, it is subservient to either idolatrous practices or an equally pagan pursuit of utopia. When confronted with the net, or operating online, Christians cannot afford to simply endorse or criticise it. Becoming part of this polarised discourse, in either the form of adversary or supporter, would amount to misunderstanding in a childlike way one's Christian call. So, what ethic is the internet in need of?

An internet ethic necessitates an approach which is critical of what currently exists. Moral vigilance commits us to keeping ourselves at arm's length from the internet, to resist being sucked into its vortex and to stay sufficiently lucid vis-à-vis its virtual culture and the movements therein. As briefly sketched above, Christian theology provides the proper amount of distancing as well as the tools needed for appropriately discriminating when assessing various situations.

An ethic must also be guided by referential models. When confronted with the internet pendulum, swinging as it does between polytheism and monotheism, gnosis and fiction, individualism and virtuality, Christianity proposes a normative grid for dynamic stability, capable of standing its ground before the ebbs and flows of the internet without drowning in its surges. Such an ethic, by being both personal and interpersonal, shareable and rectifiable, favours the plurality and accountability of the system.

Lastly, the desirable internet ethic will not come into being through our mere ability to discern the right course from within a variety of situations, nor by solely adopting normative models of reference. The internet awaits people (operating online for a variety of purposes) who are capable of announcing and incarnating the "good news" with a view to turning the internet into an accessible, dignified and responsible world. These people, having assimilated the basic foundation of a Trinitarian vision, would operate towards a fertile synthesis of unity and multiplicity. Having experienced Jesus Christ's incarnation, they would be willing to factually promote the good and right. When returning to their community, they would testify that personal relationships can be reconciled. When online, their authoritativeness would result from their submission to both the Word of God and the members of the virtual community.

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Le Sfide della Cibercultura

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La mia generazione è quella che ha cominciato a “giocare” con il *Commodore 64*, una macchina che possedeva soltanto 64 K di memoria operativa, era priva di memoria fissa e leggeva i dati da un registratore a nastro. Siamo stati i primi a scrivere e stampare autonomamente la tesi di laurea grazie al PC e ai primi programmi di *word processing*. Ricordiamo anche il rilancio editoriale e le discussioni dei media sul romanzo di fantapolitica scritto da George Orwell e pubblicato nell'ormai lontanissimo 1948 dal titolo 1984. L'anno di Orwel era giunto e ci si interrogava sulle sue intuizioni e sulle sue “profezie”. A ventitré anni di distanza, il “Grande Fratello” viene associato soltanto da pochi ad un regime opprimente che utilizza la tecnologia come mezzo di controllo della vita e delle coscienze degli uomini; in altri, al massimo, suscita qualche riflessione su ciò che “fa audience”, sul cattivo gusto dei programmi televisivi o sul vuoto torricelliano di una certa cultura giovanile contemporanea... ma non dovrebbe essere così! L'intreccio tra tecnologia e stile di vita, etica sociale, coscienza individuale e tirannia merita maggiore attenzione e ben più profonde riflessioni.

Sebbene il progresso tecnologico, che negli ultimi duecento anni ha seguito un modello di sviluppo esponenziale, abbia fatto riflettere e inquietato più di un pensatore, l'atteggiamento dei più rimane prevalentemente quello dell'utente più o meno entusiasta, ma generalmente acritico. Eppure l'introduzione, sempre più invadente e pervasiva, di macchine che hanno velocizzato e semplificato molte delle attività umane, ha acceso un profondo dibattito tra coloro che s'interessano di storia e sanno molto bene che nessuna tecnologia è “neutra” ma che ogni innovazione in questo campo ha sempre agito come catalizzatore del mutamento sociale e culturale.

La tecnologia del computer ha determinato la

nascita della cibercultura ovvero di una “società digitale”,¹ ed ha acceso un dibattito che è destinato a non esaurirsi così presto. Prova ne sia l'ampiezza degli ambienti coinvolti: da quello accademico, a quello politico, a quelli “popolari” del cinema, della carta stampata e della televisione.²

1. L'influenza della tecnologia sulla vita sociale

L'archeologia ha documentato che lo sviluppo della civiltà umana è andata di pari passo all'introduzione e lo sviluppo di tecnologie che hanno avuto un profondo impatto sulla vita degli individui. Alcuni esempi basteranno per comprendere come l'introduzione di alcune “nuove tecnologie” possa produrre degli effetti imprevedibili sulla vita sociale.³

Le origini dell'orologio meccanico risalgono ai monasteri benedettini del 1100 e 1200. Fu inventato per dare regolarità alla vita quotidiana dei monasteri che, tra l'altro, prevedeva sette fasi di preghiera durante il giorno. Per scandire le ore della preghiera si suonavano le campane del monastero e l'orologio meccanico era la tecnologia capace di dare precisione ai riti della preghiera. E così fece. Ma, ovviamente, si vide che l'orologio poteva giovare a sincronizzare e controllare anche altre azioni umane. Così, verso la metà del '300 l'orologio era già uscito dai monasteri e aveva imposto scadenze nuove e precise alla vita degli artigiani e dei mercanti. Sicché è stato detto che: “L'orologio meccanico ha reso possibile il concetto di produzione regolare, di ore lavorative regolari e di prodotto standard”. Il che equivale a dire che dobbiamo andare più lontano dell'etica protestante per individuare l'origine del capitalismo e giungere fino ai conventi benedettini! Inoltre, la data che segna la definitiva trasformazione dell'orologio da

strumento d'osservanza religiosa a strumento d'impresa commerciale è il 1370 quando il re di Francia Carlo V ordinò a tutti i cittadini di Parigi di regolare la loro vita privata, commerciale e industriale sulle campane dell'orologio del palazzo reale, che battevano ogni sessanta minuti. Anche a tutte le chiese di Parigi fu richiesto di uniformarsi a quell'orologio, senza più tener conto delle ore canoniche. In questo modo la chiesa dovette anteporre gli interessi materiali ai bisogni spirituali. Questo è un esempio di come uno strumento può essere usato per impoverire l'autorità di una istituzione a favore di un'altra.⁴

Per questa ragione, N. Postman osserva che "non è possibile contenere gli effetti di una nuova tecnologia nei limiti di una determinata sfera dell'attività [ma si potrebbe aggiungere: "o una istituzione, di una disciplina, di un'arte..."] umana. Il cambiamento tecnologico non aggiunge e non sottrae. È ecologico... determina un cambiamento totale... Una nuova tecnologia non aggiunge e non sottrae nulla: cambia tutto". Per provare la sua affermazione aggiunge:

Cinquant'anni dopo l'invenzione della stampa, la vecchia Europa non era più la stessa con "in più" la stampa: era un'Europa diversa. Dopo la televisione gli Stati Uniti non furono l'America con in più la televisione: la televisione dette nuovi connotati a ogni campagna politica, a ogni casa, scuola, chiesa, industria.⁵

Queste sono semplici constatazioni, ma sufficienti a costringerci a riflettere, a rifiutare di lasciarci trasportare passivamente dalla corrente e di lasciarci penetrare da qualunque innovazione tecnologica.

Prendere coscienza dell'effetto "ecologico" delle nuove tecnologie sui cambiamenti sociali è già tanto. Ovviamente, a questo livello, non si tratta di fare delle valutazioni intono a: "tecnologia amica/nemica", ma di comprendere quale sia la potenza trasformatrice esercitata dalla tecnologia e, in particolare – considerato che le nuove tecnologie sono potentissime perché a basso costo, semplici da utilizzare e molto diffuse – della potenza trasformatrice delle nuove tecnologie in generale e di quella che è stata definita cibercultura in particolare.

2. Il variegato mondo della cibercultura

→ Ma cos'è il ciber spazio? E cos'è la cibercultura? Il ciber spazio è "la dimensione creata dalle macchine".⁶ Non è un luogo fisico ma, appunto, uno "spazio virtuale" determinato dai collegamenti tra

computer e dai documenti che vengono posti in condivisione. Per accedervi è quindi necessario un computer e una rete (telefonica o senza fili). Il cibernauta è quindi chiunque usi e contribuisca a creare o ad ampliare questo mondo. A grandi linee, quindi, si può definire cibercultura *il mondo, composto da uomini e macchine, documenti, immagini e interazioni, creato dalla comunicazione tramite computer*. È il mondo di Internet con tutti i "servizi" che offre. Ecco i più diffusi:⁷

Il World Wide Web, (la rete mondiale) sulla quale aziende, enti e privati costruiscono i propri "siti" con "pagine" che possono essere sfogliate o copiate per scopi molto vari: notizie governative, sport, arte e popolari programmi televisivi.

E-mail (posta elettronica) permette di inviare messaggi agli amici senza l'impiccio di dover usare buste e francobolli.

Usenet newsgroup sono simili all'e-mail ma consentono di inviare il messaggio su una delle migliaia di bacheche tematiche, dove può essere letto da altri che condividono l'interesse per quell'argomento.

Chat room (le stanze delle chiacchiere) sono come conversazioni telefoniche tramite tastiera di computer invece che a voce tra due o più utenti.

Instant messaging (Skype e simili) permette di comunicare immediatamente, in tempo reale, con una o più persone che siano collegate in quel momento ad Internet e, oltre a parlare, si possono scambiare file, immagini, brani musicali, giocare.

Mailing list (liste di distribuzione), con o senza moderatore, sono "gruppi di discussione", nei quali messaggi e-mail sono inviati ai partecipanti, che vi prendono parte su base volontaria.

Video-conferenze consistono nella possibilità di utilizzare telecamere connesse a Internet, in modo da consentire a una pluralità di utenti di comunicare contemporaneamente e in tempo reale tramite strumenti audiovisivi.

MUDs (*Multiple User Dungeons* o *Domain*) sono siti Internet nei quali ci s'impegna in attività (giochi o altro) con altre persone collegate in rete.

Blog (web log) sono pagine personali dove chi le cura inizia una discussione, ne propone qualcuna oppure, semplicemente, condivide notizie personali (tipo diario) a cui è possibile aggiungere le proprie impressioni o, semplicemente "spiare".

You-Tube una galleria di file audio-video non solo "scaricabili" ma che consente a chiunque di pubblicare le proprie "produzioni".

Podcast un sistema che permette di scaricare in modo automatico (e generalmente gratuito) docu-

menti audio, video o testuali. I contenuti possono essere i più vari: notiziari, programmi radio, diari multimediali, ecc.

Wikipedia è una enciclopedia “aperta” dove chiunque può aggiungere o modificare voci, spiegazioni, documenti, collegamenti e i cui contenuti possono essere consultati, distribuiti o tradotti liberamente.

La cibercultura, seppure in un breve lasso di tempo, si è diffusa in modo davvero straordinario. Alcuni dei fattori che ne hanno promosso il successo sono: la diffusione della rete telefonica e del computer, la quantità e la varietà dei servizi che si traducono in una grande offerta di informazioni e di possibilità di apprendimento, intrattenimento ed evasione. Si assommano a tutto ciò anche: la rapidità di accesso, i costi contenuti, e la semplicità concettuale che caratterizzano questo mondo, la velocità con cui si può ottenere ciò che si cerca e – *dulcis in fundo* – la quasi completa garanzia dell’anonimato, e si capisce perché “la società digitale” sia ormai composta trasversalmente da persone di ogni ceto sociale, culturale ed anagrafico.⁸

3. L’ethos evangelico al confronto della cibercultura

Ma la cibercultura costituisce una minaccia o un’opportunità per l’ethos evangelico e per la missione della chiesa? Allo stesso modo in cui credo che un atteggiamento ostile verso la cibercultura sia sbagliato e impraticabile⁹ poiché essa rappresenta una buona parte del mondo in cui viviamo, ritengo che essa, come il Golia dei tempi del re Saul (cfr. 1 Sam 17), ci lanci delle sfide che non possiamo far finta di ignorare. Se la forza di un tale gigante Filisteo potrebbe incuterci timore bisogna ricordare che le sfide che lancia agli individui, alle famiglie e alle chiese cristiane ed evangeliche non siano realmente “nuove”. Sono semplicemente più forti e potenzialmente più distruttive, ma non di natura diversa rispetto a quelle che le generazioni che ci hanno preceduti hanno dovuto affrontare.

La somiglianza sta nel fatto che la tecnologia in generale (e ancor di più le “nuove tecnologie”) possono essere facilmente deificate poiché si prestano ad essere utilizzate in modo da soddisfare molti bisogni primari, a svolgere importanti funzioni psicologiche e promettono di assorbire e rispondere facilmente a molte comuni aspettative e speranze.¹⁰

Si pensi al fenomeno delle cosiddette “nuove dipendenze”. Molte di esse, come l’*Internet Addic-*

tion Disorder, la dipendenza da cellulare (detta anche *cellularomania*), la *sexual addiction* o la dipendenza dai videogioco e dal gioco d’azzardo elettronico¹¹ si nutrono, prosperano e si moltiplicano grazie alle sempre più varie e allettanti offerte tecnologiche, promuovendo un individualismo in cui l’unica cosa ricercata è la personale soddisfazione immediata e il piacere privato. La novità, in questi campi, è che la relazione corporea e fisica con gli altri esseri umani perde valore e, in molti casi, viene svolta dalla macchina più che dalle persone che l’adoperano.¹² Se, tuttavia, il problema più presente nell’immaginario collettivo è quello relativo alla pornografia, pedofilia, violenza, che – senza ombra di dubbio – abbondano in rete,¹³ non bisogna trascurare l’effetto che avranno a lungo termine altri fattori, apparentemente più innocui.

Si consideri l’uso oculato e proficuo del tempo. L’evangelico “tradizionale” ha sempre impiegato del tempo nella lettura e lo studio personale della Scrittura, accompagnato dalla meditazione e dalla preghiera. A questi “tempi” quotidiani di ascolto e dialogo personale con Dio, la migliore tradizione protestante ha affiancato la pratica del “culto di famiglia” che, tra i Puritani era praticata almeno due volte al giorno (al mattino e alla sera). Nella la società digitale il tempo risulta tremendamente compresso, lo spazio della privacy, perfino quella familiare, oltre che dal “vecchio” televisore, oggi è invaso da telefoni, fax e connessioni di ogni tipo che riversano su di noi valanghe di informazioni tra le quali, alcuni di noi che sono particolarmente “curiosi”, rischiano di “naufragare” o, perlomeno, di rimanere disorientati e confusi perché privi degli strumenti culturali ed epistemologici per valutarle. Il ciberspazio diviene facilmente una “via di fuga” dalle nostre responsabilità, dal dovere di curare l’affettività e la comunicazione in famiglia e con il resto del “nostro prossimo”, facilmente divora “il tempo degli altri”: quello che dovremmo dedicare a Dio e al prossimo (famiglia, lavoro, chiesa, bisognosi, non credenti).

Si consideri infine quali effetti si registrano a riguardo delle dinamiche dell’apprendimento e della comunicazione. Anche in questo campo le nuove tecnologie stanno determinando un profondo mutamento. Ovviamente i pareri sono discordi. Alcuni ritengono che il modello di comunicazione dei Blog e le interazioni della “blogosfera” offra una grande occasione di sviluppo della conoscenza collettiva e come una grande opportunità per il progresso in quasi ogni campo,¹⁴ mentre altri sono assai più scettici e negativi sugli effetti

a lungo termine del linguaggio contratto, sintetico e dalla comunicazione generalmente superficiale che si attua in rete. È tuttavia generalmente riconosciuto, e quasi universalmente attribuito alla "cultura dell'immagine", che le nuove generazioni non siano in grado di prestare attenzione ad un "discorso" per più di dieci-quindici minuti e che abbiano notevoli difficoltà a comprendere un testo scritto. A mio avviso è proprio da questa "cultura dell'immagine" e dall'impoverimento dell'importanza attribuita alla comunicazione verbale in una dimensione spazio-temporale definita che proviene il pericolo maggiore. Il "popolo del libro" non potrà continuare ad esistere come tale in una società dove le parole perdono significato e importanza. Ma, un tale mondo è il "Paradiso" del "popolo dell'immagine", ovvero per ogni forma di paganesimo che, sul modello dell'antico panteismo, confonda Dio con il creato.¹⁵ Per questa ragione ancora oggi il cristiano evangelico, la famiglia e la chiesa cristiana continuano ad essere sfidati dall'idolatria che, forse, ha assunto forme diverse, ma non è meno perniciosa e distruttiva per la religione e l'ethos biblici.

4. Come vivremo nell'era della cibercultura?

Il tempo delle sfide è quello delle scelte. Su genitori, educatori, ministri del Vangelo, operatori sociali, gravano delle pesanti responsabilità. Abbiamo la necessità di *comprendere sempre meglio, anzi di studiare questo mondo* non cedendo alla tentazione di fuggire da esso. Dobbiamo essere, insomma, fruitori attenti e critici mantenendo una "sana diffidenza".¹⁶

Dobbiamo essere in grado di individuare le forme nuove in cui gli antichi meccanismi e dinamiche della "tentazione" si instaurano quando l'anima umana si trova nel cberspazio. Bisogna capire perché un tale mondo alimenti così facilmente l'individualismo di chi cerca la gratificazione personale immediata senza volersi impegnare in una relazione, e poi esporre e spiegare tali fenomeni a tutti, ma con particolare attenzione alle nuove generazioni che sembrano i più disavveduti e disinibiti fruitori della rete (questo è un argomento che richiede un serio studio da una prospettiva distintamente cristiana).

Riconoscendo che il luogo d'istruzione primario dove, mediante i precetti e l'esempio si attua un vero e proprio "laboratorio" sociologico e teologico, è la famiglia, bisogna che i genitori siano

istruiti affinché s'impegnino ad affrontare le sfide di cui si è detto in modo sistemico, ovvero non limitandosi a fornire divieti, o a porre dei limiti (destinati prima o poi ad essere superati), ma acquisendo, possedendo e comunicando ai figli "una precisa visione del mondo", una spiegazione coerente della realtà che li aiuti capire e interpretare il mondo e l'esperienza umana alla luce del teismo biblico. Diversamente, l'immensa quantità di informazione che proviene dalla rete genererà confusione in tutti coloro che non sono guidati nel loro modo di pensare da una visione unitaria del mondo.

Infine, un'altra pista da seguire è quella di privilegiare le relazioni umane fondate su una comunicazione non-mediata (dove la dimensione fisica del linguaggio verbale e non verbale continuino ad essere presenti e dominanti) e su l'espressione di un'affettività pura, schietta e altruistica.

- 1 G. GRANIERI, *La società digitale*, Roma, Laterza 2006.
- 2 Un'ampia bibliografia può essere reperita in fondo ai testi citati nell'articolo. Per quanto riguarda la cinematografia vorrei raccomandare una "lettura" attenta di due film molto popolari: *Matrix* (1999) dei fratelli Wachowsky (il primo dei tre) che mischia la filosofia platonica a temi biblici proiettandoli in una futura era ipertecnologica e affronta il tema del dominio delle macchine sugli uomini ridotti ad essere loro schiavi; *Intelligenza Artificiale* (2001) di Steven Spielberg, che descrive un mondo in cui la morale è poco più che un ricordo e dove il trionfo dell'individualismo umano determina la distruzione dell'umanità stessa; è un film molto interessante anche perché apre una finestra sull'impatto che le nuove tecnologie hanno (o possono avere) sulla vita affettiva e sulla famiglia.
- 3 Si rifletta su quali cambiamenti abbiano prodotto in campo domestico, economico e militare le tecnologie della ruota, dei metalli, della terracotta, dell'agricoltura, della pratica della domesticazione degli animali, dell'aratro, della scrittura e tutti i loro miglioramenti. Gli esempi riportati di seguito li devo a N. POSTMAN, *Technopoly*, Torino, Bollati Boringhieri 1993, pp. 21, 31.
- 4 Si pensi anche al ben noto esempio dell'introduzione della stampa a caratteri mobili che, inventata nel 1450 da un fervente cattolico, Johannes Gutenberg (1397-1468), che però fu lo strumento più potente per la diffusione delle idee della Riforma protestante e fece crollare il monopolio della chiesa di Roma.
- 5 N. POSTMAN, *Technopoly*, cit., p. 24.
- 6 La cibernetica è la scienza che studia i principi di funzionamento e di realizzazione delle macchine automatiche, generalmente elettroniche, in grado di simulare le funzioni di organismi viventi e, in par-

- ticolare, del cervello umano. Dal greco *kybernetikè* (*tèchne*) “arte di guidare, di pilotare”. Nome che si deve al matematico statunitense Norbert Wiener (1894-1964).
- 7 Un’ampia descrizione dei servizi offerti dal mondo della rete si può leggere A. SPADARO, *Comessioni*, Bologna, Pardes 2006. Sul fenomeno dei Weblog si veda G. GRANIERI, *Blog generation*, Roma, Laterza 2005.
 - 8 Bisogna comunque ricordare che siamo ancora lontani da una vera “democrazia elettronica globale”. Si pensi ai limiti imposti alla diffusione della rete da governi (come quello cinese) che percepiscono molto bene come, per la sua stessa natura, la rete non permetta alcun controllo né limite alla pluralità dell’informazione; oppure al *gap* tecnologico tra centri urbani e zone rurali, non ancora raggiunti da “internet veloce”; o anche all’analfabetismo informatico di vaste fette di popolazione. Un interessante articolo che tocca l’argomento dei “paradossi dell’età dell’informazione è reperibile in rete all’indirizzo: <http://www.pol-it.org/ital/riviste/bollettino/barbera.htm>
 - 9 Confesso che mi ha sempre infastidito l’atteggiamento snobistico di una certa élite intellettuale nei confronti delle “nuove tecnologie”... soprattutto perché sono rarissimi i casi in cui tale attitudine viene mantenuta coerentemente quando si capisce che ciò comporterebbe il pagamento del prezzo dell’emarginazione. Si registra, tuttavia, un decremento del numero di persone che bocciano *tout court* la rete e tutto ciò che offre senza impegnarsi neanche un poco a conoscerla e comprenderla. Felicemente, dalla fase tecnofobica, si è passati a quella esplorativa e di studio del fenomeno anche in campo evangelico. Ciò servirà almeno per dare risposte sensate e oneste a chi pone dei veri quesiti.
 - 10 Perché mai il telefono cellulare è divenuto così rapidamente “oggetto del desiderio” di innumerevoli adolescenti? Una spiegazione potrebbe essere offerta dalle funzioni psicologiche che un tale oggetto si presta a svolgere pregevolmente. Si pensi al modo in cui il telefono cellulare può essere utilizzato per regolare la distanza nella comunicazione e nelle relazioni (per restare vicini o allontanarsi dagli altri a piacimento, oppure da genitori ansiosi per tenere “al guinzaglio” i figli); come mezzo per gestire la solitudine e l’isolamento (sentendosi così sempre “connessi” ad altri); come strumento per vivere più appieno e dominare la realtà (grazie alle sue innumerevoli possibilità tecniche, il telefonino è in grado di regalare l’idea di poter essere presenti dappertutto e capaci di “fermare il tempo” con una o più immagini... un’illusione di potere che può essere spinta fino alla sensazione estrema di onnipotenza).
 - 11 Questi fenomeni, ormai da anni, sono oggetto di studio da parte della comunità scientifica. Si segnala la valida raccolta di saggi *Le dipendenze patologiche, cliniche e psicopatologiche*, a cura di V. CARETTI e D. LA BARBERA, Milano, Raffaello Cortina 2005. Anche in rete è reperibile una gran quantità di materiale.
 - 12 Si veda D. GROOTHUIS, *The Soul in Cyberspace*, Grand Rapids, Baker 1997 dove vi è un intero capitolo dedicato al fenomeno del ciber Sesso dal titolo *Cybersex, Eroticism without Bodies* (pp. 91-104). A p. 97, Groothuis definisce questo fenomeno come “attività sessuali disgiunte da relazioni personali”.
 - 13 È praticamente impossibile rincorrere i dati dell’offerta di pornografia in Internet. Alcuni dati, sebbene non aggiornatissimi, possono almeno darcene l’idea: nel 2003 l’industria pornografica nel mondo ha “fatturato” 57 miliardi di dollari; in rete c’erano 4,2 milioni di siti pornografici (il 12% del totale); le ricerche di materiale pornografico, quotidianamente, erano di 68 milioni (il 25% delle ricerche totali). Un’indagine pubblicata nell’aprile 2004 dall’ICAA (International Crime Analysis Association) dal titolo *Child Internet Risk Perception* (ricerca sulla percezione dei rischi di navigazione internet da parte dei minori) effettuata su un campione di 5000 minori italiani, ha rilevato che il 77% dei minori tra gli 8 e 13 anni naviga su Internet. Solo il 26% dei genitori fa un monitoraggio costante della navigazione dei propri figli. Eppure il 52% degli intervistati è incappato nella pornografia, e il 24% di loro ha reagito con curiosità. Il 13% ha avuto contatti con pedofili e di loro il 70% non ha rivelato nulla ai genitori. Per un quarto di questi ultimi, il motivo è che “in fondo non c’è nulla di male”.
 - 14 Questa è l’opinione di G. GRANIERI, *Blog generation*, Roma, Laterza 2005.
 - 15 Su questo tema si veda l’ottimo lavoro di A.W. HUNT III, *The Vanishing Word. The Veneration of Visual Imagery in the Postmodern World*, Wheaton, Crossway 2003. Hunt partendo dall’affermazione che “vi è una permanente e irreconciliabile tensione tra parola e immagine”, mostra come la religione giudaica sia stata fondata dalla rivelazione divina, mediata dalla parola scritta e orale, e come essa sia sempre stata messa in crisi dalle culture pagane circostanti e dalla loro venerazione delle immagini (pp. 29-52).
 - 16 A questo proposito sarà importate anche documentarci sui vari “filtri” che limitano la navigazione in rete (si segnalano due siti: www.ilfiltro.it; www.davide.it), tenendo bene in mente, però, che anche il migliore dei filtri non risolve il problema e che, più che fare affidamento su “barriere meccaniche”, dobbiamo coltivare dei sani principi che possano funzionare sempre, in presenza e in assenza di un controllo esterno!

The Challenge of Cyberculture

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SUMMARY

The massive spreading of technology has produced a new type of culture, i.e. cyberculture. It has a bearing on the whole of present-day life. According to Postman, cyberculture has been changing everything. Cyberculture is a multifaceted world comprising of different tools and options. Evangelical culture has traditionally been

a book-oriented culture whereas cyberculture is much more inclined to the use and abuse of images. How does a biblical worldview interact with the challenges of cyberculture? Answers are still in the process of being formed and this article asks questions and raises issues that should be borne in mind if one does not want to passively absorb complex, yet unavoidable cultural trends.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die gewaltige Verbreitung der Technologie hat eine neue Art von Kultur hervorgebracht, die Cyberkultur. Diese wirkt sich auf das gesamte gegenwärtige Leben aus. Laut Postman hat die Cyberkultur alles verändert. Cyberkultur ist eine facettenreiche Welt, die aus verschiedenen Werkzeugen und Möglichkeiten besteht. Die evangelikale Kultur ist traditionell eine auf das Buch ausgerichtete Kultur gewesen; im Gegensatz dazu neigt die Cyberkul-

tur viel mehr dem Gebrauch und Missbrauch von Bildern zu. Wie geht eine biblische Weltsicht mit den Herausforderungen der Cyberkultur um? Antworten auf diese Frage befinden sich noch im Anfangsstadium und dieser Artikel stellt Fragen und wirft Probleme auf, die man im Kopf behalten sollte, wenn man komplexe, aber unumgängliche kulturelle Trends nicht passiv absorbieren will.

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RÉSUMÉ

L'expansion massive des techniques a produit un nouveau type de culture, la cyberculture, qui affecte actuellement toute la vie des gens. D'après Postman, cette cyberculture a des répercussions sur tout ce qui fait notre vie. C'est un monde aux multiples facettes utilisant différents outils et offrant diverses options. La culture évangélique a traditionnellement été orientée vers le livre, tandis que

la cyberculture est bien plus portée sur l'usage et l'abus des images. Qu'est-ce qu'une vision du monde biblique a à dire quant à cette nouvelle culture ? Les réponses en sont encore à l'état d'élaboration. Le présent article pose des questions et soulève des problèmes auxquels il faut prêter attention si l'on ne veut pas absorber passivement des tendances culturelles complexes et en même temps incontournables.

* * * *

My generation began to “toy” with the *Commodore 64*, a machine with a paltry 64k RAM and no hard disk which read data from a tape recorder. We were among the first who wrote and printed our final dissertation by means of a PC and *word processing* software. Let us also recall the debate relayed by the media which followed a much advertised reprint of 1984 – the futuristic, political, fictional novel

which George Orwell had published quite some time before, in 1948. Orwell's year had come about at last and much speculation was being exchanged on the accuracy of his hunches and prophecies. Today, 23 years since then, very few associate “Big Brother” with an oppressive regime utilising technology in order to control people's lives and consciences. To most, Big Brother is more suggestive

of shows attracting a high viewership, the gaudiness of what TV companies provide or, worse still, the pneumatic vacuum of contemporary youth culture. Yet, things need not be this way! The intertwining of technology and lifestyle, social ethics, individual conscience and tyranny deserves more attention and altogether more in-depth reflection.

Although technological progress, thanks to its exponential growth rate over the last 200 years, has led more than one thinker to worry and reflect on foreseeable consequences, most people have adjusted to being more or less excited users of technology and ask no further questions. Nevertheless, the ever more intrusive and pervasive introduction of machines capable of speeding up and simplifying many human activities has triggered a momentous debate among those who, being concerned with past history, are all too aware that no technology is "neutral", and any innovation in such fields has always acted as a catalyst for social and cultural change.

Computing technology, having given rise to cyberculture (aka. "digital society"¹), has sparked an enduring debate which straddles academia, the political scene as well as "popular" media (cinema, the press and television).²

1. The Influence of technology on social life

Archaeology documents that the development of human civilisation proceeded in relation to the introduction and refinement of technologies which had a profound impact on our lives. A few examples suffice to show how the introduction of selected new technologies has produced unforeseen effects in social life.³

The origin of the mechanical clock dates back to the period between 1100 and 1200, when it was put together to regulate the daily life of Benedictine monasteries, announcing the allotted seven times per day which were set aside for prayer. Those times were signaled by the ringing of the monastery bells, and mechanical clocks provided the technology for adding in the precision of this rite. Obviously, it soon appeared that they could also synchronise and regulate other human activities. By the mid-14th century, they were routinely utilised also by craftsmen and merchants as "the mechanical clock had made regular production possible by standardising working hours and product specifications". Hence, the cradle of capitalism may be found in Benedictine monasteries,

at a much earlier date than the forming of Max Weber's Protestant ethic! Besides, the transition of clock regulation from religious observance to commercial enterprise occurred in 1370, when the French king Charles V pronounced that the citizens of Paris were to regulate their private lives, as well as trade and productive activities, by the 60-minutes-spaced ringing from the bells of the royal palace. All churches in Paris were also expected to synchronise their bells with the royal ones, regardless of the scheduling based on canonical hours, thus subjecting spiritual urges to material interests. We have here an example of how a newly developed tool may enhance the status of an institution at the expense of another.⁴

Because of this, N. Postman notes that "it is not possible to restrict the effects of a new technology within the limits of a given range of human activities. Technological change does not add to nor detract from the resulting total. It is ecological... and triggers total change... A new technology does not add nor subtract, it changes everything." And, to clarify further, the same author adds:

Fifty years after the press had been invented, old Europe was not "the same Europe plus the press", it was a different Europe. Once television had been introduced, the US was not "America with TV added": television had reshaped political campaigns, life at home, schools, churches, industries.⁵

These observations, however simple, force us to think more in depth, to resist swimming with the tide or letting ourselves be passively conditioned by technological advances.

A first step requires becoming aware of the "ecological" effect induced by new technologies upon social change. Obviously, at this early stage, we are not expected to evaluate whether the technology being considered is "friendly" or "inimical", but rather to understand technology's potential for transformation. Great care should be taken not to underestimate its potential, knowing all too well that, generally speaking, new technologies are prone to bringing about disruption on account of their low cost, ease of operation and widespread dissemination. In no way should what goes on under the name of cyberculture be underestimated.

2. The variegated world of cyberculture

Coming to the point: what is cyberspace, or cyber-

culture? Cyberspace is “the dimension created by machines”.⁶ It is not a physical location, but rather a “virtual” space identified by means of networked computers and documents being shared by them. Hence, it can only be accessed through computers with either cabled or wireless networks. A cybernaut is anyone who navigates or contributes to developing this world. Therefore, cyberculture may be broadly defined as the *world consisting of humans and machines where documents and images are created by computer interaction*. This is the world of the internet and the services it provides. Some of the most popular services are listed below:⁷

World Wide Web: the global network where businesses, organisations and the general public display their own “sites” with “pages” which can be perused or copied for a variety of purposes: government bulletins, sport events, art, popular TV shows.

E-mail: used to exchange messages (e.g. with friends) without having to resort to envelopes or stamps.

Usenet newsgroup: they are similar to e-mail, but messages are posted on any of thousands of thematic bulletin boards, for those who share a common interest to view them.

Chat rooms: similar to phone calls, but voice sounds are replaced by lines being typed on a keyboard.

Instant messaging (Skype and other brands serving the same purpose): it establishes real time communication channels between two or more people simultaneously connected to the internet, enabling them to speak, play games or share files, images, musical compositions.

Mailing lists: they are “discussion groups” with or without a moderator filtering contacts; communication makes use of e-mail messages sent to all those who agree to subscribe to a list.

Video-conferences: based on audiovisual cameras, they enable real time communication across the internet among groups of people.

MUDs (*Multiple User Dungeons or Domains*): found in web sites devoted to games or other structured activities, usually with several persons interacting among them.

Blogs (web log): consist of web pages placed under the control of an individual who maintains them for discussing particular topics with other people, or recording aspects of her/his per-

sonal life; while external inputs may be screened by owner, viewing is normally open to all.

You-Tube: a gallery of audiovisual, freely downloadable files made available by their producers.

Podcasts: allow (usually at no charge) automatic downloading of texts and audiovisual files; most popular contents are news, radio broadcasting and journals.

Wikipedia: an encyclopaedia online open to contributions submitted by the general public; its contents carry no copyright restriction; translations into other languages are allowed as well.

In spite of its youth, cyberculture has penetrated the globe at an extraordinary speed. Some of the factors which account for its success are: the spreading of telephone networks and computer use, the array of services made readily available which offer information exchange of all kinds, learning opportunities, entertainment and escape from daily routine. Its expansive momentum was sustained by ease of access, low costs, a communicative style based on conceptual straightforwardness, speed of search and retrieval operations, the unbounded scope of contacts available and last but not least the virtual guarantee of anonymity. We thus understand why today’s “digital society” is comprised of those from every social, cultural and age group.⁸

3. Evangelical ethos meets cyberculture

But does cyberculture pose a threat or does it yield opportunities for the evangelical ethos and for the mission assigned to the church? I believe that any hostile attitude towards cyberculture is misplaced and impractical,⁹ on account of it representing such a large part of the world we live in. Moreover, I feel that cyberculture challenges us in a manner not unlike Goliath did in King Saul’s days (cf. 1 Sam 17), a challenge we cannot pretend to ignore. However daunting our Philistine giant’s fierceness may be, we should remember that the peril looming before individuals, families, Christian and Evangelical churches is not “new”. It is simply more harmful and potentially destructive, but not intrinsically different from tests endured by the generations preceding us.

The similarity lies in the fact that technology (and especially “new technologies”) can easily be deified because of its potential to fulfill primary needs, the ability to perform important psychological functions, and its promise to address common expectations and hopes.¹⁰

In this regard, let us consider the so called “new dependencies” phenomenon. Many of them (e.g. *Internet Addiction Disorder*, mobile phone dependency or cellphone-mania, *Virtual Sex Addiction*, or being addicted to video games and electronic gambling)¹¹ are fed, thrive and multiply due to an ever growing number of technologies on offer, aimed at promoting an individualism bent on the immediate satisfaction of one’s private pleasures. The novelty in these cases stems from how bodily, physical relationships with others lose value and are in most cases re-orientated more towards the machines themselves than those who are operating them.¹² However, in spite of the prominence assigned to pornography, paedophilia, violence (which do exist in abundance online),¹³ we should not turn a blind eye to the effects that may materialise in the long term as a result of other, apparently less troubling factors.

Let us turn our attention to how time is to be employed in a considerate and enriching manner. Traditional evangelicals set aside time to reading and studying Scripture, which is accompanied by meditation and prayer. Beside the time spent listening to and holding a dialogue with God, the best Protestant traditions have embraced the “family cult” which the Puritans practiced at least twice a day (in the morning and evening). With the advent of digital society, time management is hampered by intrusive interferences; yesteryear’s television was quickly followed by a welter of other electronic means of connection (phones, faxes etc.) whose information flows are hard to contain by those wishing to allot time for themselves and their family. Those of us who are particularly “curious” of this technology risk being “shipwrecked” or wholly disoriented and confused due to our lack of cultural and epistemological maturity which is necessary in order to evaluate it. Cyberspace may appeal to us as an easy escape from our responsibilities in regard to our family life as well as caring for our neighbours. In short, time allotted to cyberspace is taken away from God and our community (family, work, church, the needy and non-believers).

Lastly, let us consider the disruptive impact of digital technology on learning and communication. Even in this sphere new technology is affecting a profound change. Clearly, however, views differ. While some believe that the communication model set by blogs and the interaction they raise within the blog-sphere open new avenues to collective knowledge and yield fresh opportunity for progress in a wide array of fields,¹⁴ others are far

more sceptical and dread the long term effects of the hacked, synthetic language (by necessity limited to superficial exchanges) which has become prevalent on the internet. It is generally acknowledged that the attention span of the younger generations engaging in a “discourse” does not exceed ten to fifteen minutes, and that they encounter serious difficulty in understanding a written text. The cause of this is most often attributed to a “culture based on images” which, in my personal view, is the greatest danger in that it weakens the role assigned to verbal communication set in a spatio-temporal dimension. The “people of the Book” cannot survive in a society which deprives words of their meanings and relevance. But such a world is a “Paradise” to the “people of the Image”, or really to any form of paganism which, after the model of ancient pantheism, makes God indistinguishable from creation.¹⁵ This is why evangelical Christians, families and the whole Christian Church are being challenged, today like in the past, by an idolatry which, despite its new forms, remains as pernicious and destructive as ever for religion and the biblical ethos.

4. What will our lives be like in the age of cyberculture?

A time of threats is likewise a time of choices. Parents, educators, ministers of the Gospel and social workers are saddled with heavy responsibilities. We need to understand this world ever more in depth, studying its characteristic traits without giving in to the temptation to recoil before it. In other words, we must come in contact with it while staying alert, critical and endowed with a “healthy mistrust”.¹⁶

We must develop the means to identify the new forms of those ancient mechanisms and dynamics whose “temptation” is set to ensnare the human souls travelling through cyberspace. It is necessary to discover why this world is so adept at feeding the individualism of those who look for immediate personal gratification while shunning all commitment to relationships. Whatever findings are yielded by our research are to be shared with others, but with special attention to younger generations who appear to be most thoughtless and uninhibited in their use of the internet (this topic requires further in depth study from a distinctly Christian perspective).

We acknowledge that the primary arena for this education is the family, which can act as a true

socio-theological “laboratory” and whose operating tools are precepts and examples. It is therefore paramount that parents be provided with knowledge and skills tailored to the magnitude of the challenges outlined above. They should educate in a systematic manner, refraining from one-off corrections (prohibitions, setting of limits bound to be soon or later trespassed) but relying instead on a “well-defined worldview” deeply assimilated and then passed on to their children. A vision centred on a coherent account of reality, enabling the children to comprehend and interpret both the world and human experiences in light of biblical theism. Without this, the enormous amount of information conveyed by the internet will surely generate confusion of all types in the minds of those lacking the guidance of a Unitarian vision of the world.

Ultimately, human relationships based on non-mediated communication (i.e., those which accentuate verbal and non-verbal language forms and which are channeled through physical, as opposed to virtual, media) should be preserved, while pure, altruistic forms of affection are fostered.

Notes

- 1 G. GRANIERI, *La società digitale*, Rome, Laterza 2006.
- 2 A wide bibliography is found after the texts cited in this article. With regard to movie-making, I wish to recommend an attentive screening of two quite popular films: *The Matrix* (1999), by the Wachowsky brothers (in the first of the three Matrix films, Platonic philosophy is linked to biblical themes against a futuristic, hyper-technological backdrop while the risk that humankind can be enslaved by machines is assessed); *Artificial Intelligence* (2001) by Steven Spielberg, describing a future world with no morals, where the triumph of human individualism brings about the end of the human species. The latter film is of considerable interest due to the light it sheds on the impact that new technologies might have on feelings of affection and family life.
- 3 In this respect, one may recall the changes induced in everyday living as well as in wider economic systems (or for military purposes) by technologies based on wheels, metals, earthenware, agriculture, animal domestication, ploughs, writing and their further elaborations. The examples which follow are drawn from N. POSTMAN, *Technopoly*, Turin, Bollati Boringhieri 1993, pp. 21, 31.
- 4 The press (developed in 1450 by Johannes Gutenberg [1397-1468], a fervent Catholic) was based on mobile types and was likewise instrumental in

spreading Protestant Reform ideas and undermining the monopoly of the Roman Church.

- 5 N. POSTMAN, *Technopoly*, cit., p. 24.
- 6 Cybernetics is the science concerned with the principles of making automatic machines (increasingly of the electronic kind) simulate the functioning of living organisms – particularly the human brain. Derived from Greek *kybernetichè* (*tèchne*), i.e. “ability to steer, guide”, it was so named by US mathematician Norbert Wiener (1894-1964).
- 7 For a more detailed listing, cf. A. SPADARO, *Connessioni*, Bologna, Pades 2006. On *Weblogs*, cf. G. GRANIERI, *Blog generation*, Rome, Laterza 2005.
- 8 Let us caution however that we are still a long way from true “global, electronic democracy”. Some governments – e.g., the Chinese one – fret about the risks of any unrestrained access to information and place restrictions on the use of the internet by their nationals. Also, an unbalance of computing literacy and technological know-how, coupled with the patched spreading of broad band infrastructure, separates towns from countryside, *élites* from general population. An interesting article on the “paradoxes” of the information age is found at: <http://www.pol-it.org/ital/riviste/bollettino/barbera.htm>.
- 9 I must admit that the snobbish attitude of certain intellectual *élites vis-à-vis* the “new technologies” has always irked me – above all because it very seldom happens that the same attitude is coherently kept whenever it dawns on them that the price to be paid is nothing less than marginalisation. However, the number of those who disparage the net and its services, and shun all efforts to become acquainted with it, is now rapidly decreasing. Happily, an exploratory, evaluative phase is replacing a former internet-phobic stance even among evangelicals. At least, now we will come up with satisfactory answers when people ask sensible questions.
- 10 Why is it that mobile phones are so popular with so many teenagers? One possible answer is that they lend themselves to valuable psychological functions: regulating at will the intensity of communication and affective ties (one may elect to be close to others and, instants later, prefer to be left alone; or apprehensive parents may use them to keep their children on a leash); offsetting feelings of solitude and isolation (due to their signifying permanent connectivity to others); living more intensively while keeping the outside world under control (thanks to countless technical features, mobile telephones regale us with the fantasy of being able to show up anywhere, at any time, or encapsulate reality in one or more snapshots...thus feeding an illusion of powerfulness that some stretch to full-blown omnipotence).
- 11 These phenomena have been scrutinised by the scientific community for some time. A good compendium of essays thereon is found in *Le dipendenze*

- patologiche, cliniche e psicopatologiche*, V. CARETTI and D. LA BARBERA editors, Milan, Raffaello Cortina 2005. Further material can be easily obtained from the internet.
- 12 Cf. D. GROOTHUIS, *The Soul in Cyberspace*, Grand Rapids, Baker 1997, particularly the chapter titled *Cybersex, Eroticism without Bodies* (pp. 91-104). On p. 97, Groothuis defines this phenomenon as based on "sexual activities disjoined from personal relationships."
 - 13 It is practically impossible to pinpoint updated figures on the prevalence of internet pornography. However, data collected in 2003 suggest its order of magnitude: that year's turnover for the pornographic industry online was US\$57 bln; 4.2 mln web sites (12% of total sites) dealt with pornography; daily, pornographic sites received an average of 68 mln hits from visitors (25% of total daily hits for the entire net). A research titled "Child Internet Risk Perception", published in April 2004 by ICAA (International Crime Analysis Association), reported the following findings based on a sample of 5,000 Italian children: 77% of those aged between 8 and 13 surfed the internet; only 26% of parents monitored them when operating on the internet; 52% of the interviewed children had unwittingly come across pornographic material; of these, 24% voluntarily pursued the exploration of such material; 13% had been approached by pedophiles; of them, 70% did not inform their parents of such contacts; one quarter of those not reporting contacts to their parents justified their decision on grounds that "all in all, there was nothing wrong in having these contacts".
 - 14 Such is the position held by G. GRANIERI, *Blog Generation*, Rome, Laterza 2005.
 - 15 On this topic, cf. the excellent work by A.W. HUNT III, *The Vanishing Word: The Veneration of Visual Imagery in the Postmodern World*, Wheaton, Crossway 2003. Hunt, moving from the statement that "there is a permanent and irreconcilable tension between word and image" shows that Judaic religion was founded on divine revelation conveyed through written and oral words, and that it has always been challenged by surrounding pagan cultures bent on the cult of images (pp. 29-52).
 - 16 In this regard, it is also important to acquire additional information on "filters" limiting the scope of net-surfing (two useful sites are at: www.ilfiltro.it; www.davide.it). At the same time though, let us not ignore that the best of filters won't fix this kind of problem by itself. More than relying on "mechanical fences", good principles need be internalised. They are the only effective protection likely to remain in place once artificial barriers have failed!

NEW FROM PATERNOSTER

Salvation Is More Complicated Than You Think A Study on the Teachings of Jesus

Alan P. Stanley

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This book will be an important resource for any Christian seeking to understand more of what God requires of those on the narrow road. Pastors and teachers, too, will benefit from a comprehensive biblical theology on salvation.

Alan Stanley is a pastor in Queensland, Australia in and teaches Old and New Testament at Mueller College of Ministries.

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NEW FROM PATERNOSTER

A New Kind of Conversation

Blogging Toward a Postmodern Evangelical Faith

Myron Bradley Penner & Hunter Barnes (editors)

Using the format of the weblog, *A New Kind of Conversation* is an experimental book that enters into a conversational theological exploration with five evangelical leaders and academics (Brian McLaren, Bruce Ellis Benson, Ellen Haroutunian, Mabilia Kenzon, and Myron Bradley Penner), who are the primary bloggers. Originally posted on anewkindofconversation.com, people all over the world were invited to blog on the following topics: What is 'Postmodernity'? What is a Postmodern Evangelical? Theology and (Non)(Post) Foundationalism; The Bible, Theology and Postmodernism; Evangelical Faith and (Postmodern) Others; Postmodern Apologetics; Postmodern Ministry; Spiritual Formation in a Postmodern Context. The book is a condensed version of that conversation.

Myron Bradley Penner is Professor of Philosophy and Theology, Prairie College, Canada; **Hunter Barnes** is Creative Arts Director for Zarephath Christian Church, in Zarephath, New Jersey.

978-1932805-58-1 / 229 x 152mm / 240pp / £11.99

Chrysalis

A Forgotten Phase in the Journey of Faith

Alan Jamieson

Increasing numbers of Christian people find their faith metamorphosing beyond the standard images and forms of Christian faith but questions about where this may lead remain. Is this the death of personal faith or the emergence of something new? Could it be a journey that is Spirit-led?

Chrysalis uses the life-cycle of butterflies as a metaphor for the faith journey that many contemporary people are experiencing. Drawing on the three principal phases of a butterfly's life and the transformations between these phases, the book suggests subtle similarities with the zones of Christian faith that many encounter. For butterflies and Christians change between these 'phases' or 'zones' is substantial, life-changing and irreversible. This book accompanies ordinary people in the midst of substantive faith change. *Chrysalis* is primarily pastoral and practical drawing on the author's experience of accompanying people in the midst of difficult personal faith changes.

Alan Jamieson is a minister in New Zealand and a trained sociologist. His internationally acclaimed first book, *A Churchless Faith*, researched why people leave their churches to continue their walk of faith outside the church.

978-1-84227-544-3 / 216 x 140 mm / 168pp (est.) / £9.99

Positive Church

Emerging Without Losing Church

Jason Clark

This book is a positive affirmation of the place and importance of church in our emerging Western cultures. Seeking a middle way between those who would freeze the way we 'do' church and those who would vaporise it, Jason Clark charts a way forward that embraces the future without forgetting the past. Drawing on his own experience as a church planter and leader as well as on sociological and theological reflection Clark helps us to better understand our context and positive ways to engage it. He considers how we should rethink mission, technology, and the content of our message before recommending positive, postmodern approaches to spiritual formation, preaching, leadership, gathering-as-church and conversion. A must-read for all who recognise that the church must change, but are fed up with being told that it has passed its sell-by date.

Jason Clark is the Senior/Founding Pastor of Vineyard Church, Sutton. He heads up Emergent-UK and is currently studying for a PhD in theology at King's College in London.

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Internet, Cultura, Chiesa

Leonardo De Chirico

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Tra i tanti titoli a disposizione sulla relazione triangolare tra Internet, cultura e chiesa, questa selezione è sicuramente riduttiva ma sufficientemente rappresentativa del dibattito in corso. I volumi presi in considerazione sono:

QUENTIN J. SCHULTZE, *Habits of the High-Tech Heart. Living Virtuously in the Information Age*, Grand Rapids, Baker 2002, pp. 256.

JEROME COTTIN – JEAN-NICHOLAS BAZIN, *Vers un christianisme virtuel? Enjeux et défis d'Internet*, Genève, Labor et Fides 2003, pp. 146.

ROMANO ALTOBELLI e SALVINO LEONE (edd.), *La morale riflessa sul monitor. Internet ed etica*, Roma, Città Nuova 2006, pp. 207.

ANTONIO SPADARO, *Connessioni. Nuove forme della cultura al tempo di internet*, Bologna, Pades 2006, pp. 178.

Nel mondo apparentemente scoppiettante ed accattivante di Internet, esiste un pesante deficit di coerenza morale e di direzione spirituale. Riprendendo la lezione di Jacques Ellul che denunciava la degenerazione moderna della fede nella tecnica, l'A., professore di Comunicazione al Calvin College di Grand Rapids (USA), sostiene che nell'età della cybercultura abbiamo perso virtù come la moderazione, il discernimento e l'umiltà.

L'“informazionismo” è diventata una fede religiosa: lo scambio di informazioni è considerato l'automatismo assicurato verso il progresso sociale e la felicità personale. L'osservazione voyeuristica prevale sull'intimità delle relazioni e la misurazione (“quanto è grande la tua banda larga?”) ha la meglio sul significato dei rapporti. L'enfasi sulla quantificazione degli scambi, unita all'individualismo della fruizione di Internet, scalfisce l'importanza della memoria condivisa, le pratiche caritatevoli e la reciproca responsabilità. Anche il

senso di appartenenza ad una comunità organica e reale viene indebolito in favore di legami superficiali e disincarnati.

L'analisi di Schultze è molto elluliana, ma risente anche della riflessione di Alexis de Tocqueville sulla democrazia in America (che coniuga interesse individuale e senso religioso in vista del bene comune) e di Vaclav Havel per il quale la responsabilità morale è un pre-requisito della vita democratica. Il tono può sembrare disfattista, ma è contemplata anche una proposta culturale per un riorientamento nella fruizioni di Internet.

Il capitolo conclusivo, infatti, suggerisce sei spazi di lavoro per coloro che desiderano coltivare le virtù a rischio di estinzione nell'età di Internet: l'ammissione della “leggerezza” dell'essere digitale, senza montature e rigonfiamenti della sua importanza; la sfiducia nella crescente tecno-magia che promette molto e non mantiene secondo le aspettative; la detecnologizzazione delle tradizioni religiose, impedendo che diventino troppo piegate sul loro uso indiscriminato; il servizio responsabile a Dio e al prossimo come risposta al dono della vita ricevuta; la coltivazione dell'amicizia come via principale per tessere relazioni su cui le modalità tecnologiche possono innestarsi senza sostituirla; l'assunzione dell'atteggiamento di residenti nel mondo che usano Internet in modo virtuoso, così come cercano di fare per ogni altro aspetto della loro vita.

Il secondo volume a cura di Cottin e Bazin nasce nel contesto di un progetto di ricerca sulla relazione tra Internet e la chiesa che ha visto coinvolti il Consiglio ecumenico della chiese e la Chiesa riformata di Francia. E' un'ottima introduzione al tema, anche perché riassume criticamente molti lavori pubblicati in ambito cristiano e offre quindi un ampio stato della questione.

Internet ha fatto irruzione anche nella chiesa e, come tutte le irruzioni, ha seminato imbarazzo,

curiosità, perplessità. Anche in circoli cristiani si è assistito alla polarizzazione tra entusiasti e disfattisti. I primi hanno favoleggiato sulle possibilità benefiche di Internet per lo sviluppo della missione della chiesa, i secondi hanno dipinto scenari inquietanti sui pericoli introdotti. Per gli AA., sono vere entrambe le cose, nel senso che Internet ha effettivamente aperto un nuovo modo di comunicare e di favorire la partecipazione di molti soggetti nello spazio virtuale. Al contempo, anche se è ancora presto per fare bilanci retrospettivi, vi sono rischi di superamento della dimensione comunitaria "reale" e di disgregamento dei legami sociali "vicini".

Internet è ambivalente, potenzialmente straordinario e potenzialmente malefico, ma per gli AA. deve prevalere un atteggiamento di ottimismo autocritico. Anche sulla base di ricerche empiriche, essi sono convinti che l'atteggiamento cristiano non può che andare verso l'umanizzazione di Internet al servizio della missione della chiesa. Internet favorisce la comunione nella chiesa, soprattutto quando questa vive situazioni di minoranza e di diaspora, può essere uno strumento di formazione teologica, può intercettare in senso evangelistico la domanda di spiritualità che esiste in rete, può favorire l'approntamento e lo svolgimento di progetti comuni di carattere sociale e missionario. Insomma, per gli AA. il cristianesimo "virtuale" paventato nel libro non deve scoraggiare l'uso massiccio di Internet, anche se sempre aperto ad una correzione critica.

Quali sono i rischi principali? Essi riflettono tendenze che si manifestano nella società. Non c'è dubbio che Internet favorisca gli "individualismi in rete" o le "solitudini collegate", un nuovo modo di vivere l'individualismo moderno in una forma tecnologicamente postmoderna. Il cristianesimo è una religione che fa dell'"incarnazione" il suo perno. Ciò, per gli AA, non significa respingere di per sé la "virtualità" di Internet, ma di viverla fruttuosamente.

Chiude il libro una rassegna commentata di siti religiosi (soprattutto di area francofona). In alcuni commenti si percepisce un certo disagio nei confronti di alcuni siti evangelicali e sul loro contenuto evangelistico. Per il resto si tratta di una buona base di partenza per una riflessione argomentata sulla questione.

Il libro a cura di Altobelli e Leone è frutto di un seminario promosso dall'ATISM sul rapporto tra internet ed etica. Nelle parole stesse dei curatori, si tratta di "prime piste di una riflessione valutativa" (8) su temi così complessi e così nuovi. I saggi danno voce al dibattito che sta sorgendo

in ambienti cattolici, soprattutto in Italia, e registrano un interesse crescente per le sfide e le opportunità che internet pone alla missione della chiesa. Tra i dodici interventi proposti, alcuni sono particolarmente interessanti, anche per un lettore non cattolico. Ad esempio, X. Debanne ripercorre le dinamiche culturali e tecnologiche che hanno portato alla digitalizzazione della società e alla nascita di internet. Le religioni hanno rincorso questi sviluppi e hanno approntato una loro presenza variamente articolata (siti vetrina, transazionali, interattivi, ecc.). G. Coccolini esamina le prese di posizione ecclesiali (cattoliche) tramite documenti di studio e dichiarazioni di vari organismi. D. Grohmann si addentra nella complessa questione dei problemi giuridici e legislativi dell'informatica, soprattutto in relazione alla tutela della privacy, il commercio elettronico, la pedofilia informatica. Il contributo di R. Altobelli è più teologico e s'interroga sul tema spazio-tempo in internet alla luce di categorie cristologiche in cui spazio-tempo sono state assunte e conciliate. La domanda di Altobelli è se in internet sia possibile una "comunicazione incarnata", così come quella che è stata la scelta della rivelazione biblica. J. Scianchi, infine, si pone la questione se internet sia una "nuova povertà" o un "nuovo sviluppo" su scala mondiale. Entrambe le risposte sono possibili contemporaneamente ed è per questo che l'A. spinge per un impegno cattolico in vista di un "nuovo umanesimo".

Il mondo cattolico italiano sembra aver tematizzato la questione e sembra non voler semplicemente sfruttare internet o assistere alla sua larghissima diffusione. La riflessione etica è ancora alle prime armi, ma è un compito improrogabile.

Infine, l'opera di Spadaro. Scritto da un redattore de *La Civiltà Cattolica*, acuto osservatore culturale e critico letterario, questo volume raccoglie otto saggi a suo tempo pubblicati sulla rivista gesuitica e suddiviso in due parti, la prima più descrittiva di alcuni fenomeni relativi all'impatto di internet sulla cultura, la seconda più focalizzata sulle ricadute di internet nel campo religioso.

L'A. mostra una notevole competenza nello snocciolare i dati, le tendenze, le fonti, i problemi, le potenziali e le prospettive delle nuove tecnologie informatiche. In brevi ma informatissimi capitoli, vengono presentati tempi complessi ed affascinanti come l'editoria in digitale, le biblioteche e le librerie virtuali, le web-zine (riviste in rete), il fenomeno dei blog tra diario e giornale, il podcasting e la diffusissima wikipedia. Si tratta di presentazioni sintetiche, ma frutto di conoscenza di prima mano

che aiutano a farsi un'idea circostanziata e sufficientemente critica. In genere, l'A. mostra una cauta e positiva apertura alle nuove forme di cultura, mettendone in risalto le potenzialità, senza nascondersi peraltro le zone grigie o le potenziali distorsioni.

Molto interessante è la seconda parte del libro in cui l'analisi si fa più teologica e pastorale. Non a caso i due capitoli s'intitolano "Dio nella rete" e "La Chiesa e internet". Nel primo, l'A. s'interroga sul bisogno di Dio nella società contemporanea e l'offerta di cyber-spiritualità che la rete offre; sugli spazi che la medesima apre per il dialogo spirituale ampiamente inteso e per il dialogo teologico più in particolare. Tra le tante innovazioni portati dall'avvento di internet, una non trascurabile è la mutazione della localizzazione dell'autorità nel confronto teologico: "la conoscenza non prevede più un centro da cui si deducono dei raggi, ma tutto può essere centro e dappertutto si può raggiungere qualunque luogo. Il sapere è non-gerarchico, frammentato, e non c'è differenza tra interno ed esterno. Quali effetti avrà ciò sulla conoscenza e la comunicazione teologica?" (121). La "teoblogia", il "bloggare" teologico di internet suscita nuovi interrogativi e apre un nuovo spazio di confronto: la "blogosfera cristiana". È interessante notare come l'A. citi a mo' di esempio dei blog legati a riviste evangelicali nordamericane (*Christianity Today*, *World*, ecc.), a testimonianza del fatto che l'uso delle nuove tec-

nologie è trasversale nel mondo cristiano e vede il frastagliato mosaico dell'evangelicalismo come protagonista della sperimentazione di nuovi linguaggi e modalità (tra cui *Theopedia*, l'enciclopedia teologica di orientamento riformato, 126). Tra questi è da segnalare anche il "godcasting", cioè lo sviluppo di podcast a sfondo religioso. In internet, la teologia potenzia il suo essere un "codice aperto" sollecitato da mille istanze e soggetto a molteplici fluttuazioni. La *open source theology* è una forma di teologizzare comunitaria, senza apparenti centri di autorità, più interessata alla partecipazione che alla creativa fedeltà.

Nell'ultimo capitolo "La Chiesa in internet" la riflessione dell'A. ha come sfondo due documenti del Pontificio Consiglio delle Comunicazioni Sociali del 2002. Tra i tanti spunti, l'A. insiste sulla riqualificazione al ribasso dell'appartenenza tramite le procedure del *login* e del *logout* che, essendo imperniate sulle possibilità di accesso scelte autonomamente, tendono a far diventare inutile la "mediazione incarnata" (145) dei sacramenti, della liturgia, della catechesi, insomma dell'istituzioni ecclesiastica. Anche che non si riconosce nella teologia cattolica della mediazione ecclesiale può, tuttavia, intravedere la diluizione dell'impegno e dell'identificazione con la chiesa locale che l'abuso di Internet può incoraggiare.

Internet, Culture and the Church

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SUMMARY

The relationship between the culture of Internet and the Church is at the centre of an increased scholarly interest. This article reviews four recent books that deal with the topic from different angles. Quentin Shultze provides a Biblically sapiential antidote to the many traps of the Information age. From a French perspective, Cottin and

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Bazin reflects on the unnecessary polarization between pessimists and optimists, while commending a self-critical approach to the Internet. The last two books come from a Catholic background. The first is a collection of papers given at a conference on ethics and the Internet. The last book comes from a Jesuit scholar who writes for *Civiltà cattolica*. He intelligently deals with many aspects of the issue.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die Beziehung zwischen der Kultur des Internets und der Kirche steht im Zentrum eines wachsenden gelehrten Interesses. Dieser Artikel rezensiert vier neue Bücher, die das Thema aus unterschiedlichen Blickwinkeln betrachten. Quentin Shultze bietet ein biblisch-weisheitliches Gegenmittel gegen die zahlreichen Fallen des Informationszeitalters. Aus französischer Perspektive reflektieren

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Cottin und Bazin über die unnötige Polarisierung zwischen Pessimisten und Optimisten; sie empfehlen einen selbstkritischen Umgang mit dem Internet. Die beiden letzten Bücher haben einen katholischen Hintergrund. Das erste ist eine Artikelsammlung von einer Konferenz über Ethik und das Internet. Das letzte Buch stammt von einem jesuitischen Gelehrten, der für *Civiltà cattolica* schreibt. Er behandelt viele Aspekte der Frage sehr intelligent.

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RÉSUMÉ

Le rapport entre la culture de l'Internet et l'Église fait l'objet d'un intérêt grandissant de la part du monde académique. Cet article présente quatre livres différents qui abordent ce sujet sous divers angles. Quentin Schulze apporte un antidote sapientiel biblique aux nombreux pièges de l'ère de l'information. Les Français Cottin et

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Bazin invitent à se garder d'une polarisation entre pessimistes et optimistes, en recommandant une approche critique de l'Internet. Les deux autres ouvrages viennent de penseurs catholiques. L'un reprend les exposés donnés lors d'une conférence sur l'éthique et l'Internet. L'autre vient d'un penseur jésuite qui écrit pour la communauté catholique. Il traite avec intelligence de nombreux aspects de ce sujet.

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In view of the many sources available on the triangular relationship linking the internet, culture and the church, this selection, although undoubtedly reductive, is sufficiently representative of the ongoing debate. Publications to be considered are:

QUENTIN J. SCHULTZE, *Habits of the High-Tech Heart. Living Virtuously in the Information Age*, Grand Rapids, Baker 2002, pp. 256.

JÉRÔME COTTIN – JEAN-NICHOLAS BAZIN, *Vers un christianisme virtuel? Enjeux et*

défis d'Internet, [Towards virtual Christianity? Issues and challenges of the internet] Geneva, Labor et Fides 2003, pp. 146.

ROMANO ALTOBELLI e SALVINO LEONE (eds.), *La morale riflessa sul monitor. Internet ed etica*, [Morals reflected on the monitor: The internet and ethics] Rome, Città Nuova 2006, pp. 207.

ANTONIO SPADARO, *Connessioni. Nuove forme della cultura al tempo di internet*, [Connec-

tions: New forms of culture in the age of the internet] Bologna, Pardes 2006, pp. 178.

The seemingly sparkling, attractive world of the internet conceals a heavy deficit in terms of moral coherence and spiritual purposefulness. Recalling Jacques Ellul's teaching – denouncing the modern degeneration brought about by an inordinate trust in technology – the first author (Q. J. Schultze, professor of Communication at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, USA) maintains that, in the age of cyberculture, such virtues as moderation, discernment and humility have been lost.

"Informationism" has become a religious faith: exchanging information is viewed as the automatic and guaranteed route to social progress and personal felicity. Voyeur-like observation has replaced the quest for intimate relations while measurability ("How big is your broadband?") is prized above meaningful rapports. Emphasis on exchange quantification, coupled with individualistic internet fruition, lessens the importance of shared memory, charitable practices and accountability to others. Even the sense of belonging to a tangible, organic community is weakened because of the preference assigned to superficial and disembodied relationships.

Schultze's analysis closely shadows J. Ellul's but is also influenced by Alexis de Tocqueville's reflection on democracy in America (which jointly considers individual interests and religious sensitivity in light of the common good) and Vaclav Havel's contention that moral responsibility is necessary for a democratic coexistence to materialise. While his tone may sound defeatist, nevertheless a cultural proposal is outlined towards a more rewarding application of the internet.

The final chapter, in fact, suggests six areas of study for those wishing to cultivate the virtues on the brink of extinction in the internet age: 1) recognition of the "levity" of the digital mode of being – without excessively expanding its importance; 2) mistrust of a growing techno-magic which is unable to deliver on our expectations; 3) severing religious traditions from technology, lest they become indiscriminately dependant on it; 4) responsible services to be provided to God and our neighbours in return for having been granted life on earth; 5) nurturing friendship as the main avenue to form relationships which can be enhanced by technology and not replaced by it; 6) behaving as residents of the real world who would utilise the internet conscientiously and within bounds, as one

would attempt to do with all other aspects of one's life.

The second publication, edited by Cottin and Bazin, originates from a research project – supported by the Ecumenical Council of Churches and the Reformed Church of France – on the relationship between the internet and the church. It is an excellent introduction to our topic also because it critically summarises a large number of works published within the Christian sphere and therefore thoroughly presents the state of the question being posed. The internet has burst into the church as well and (as in the wake of all irruptions) spread embarrassment, curiosity and perplexity. As occurred elsewhere, Christian circles likewise witnessed a polarisation of admirers pitted against defeatists. The former focused on the beneficial possibilities which the internet could contribute to the church's missionary mandate; the latter depicted unsettling scenarios rife with danger. Both editors believe that either view may be substantiated: on the one hand, the internet opens up new communicative forms which enable a multitude of people to participate in virtual interaction. On the other hand, however, although retrospective assessments may be premature at this early stage, there are also risks when bypassing the "real" community dimension and loosening the social bonds among "neighbours".

In spite of the internet's ambivalence, of its potential for both extraordinary progress and malefic side effects, the authors opt for a stance of self-critical optimism. Their position rests on empirical evidence which suggests that Christians expect a progressive humanising of the internet which will prove beneficial to the church's mission. The internet favours communion within the church, particularly where church members constitute a minority of the overall population or are scattered across a diaspora. Furthermore, the internet may be used as a tool for theological training, which accesses – in an evangelistic sense – the demand for spirituality existing throughout the net while favouring the formulation and development of partnership projects aimed at social and missionary objectives. In conclusion, the authors hold that the "virtual" Christianity dreaded in their compendium should not deter a massive use of the internet, on condition that due attention is paid to the need for critique and corrective action.

What then are the main risks? The trends which mirror those manifest in society must be seen as central. There is no doubt that the internet is con-

ductive to “net individualism” or “linked states of solitude”, thus adding to modern individualism a new, technology-wise postmodern twist. Christianity, being a religion centred on “incarnation”, does not imply, according to the authors being discussed, that internet “virtuality” should be dismissed off-hand, but rather that it should be experienced with a view towards the fruitful contributions it could offer.

An annotated review of religious web sites (mainly located in Francophone areas) is found at the end of this book. Some of the comments betray unease as regards a number of evangelical sites and their evangelistic contents. The rest provide a good starting point for a reasoned reflection on the subject matter.

The book edited by Altobelli and Leone draws its origin from a seminar sponsored by ATISM on the relation existing between the internet and ethics. According to the editors, the publication paves the way to a reflection aimed at evaluating the implications of such complex and new issues as those raised by the internet (p. 8). The essays gathered therein – representative of a budding debate ongoing among Catholics, chiefly in Italy – voice growing interest in the challenge and opportunities that the internet introduces with respect to the mission of the church. Some of the twelve contributions may be of interest to non-Catholics as well. For example, X. Debanne offers a précis of the cultural and technological developments which have led to the digitalizing of society and to the birth of the internet. Religions have eventually resolved to make up for both lost time and opportunities and to announce their presence (through web shop-windows, transnational and interactive sites etc.). G. Coccolini examines the stand taken by (Catholic) hierarchies which resulted from working papers as well as declarations expressed by various institutions. D. Grohmann delves into the complex juridical and legislative aspects associated with digital communication media, paying particular attention to the safeguard of privacy, electronic commerce and paedophilia on line. R. Altobelli focuses on more theological issues, such as the relationship between the internet’s space/time dimension and that of Christological categories, in which space and time have been both appropriated and reconciled. Altobelli raises questions as to the capability of the internet to convey “incarnated communication” forms along lines similar to the channelling of biblical revelation. Finally, J. Scianchi wonders whether the internet signals “new poverty”

or “new development” worldwide, arguing that both outcomes might occur simultaneously and advocating, as a remedy, the emergence of a “new humanism”.

Italian Catholics seem to have explored the same issue, with their pro-active standpoint possibly replacing an earlier wait-and-see attitude (centred on making use of the internet whenever needed while passively witnessing its impressive expansion). Although ethical reflection is just now beginning, it is today viewed as an undertaking which can no longer be deferred.

Lastly, our attention turns to Spadaro’s publication. The author, a member of the editorial staff of *La Civiltà Cattolica* – a magazine owned in Italy by the Jesuit order – and an acute observer of cultural trends as well as a literary critic, has here gathered eight essays earlier published by the Jesuit review. The book is divided into two subheadings, with the first being mainly descriptive of phenomena linked to the internet’s impact on culture, and the second focusing in particular on the observable impingement of the internet upon the religious sphere. Spadaro deftly arranges data and tendencies, organising sources, identifying problems as well as assessing potential and prospective digital technologies. Short but well documented chapters are assigned to complex and fascinating themes such as digital publishing, libraries, virtual book-stores, web-zines (magazines available online), the blog phenomenon – a blending of journal-keeping and news writing – podcasting, and the remarkable success story of Wikipedia. Subjects are cursorily dealt with by one who is clearly acquainted with them, with a view to helping the reader to form detailed, critical appraisals of the topics being discussed. In general, the author is guarded but fundamentally open towards new cultural forms, both highlighting promising potentialities while not attempting to hide the grey areas nor the potential for deviant practices.

The second part of the book, where theological and pastoral analyses are emphasised, is very interesting. It is not by coincidence that its two chapters are titled “God in the Net” and “The Church and the Internet”. In the former, the author investigates the need for God in today’s society and the cyber-spirituality on offer across the net, the amount of content the internet assigns to broad spiritual debates and, more specifically, to theological dialogue. Among the many innovations brought forth by the internet, one worth considering regards a shift in the localisation of authorities which regu-

late theological debates: "knowledge is no longer based on a unique radiating centre, but, rather, any point (on the net) may become a centre while all points can be accessed from anywhere. Learning is non-hierarchical and fragmented and there exists no difference between within and without. What effects will this have upon knowledge and theological communication?" (p. 121). "Theo-blog-y" (i.e. internet theological blogging) raises new questions and leads to the opening of new forums for the exchange of views (the "Christian blog-sphere"). It is worth noting that the author sees the examples of blogs associated with North American evangelical magazines (*Christianity Today*, *World*, etc.) as a sign that new technologies are now utilised across the full spectrum of Christian denominations, with the jagged mosaic of evangelical communities seen at the forefront of the trend experimenting with new languages and media (one such medium is Theopedia, the theological encyclopaedia reflecting the reformed vision; p. 126). Another specimen of this new communicative trend is the so-called

"godcasting" (i.e. the growing popularity of podcasting with religious content added). The internet also accommodates the potential for theology to be an "open source" fed by countless inputs and stirred by various fluctuations. The *open source theology* is a community form of theologising, with no centre of authority and bent on fostering participation more than pursuing creative fidelity. In the last chapter ("The Church and the Internet"), the author reflects on two documents issued in 2002 by the Pontifical Council for Social Communications. From among the many ideas presented, Spadaro notably insists on limiting the scope of the *log-in/log-off* procedure which, being triggered at the initiative of the concerned individual, bypasses the "incarnated mediation" (p. 145) of sacraments, liturgy, catechesis and ecclesiastical institutions. Even those who do not readily accept the notion of ecclesiastic mediation, as laid out in Catholic theology, might agree that the misguided use of the internet is likely to dilute one's personal commitment and identification with the local church.

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Joel B. Green is Professor of New Testament Interpretation, Fuller Theological Seminary, USA.

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Audrey Dawson was a consultant physician working with adults and children in Scotland, and Senior Lecturer in the University of Aberdeen, becoming OBE for services to medicine. On retirement, she obtained the degrees of BD and PhD.

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Liebende Selbsthingabe als anfanghafter Glaube? – Eine Antwort an Lydia Jäger

Thomas Gerold

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der vorliegende Aufsatz setzt sich mit einigen Einwänden von Lydia Jäger auseinander, die sie in EuroJTh XVI/2 (2007) geäußert hat. Er stellt die Zusammengehörigkeit von Gottes- und Nächstenliebe heraus. Er warnt vor der Trennung beider. Das bedeutet sowohl die Ablehnung eines Glaubens ohne Auswirkungen auf das Leben, als auch die unbedingte Notwendigkeit der Gottesbeziehung. Wenn diese nur unbewusst vorhanden ist, ist auch bei noch so vielen Früchten Mission unerlässlich.

Zugleich spricht sich Gerold dafür aus, Rückschlüsse

auf eine eventuelle Gottesbeziehung anhand der Früchte eines Menschen nur mit größter Vorsicht zu wagen, und überhaupt mit dem Urteil über die Heilchancen eines individuellen Menschen vorsichtig zu sein.

Der Ansatz, liebende Selbsthingabe als anfanghaften Glauben zu verstehen, ist der Versuch, die eventuelle Rettung auch des Nichtchristen in Bezug zu Christus zu sehen. Gerade weil eine unbewusste Offenheit auf Christus nur ein Anfang, aber kein dauerhaftes Ziel sein kann, steht dieser Ansatz der Mission nicht entgegen. Im Gegenteil, er ist eine Aufforderung Christus zu verkünden.

SUMMARY

This article responds to some objections made by Lydia Jäger as expressed in EuroJTh XVI/2 (2007). It sets out the ways in which love of God and love of neighbour belong together and warns against any separation of these. That implies as well as the rejection of a faith which does not effect one's life, also the total necessity of a relationship with God. If this is something that remains unconscious then the variety of fruit of mission is nowhere to be found.

At the same time the author asserts that one should

infer a relationship with God as the end result of the fruit in a person's life only with great care and in any case one should be careful about the prospects for salvation in any individual case.

The proposal to understand loving self-offering as incipient faith is an attempt to see the eventual salvation of non-Christians also in a relationship to Christ. Just because any unconscious openness to Christ is only a beginning but cannot be more than a provisional goal, this proposal does not get in the way of mission. Quite the opposite: it is a call to preach Christ.

RÉSUMÉ

Gerold répond ici à certaines des objections formulées par Lydia Jaeger à propos de son article paru dans le *journal Européen de Théologie* XVI/2 (2007). Il tente de montrer comment l'amour pour Dieu et l'amour pour le prochain sont liés l'un à l'autre et met en garde contre une séparation des deux. Ceci implique tout autant le rejet d'une foi qui n'affecte pas la vie et l'affirmation de l'entière nécessité d'une relation avec Dieu. Si cela demeure inconscient, alors de nombreux fruits de l'œuvre missionnaire restent invisibles.

En même temps, l'auteur affirme qu'il faut faire

preuve d'une grande prudence lorsqu'on veut déduire l'existence d'une relation avec Dieu à partir du fruit dans la vie de la personne et que l'on doit prendre des précautions pour ce qui concerne l'éventualité du salut d'un individu donné.

La suggestion de considérer un amour qui se donne comme un début de foi constitue une tentative d'envisager le salut éventuel de non chrétiens en relation avec Christ. Dans la mesure où toute ouverture inconsciente à Christ n'est qu'un commencement et ne peut être plus qu'une étape provisoire, cette suggestion ne va pas à l'encontre de l'affirmation de la nécessité de la mission. Au contraire, c'est un appel à prêcher Christ.

Zur Theologie gehört die Prüfung der Thesen in der wissenschaftlichen Diskussion. Lydia Jäger hat auf meinen Aufsatz *Liebende Selbsthingabe als anfanghafter Glaube?* (EuroJTh 2007 XVI/2) geantwortet, wofür ich ihr sehr herzlich danken möchte. Das gilt umso mehr deshalb, weil sie mich auf manche Missverständlichkeiten in meinem Beitrag hingewiesen hat, die ich gerne ausräumen möchte. Ihre Antwort bietet die Gelegenheit, einigen Punkten tiefer nachzugehen, und sowohl die eigene Antwort zu erweitern als auch auf mögliche Probleme ihrer Position hinzuweisen.

Gleich zu Beginn sei darauf hingewiesen, dass ich ihr Anliegen, den christlichen Missionseifer keinesfalls schwächen zu wollen, voll und ganz unterstütze. Gerade ihre Betonung der Mission ist an ihrer Erwiderung besonders wertvoll.

Die Untrennbarkeit von Gottes- und Nächstenliebe

In Lydia Jägers zentralstem Punkt 3, nämlich der Betonung der Liebe zu Gott, stimme ich ihr in ihrem Grundanliegen zu. Eine Abtrennung der Liebe zum Nächsten von der Liebe zu Gott wäre falsch. Frau Jäger weist zu Recht darauf hin, dass nach Röm 1 die Trennung von Gott die Wurzel der Sünde gegenüber dem Mitmenschen ist. Nach Röm 1 scheint der Götzendienst dazu zu führen, dass die Heiden falsch handeln. Dies lässt sich mit einem Blick auf das Alte Testament stützen. Zuerst sündigt der Mensch gegenüber Gott, dann gegen seinen Nächsten. Der Sündenfall (vgl. 1 Mose 3) geht der Ermordung Abels durch Kain voraus, wobei bei letzterer zuerst das Verhältnis zwischen Kain und Gott gestört zu sein scheint, weil dieser ja Kains Opfer nicht annimmt, ehe Kain seinen Bruder erschlägt (vgl. 1 Mose 4). Die Liebe zum Nächsten und die zu Gott gehören demnach zusammen.

Darüber hinaus fällt auf, dass von Jesus selbst in seinem zentralsten Gebot die Nächsten- und die Gottesliebe sehr eng miteinander verbunden werden (vgl. Mt 22,27-40; Mk 12,29-31), dass nach dem 1 Johannesbrief die Gottesliebe eines Menschen, der seinen Bruder hasst, nicht echt ist (1. Joh 2,7-11; 1. Joh. 4,19-21), dass also die Kombination aus Gottesliebe und Hass gegenüber dem Nächsten nicht möglich ist, und dass ja auch die von Frau Jäger angesprochenen Propheten ins Gedächtnis rufen, dass auch durch noch so viele Opfer diejenigen keine echte Gottesbeziehung erreichen, welche die Armen im Lande ausbeuten

(Jes 58,1-12; Am 8,4-10; Micha 3,1-12). Die Hingabe Jesu an den Vater am Kreuz wurde von mir deshalb nicht eigens ausgeführt, weil sie mir im Kontext des Kreuzes so selbstverständlich erschien, dass ich eine Erwähnung nicht mehr eigens für nötig hielt. Jesu Tod am Kreuz ist sowohl die Erfüllung des Willens des Vaters als auch die Hingabe seines Lebens für seine Freunde und zwar beides in höchstmöglicher Form.

Aus der Schrift ergibt sich demnach sowohl, dass die Sünde gegenüber Gott zur Zerstörung des Verhältnisses gegenüber dem Mitmenschen führt, als auch, dass sich Gottesliebe und die Sünde gegenüber dem Nächsten nicht vereinbaren lassen. Wenn eines von beiden getrennt vorkommt, dann ist das damit eine Anomalie, und bei der Liebe zu Gott ist es sogar ausgeschlossen, dass diese – wenn man den Schriftbefund ernst nimmt – ohne die Liebe zum Nächsten vorkommt.

Diese Verbundenheit der Ausrichtung auf Gott und der auf den Nächsten macht in meinen Augen ein Gegeneinander-Ausspielen der Liebe zu Gott und der Liebe zum Nächsten unmöglich, weil beide zusammengehören. Deshalb gibt es für mich auch kein Gegeneinander-Ausspielen von Nächsten- und Gottesliebe und auch kein Aufwiegen der fehlenden Gottesliebe durch ein sehr viel an Nächstenliebe, sondern eigentlich nur beide gemeinsam. Gerade der Wunsch, die Zusammengehörigkeit von beidem Ernst zu nehmen, lässt mich daran zweifeln, die Liebe zum Nächsten im Nichtchristen nur und in jedem Fall als Werk der allgemeinen Gnade Gottes zu verstehen. Dies gilt insbesondere dann, wenn die Liebe zum Mitmenschen besonders ausgeprägt ist.

Die von Jäger herangeführten Bibelstellen für ihre sehr starke Einschätzung der allgemeinen Gnade scheinen mir hier nicht aussagekräftig zu sein. Weder die sicher richtige Aussage, dass Gott die Sonne über Böse und Gute aufgehen lässt (Mt 5,45), noch der Hinweis darauf, dass es Gott war, der die Heiden immer ernährt hat (Apg 14,16 f), dürften eine ausreichende Begründung dafür liefern, dass die Liebesfähigkeit des von Gott getrennten Menschen nicht nur erhalten bleibt, sondern auch in positiver Weise ausgeübt werden kann, ohne dass die Beziehung zu Gott wenigstens irgendwie wieder hergestellt wird. Auch der Römerbrief scheint mir keine ausreichende Grundlage zu liefern. Denn dort wird zwar festgestellt, dass der Heide das Gesetz in seinem Herzen trägt, aber hier geht es wohl doch in erster Linie darum, dass dieser sich nicht mit Unwissenheit herausre-

den könne. Bei der Betrachtung des Heiden im Römerbrief geht es ja nicht um die gelungene Liebe im Menschen, sondern um dessen Scheitern.

Ich habe die Befürchtung, dass der Versuch eine rein auf der natürlichen Ebene befindliche Welt der Ethik und Liebe zu vertreten, die ohne Bezug zur Gottesbeziehung ist, letztendlich der engen Beziehung beider, wie sie in der Schrift ausgedrückt ist, nicht gerecht wird. Das könnte sowohl in die Richtung einer „gottlosen“ Ethik ohne Rücksichtnahme auf Gott gehen, als auch in die Richtung eines das Leben nicht verändernden Glaubens, denn wenn z.B. die Liebe wie Christus uns geliebt hat, ohne jeden Bezug zu Christus möglich wäre, dann hätten beide nichts miteinander zu tun. Ich denke nicht, dass Jäger in eine solche Richtung tendiert, sehe aber doch die Gefahr, dass ihre Position in diese Richtung missverstanden oder zumindest fehl entwickelt werden könnte.

Der Bezug zwischen Handeln und Heiligem Geist

Darüber hinaus stellt sich dann das Problem, ob man den Zusammenhang zwischen dem Wirken des Geistes und dessen Früchten ernst genug nimmt. Von Paulus werden im Galaterbrief, also genau in dem Brief, in dem er sich besonders zur Rechtfertigung aus dem Glauben bekennt, „Liebe, Freude, Friede, Geduld, Freundlichkeit, Güte, Treue, Sanftmut, Keuschheit“ ausdrücklich als Früchte des Geistes beschrieben (Gal 5,22) und den Früchten des Fleisches (Unzucht, Unreinheit, Ausschweifung, Götzendienst, Zauberei, Feindschaft, Hader, Eifersucht, Zorn, Zank, Zwietracht, Spaltungen, Neid, Saufen, Fressen und dergleichen“ gegenübergestellt (Gal 5,19-21). D.h. der Geist wirkt im Christen und bringt diese Früchte hervor. Dabei spricht die Erfahrung dafür, dass dies wohl meist nicht von einem Augenblick auf den anderen, sondern im Laufe des ganzen Lebens geschieht, aber dass es sich hier um ein Wirken des Geistes handelt, geht daraus klar hervor. Für eine metaphorische Deutung dieser Stelle scheint es mir hier auch keine Grundlage zu geben. Ein solches Wirken des Geistes und damit ein direktes Wirken Gottes im Menschen scheint mir hier für den Christen klar bezeugt zu sein. Zumindest beim Christen ist also ein „rein ethisches“ Verhalten ohne Bezug zu Gott nicht möglich, sondern das ethische Verhalten ist Folge des Wirkens Gottes, das auf die Gemeinschaft mit Gott aufbaut. Vor diesem Hintergrund dürfte es zumindest fraglich sein, ob sich

beim Nichtchristen ein solches Wirken des Geistes, was ja wohl über die allgemeine Gnade Gottes hinausgehen würde, ausschließen lässt.

Gerade weil die Beziehung zu Gott und die zum Mitmenschen so eng zusammen gehören, ist für mich die Trennung beider höchst problematisch. Das ändert aber nichts daran, dass nicht irgendwelche Verdienste aus dem Wirken gegenüber dem Mitmenschen für das Heil entscheidend sind, ja nicht einmal aus dem Handeln gegenüber Gott, sondern das Handeln Gottes in Christus entscheidend ist. Aber Letzteres führt nicht nur zur Rettung des Geretteten, sondern es führt auf die Dauer immer auch zu einer tiefer gehenden Wiederherstellung des Verhältnisses zu Gott und zum Mitmenschen, also die Rechtfertigung führt auch zur Heiligung.

Die Notwendigkeit einer vorsichtigen Deutung der Früchte

Die Früchte als automatisches Zeichen eines schon vorhandenen Glaubens anzusehen, halte ich aber auch nicht als statthaft. Denn äußeres Verhalten sagt ja immer nur sehr begrenzt etwas über eine innere Haltung aus. Jemand könnte sich z.B. deshalb gut verhalten, weil er hofft, dass dies zu einem besseren Leben führt, oder im Extremfall sogar versuchen, sich damit die Rettung zu verdienen (wobei man gerade dem Atheisten diesen Vorwurf wohl nicht machen kann.). Hier sicher auf einen irgendwie vorhandenen Glauben zurück zu schließen, scheint mir nicht möglich zu sein, wohl aber in den Früchten ein Indiz zu sehen. Ein sicheres Urteil darüber abzugeben, ob ein Mensch zu den Geretteten gehört oder nicht, ist für den Menschen unmöglich. Deshalb kann man niemals sagen, dass ein Mensch mit diesen oder jenen Früchten automatisch gerettet sein müsste. Die tatsächlich vorhandene Beziehung zu Gott, welche die Grundlage für die Rettung durch diesen Gott ist, ist nur für diesen und den Glaubenden feststellbar, nicht für einen Außenstehenden.

Das Konzept des anfanghaften Glaubens unterstreicht die Notwendigkeit der Mission

Der Vorwurf, auf diese Weise den Missionseifer zu schmälern, ist falsch; denn auch wenn sich auf Grundlage der Früchte auf einen möglichen anfanghaften Glauben schließen lassen sollte, dann bleibt dieser anfanghaft. Das Gute im Nichtchris-

ten ruht dann auf einem Glauben, der anfanghaft, nicht reflektiert, ja dem Betroffenen vielleicht nicht einmal bewusst ist und mit anderen Überzeugungen desselben Menschen vielleicht sogar in Widerspruch steht. Das mag zwar ein Fundament sein, aber ein sehr wackeliges. Gerade wenn man davon ausgeht, dass das Beste, was so jemand hervorbringen kann, auf einem solchen schwankenden Fundament ruht, dann wird der Ruf zur Mission noch intensiver. Denn dann ist es wohl erst recht notwendig, den unbewussten durch den bewussten Glauben zu ersetzen und eine Ahnung Christi durch die Begegnung mit Christus in der Schrift. Denn gerade in dem Wissen, dass die Trennung von Gott alles in der Sünde zu Grunde gehen lässt, macht den Ruf hin zu Christus umso dringlicher. Hier scheint mir eine zu hohe Einschätzung der allgemeinen Gnade für den Missionseifer mindestens ebenso gefährlich zu sein wie die Annahme eines anfanghaften Glaubens, weil sie dem Menschen so etwas wie ein gutes Leben ohne Gott zutraut.

Zur Aufweichung der eschatologischen Trennung

Der von mir vorgestellte Ansatz bedeutet keine Allversöhnungslehre. Ich habe darauf verzichtet zu entscheiden, wer jetzt genau zu den Geretteten gehört und wer nicht. Es mag sein, dass es für die Theologie gerade in der heutigen Diskussion immer wieder notwendig ist, auf die vielen heute gern verschwiegenen Schriftaussagen hinzuweisen, die dafür sprechen, dass ein Teil der Menschen verloren geht. Aber gleichzeitig ist es notwendig zu beachten, dass das Urteil, wer jetzt genau gerettet wird und wer nicht, allein Gott zusteht und nicht dem Theologen.

Ich spreche mich dagegen aus, das Urteil über einen Menschen vorwegzunehmen. Das spricht auch dagegen, vorschnell von der Rettung eines bestimmten Menschen auszugehen. Auch im Nichtchristen einen jedenfalls potentiellen Bruder bzw. eine zumindest potentielle Schwester zu sehen, halte ich deshalb für notwendig, weil kein Menschen zu Lebzeiten aufgeben werden darf. Z.B. das Beispiel des reuigen Schächers beweist, dass auch eine sehr späte Reue möglich ist. Und das Beispiel des Paulus zeigt, dass auch die Bekehrung des Verfolgers möglich ist. All dies dürfte wiederum den Missionseifer eher erhöhen als senken. Gerade in diesem Kontext macht auch die Forderung Jesu nach Feindesliebe Sinn. Aber bei aller Hoffnung müssen auch die Warnungen Jesu vor dem Gericht ernst genommen werden.

Christusbezug der Rettung

Ein Vorteil des von mir in *Liebende Selbsthingabe als anfanghafter Glaube* vorgeschlagenen Ansatzes ist, dass der Christusbezug der Rettung eines Menschen auch bei eventuell geretteten Nichtchristen durchgehalten wird. Jägers Hinweis auf Melchisedek als Beispiel eines Geretteten ist richtig und hilfreich. Aber die Frage wie eine solche Rettung auf einen Christusbezug hin denkbar wäre, bleibt doch bestehen. Einerseits ist es möglich, dass es zwar einen Christusbezug gibt, dieser aber uns nicht zugänglich ist, und weitere Überlegungen deshalb überflüssig sind. Das ist eine mögliche Antwort. Andererseits ist es gefährlich, nicht darüber nachzudenken, welche Bedeutung Christus für die Rettung eines Menschen hat. Denn so könnte der Eindruck entstehen, eine Rettung ohne ihn wäre möglich.

Es stellt sich nur die Frage, wie ein solcher anfanghafter Glaube gedacht werden könnte. Vorstellbar wäre eine schon gegebene Offenheit auf Christus, die den Menschen für dessen durchaus auch verändernde Zuwendung offen werden lässt. Eine Grundoffenheit, die das Wirken des Geistes im Menschen ermöglicht. Dies würde erklären, wieso erste Früchte dieses Wirkens schon im Menschen sichtbar sein könnten, bevor er voll zum Glauben gekommen ist. Aber es wäre gleichzeitig klar, dass eine bewusste Beziehung zu Christus noch nicht gegeben ist. Dass ein Stehen Bleiben bei einer Grundoffenheit auf Christus, ohne den Schritt zu einer bewussten Christusbeziehung weiterzugehen, äußerst problematisch ist, ist selbstverständlich, ähnlich wie ein Embryo zu Grunde geht, der sich nicht irgendwann weiter entwickelt. Ein solcher Zustand ist ein Anfang, aber kein erstrebenswertes Ziel. Bei diesem Vorschlag geht es mir deshalb keinesfalls darum, vorzuschlagen, Menschen bei einem solchen anfanghaften Glauben stehen bleiben zu lassen, sondern für gute Wachstumsbedingungen zu sorgen. Und die beste Hilfe, die möglich ist, ist das Wort Gottes, das ausnahmslos allen Menschen zugänglich zu machen ist. Denn die Begegnung mit dem Herrn im Wort ist für ein bewusstes Christsein unerlässlich.

Fazit: Das Wort Gottes allen Menschen verbreiten

Zwischen Lydia Jägers Position und meiner Position bleiben Differenzen. So vertraut im ethischen Bereich Jäger deutlich stärker auf die Kraft einer

im Hinblick auf das Heil nicht relevanten allgemeinen Gnade, wohl um jede Gefahr auszuschließen, die Bedeutung eines von der Wortverkündigung geprägten Glaubens zu relativieren. Ich selbst betone sehr stark, dass die Liebe zu Gott und die zum Nächsten zusammen gehören und halte die Gefahr für größer, beide Bereiche, und damit Ethik und Glaube zu sehr voneinander zu trennen.

Faktisch scheint es bei Jäger und bei mir eine – wenn auch unterschiedliche ausgeprägte – Hoffnung auf die Rettung des Nichtchristen zu geben.

Jäger ist hier deutlich vorsichtiger, aber selbst von mir wird bewusst von einer Möglichkeit gesprochen. Bei beiden ist der explizite Glaube selbstverständlich vorzuziehen. Dieser erfordert immer eine Kenntnis der frohen Botschaft. Diese weiterzuzählen, also Christus zu verkündigen, ist zentral. Bei allen Unterschieden sollte der gemeinsame Aufruf zur Mission im Zentrum stehen. Christus zu verkünden, muss immer an erster Stelle stehen. Sein Wort ist ausnahmslos allen Menschen zugänglich zu machen.

NEW FROM PATERNOSTER

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Tom Sine is an author and a Christian speaker with an international ministry. He is founder of Mustard Seed Associates, Seattle, USA.

978-1-84227-559-7 / 216 x 140mm / 293pp (est.) / £8.99



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PATERNOSTER BIBLICAL MONOGRAPHS

Paul's Understanding of the Church's Mission

Did the Apostle Paul Expect the Early Christian Communities to Evangelize?

Robert L. Plummer

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Robert L. Plummer is Assistant Professor of New Testament Interpretation, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, USA

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Victor Copan

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Victor Copan is Associate Professor of Ministry, Palm Beach Atlantic University, Florida, USA.

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Kiwoong Son

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Kiwoong Son completed his doctorate at London School of Theology and served as a chaplain to Korean and Asian students at Royal Holloway College, University of London, UK, before returning to South Korea.

978-1-84227-368-5 / 229 x 152 mm / 266pp / £19.99

Paternoster, 9 Holdom Avenue, Bletchley, Milton Keynes MK1 1QR, UK

Book Reviews – Recensions – Buchbesprechungen

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Dizionario di teologia evangelica

Pietro Bolognesi, Leonardo De Chirico,
Andrea Ferrari, (Ed.)

Marchirolo (Varese): Editrice Uomini Nuovi, 2007,
Hb., XVI+875 pp., € 58,--
ISBN 978-8-8807-7273-6

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die Publikation eines evangelikalen theologischen Wörterbuchs ist für Italien ein bedeutendes Ereignis. Nicht nur in Italien, sondern auch in Auslandsgemeinden über das Land hinaus können Christen von dem Lexikon, das allgemeinverständlich geschrieben ist, profitieren. Besonders gut eignet es sich für die Ausbildung von Pastoren, Studenten und Dozenten, Religionspädagoginnen und Missionaren. Zwei Anhänge informieren über die evangelikale Theologie in Italien und weltweit. Mit diesem Wörterbuch wird daher auch die römisch-katholische Öffentlichkeit in Italien über die wenig bekannte evangelikale Bewegung informiert.

SUMMARY

The publication of an evangelical, theological dictionary is for Italy an important event. Not only in Italy, but also outwith the country, Christians can profit from this encyclopedia, which is generally written in an accessible manner. It is particularly suited to those training for ministry, students and lecturers, teachers of religion and missionaries. Two appendices describe the roots of evangelical theology in Italy and world-wide, so this dictionary may also inform the Roman-catholic majority in Italy regarding the little known evangelical movement.

RÉSUMÉ

La publication d'un dictionnaire de théologie évangélique constitue un événement important pour l'Italie. Les chrétiens, non seulement en Italie mais au-delà, tireront profit de cet ouvrage généralement rédigé en un style accessible. Il sera particulièrement utile pour les pasteurs, étudiants, enseignants et missionnaires. Deux appendices présentent les racines de la théologie évangélique en Italie et dans le monde, et apportent ainsi une information sur le mouvement évangélique minoritaire et méconnu dans un pays en grande majorité catholique.

* * * * *

Den Herausgebern, alle bewährte und anerkannte Dozenten, Pfarrer und Theologen, ist es nach jahrelanger Arbeit gelungen, ein interdisziplinäres Lexikon evangelikaler Theologie herauszugeben, in dem das Gedankengut der führenden evangelikalen Theologen Italiens der Gegenwart zusammengefasst ist.

Damit präsentieren sich die führenden evangelikalen Theologen Italiens nicht nur einer breiteren Öffentlichkeit, sondern zeigen auch, dass sie theologisch ein Teil der weltweiten evangelikalen Bewegung sind, die aus eigener Kraft fähig ist, ihre Verpflichtung zur Treue der Bibel und der Reformation auf hohem wissenschaftlichem Niveau differenziert zu vertreten. Eine solche dynamische Entwicklung innerhalb des Protestantismus Italiens ist neu und erfährt nicht nur durch bibeltreue theologische Ausbildungsstätten, sondern auch durch die Gemeinden, die in der Evangelischen Allianz Italiens vertreten sind, eine große Zustimmung und Dankbarkeit. Mit Recht kann deshalb von einem Aufbruch der evangelikalen Theologie Italiens gesprochen werden. Hier liegt auch das besondere Verdienst dieses neuen *Dizionario*.

Mehr als 200 redaktionelle Mitarbeiter aus der weltweiten evangelikalen Theologie trugen zum Gelingen dieses interdisziplinären Lexikons bei, indem sie unter der Leitung eines italienischen Redaktionsteams die wissenschaftlichen Ergebnisse von über 600 Theologen aus den Bereichen der Biblischen, Historischen und Praktischen Theologie sinnvoll zusammenführten.

Es ist deshalb nicht verwunderlich, dass ein Teil der Artikel aus weltweit bekannten evangelikalen Lexikons stammen: W. Elwell ed., *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984; S. Ferguson, J. I. Packer, D. F. Wright ede., *New Dictionary of Theology*, Leicester: Inter-Varsity-Press, 1988; E. F. Harrison ed., *Dictionary of Theology*, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1982; *Grand Dictionnaire de la Bible*, Cléon d'Andran: Excelsis Sarl, 2004.

In *formaler Hinsicht* fällt auf, dass kurze bibliographische Hinweise am Ende jedes Artikels zu einem ergänzenden und vertiefenden Weiterstudium motivieren. In zwei bemerkenswerten Anhängen, die in anderen internationalen Lexika so nicht unbedingt üblich sind, werden die weltweit und in Italien führenden evangelikalen Vereinigungen, Ausbildungsstätten, Verlagshäuser, Zeitschriften und Theologen namentlich aufgeführt. Das Lexikon schließt ab mit einem umfassenden Bibelstellen- und Personenregister aus der Theologiegeschichte und der Bibel und einem kurzen hilfreichen Sachregister. Damit wird dieser *Dizionario* zu einem für Theologie und Gemeinde unverzichtbaren Handbuch.

Aus *theologischer Perspektive* fällt auf, dass sich die Herausgeber des *Dizionario* dem evangelikalen Mainstream anschließen und Sonderlehren (Dispensationalismus) und einseitige konfessionelle Engführungen vermeiden. Positiv gewürdigt wird beispielsweise das Verdienst der baptistisch, freikirchlichen Theologie, die in Italien einen hohen Stellenwert hat und das Entstehen einer evangeli-

kalen Theologie vermutlich erst ermöglicht hat.

Missiologisch betrachtet fällt auf, dass die Missionswissenschaft anscheinend keine theologische Disziplin ist. Deshalb ist es nicht verwunderlich, dass die missionswissenschaftliche Reflexion kaum aufgenommen und berücksichtigt wird und beispielsweise die Akademie für Weltmission in Korntal bei Stuttgart auch nicht als führende Theologische Ausbildungsstätte erwähnt wird.

Die religionspädagogischen Aspekte und ihre Bedeutung für die Theologie und Gemeinde finden in diesem Lexikon noch nicht ihren gebührenden Platz. Es ist deshalb wünschenswert, dass In einer Zweitaufgabe die Missiologie und Religionspädagogik als sinnvolle Ergänzung aufgenommen werden.

Das Lexikon eignet sich hervorragend für eine solide theologische Grundausbildung und Weiterbildung von Pastoren, Studenten und Dozenten, Religionspädagoginnen und Missionaren. Ihm ist deshalb eine grosse Verbreitung zu wünschen, damit eine gesunde biblische und reformatorische Theologie das Denken und Handeln vieler evangelischer Gemeinden und Werke in Italien befruchtet.

Hans Ulrich Reifler, Möhlin / Basel, Schweiz

Vita Augustini, zweisprachige Ausgabe

Geerlings, Wilhelm, Ed.

Augustinus Opera Werke

Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005, Hb., 237 pp., € 29,90

ISBN 978-3-506-71022-2

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Possidius, Bischof von Calama, Freund und Schüler des Augustinus, verfasste nach dem Jahr 431 nach Christus eine Biographie seines großen Vorbildes und Lehrers, die in der patristischen Literatur allgemein gelobt wird. Der katholische Bochumer Patristiker Wilhelm Geerlings hat das Werk neu herausgegeben, übersetzt und kommentiert. Auch heute noch lohnt es sich, das Leben des Augustinus aus der Sicht des Possidius kennen zu lernen. Von dem Text gibt es auch Übersetzungen ins Englische (1919, 1992), Italienische (1955, 1989), Spanische (1969) und Französische (1994).

SUMMARY

Possidius, the Bishop of Calama, friend and pupil of Augustine, wrote a biography of his great model and teacher in 431 AD, which is widely praised in the Patristic literature. The catholic Patristics scholar, William Geerlings has now republished, translated and commentated on this work. Even today it is still worthwhile to learn about the life of Augustine from the view of Possidius. There are also other translations of this text: English (1919, 1992), Italian (1955, 1989), Spanish (1969) and French (1994).

RÉSUMÉ

En 431, Posside, évêque de Calame, ami et disciple de

Saint Augustin, a publié une biographie de celui qui était son maître et son modèle. Cette biographie a généralement été citée avec éloges dans les écrits patristiques. Wilhelm Geerlings, spécialiste catholique de la patristique, en a élaboré une nouvelle édition, avec traduction et commentaires. Il vaut encore la peine aujourd'hui de connaître la vie de Saint Augustin telle que Posside en a rendu compte. Son livre a aussi été traduit en anglais (1919, 1992), italien (1955, 1989), espagnol (1969) et français (1994).

* * * *

Viele Leser werden mit dem Stichwort „Biographie Augustins“ ihre Lektüre der in zahlreichen Ausgaben verbreiteten „Bekenntnisse“ des großen lateinischen Kirchenvaters verbinden. Daneben ist die Biographie des eher unbekannten Augustinus-Schülers und -Verehrers Possidius nur wenigen Spezialisten vertraut. Adolf von Harnack hat sie aus Anlass des 1500. Todestages von Augustinus 1930 ins Deutsche übertragen und kommentiert, und 1964 erschien der Text in dem Sammelband *Bischöfe der alten afrikanischen Kirche* (Düsseldorf, hrsg. v. W. Schamoni).

Possidius will Augustinus als Prediger, Lehrer und Mönch darstellen, besonders in der Periode nach den *Confessiones*: „All das, wovon der hochselige Augustinus selbst in seinen Bekenntnissen spricht, über sich selbst, über sein Leben vor Erhalt der Gnade und wie er nach deren Empfang gelebt habe, davon will ich schweigen“ (Vorrede 5, S. 29). So wird Augustins Lebenslauf bis zu seiner Bekehrung, Taufe und Priesterweihe nur knapp zusammengefasst (Kap. 1-4, S. 28-35). Ausführlicher wird dann über die Klostergründung und die – im Westen für Priester damals noch unübliche – Predigt, die eigentlich Bischöfen vorbehalten war, berichtet. Seine Bischofsweihe – widerwillig, wie auch die Priesterweihe – wird eingerahmt von den zahlreichen Auseinandersetzungen mit Manichäern, Donatisten, Circumcellionen („Die terroristische Spitze des Donatismus“, S. 195), Arianern und Pelagianern. Doch nicht nur als Kontroverstheologe und Richter wird der Bischof von Hippo geschildert; auch nach seiner aufbauenden Tätigkeit rückt er ins Blickfeld als einer, der den Fortschritt der Kirche fördert („Gemeindegewachstum!“), kirchlichen Frieden und kirchliche Einheit sucht sowie Häretiker ihrer Glaubensfehler überführt und sie wieder in die Kirchengemeinschaft eingliedert.

Interessant ist die Darstellung des Alltagslebens in der Gemeinschaft des Augustinus. Ausführungen zu Kleidung, Tischsitten und -speisen, Finanzen, Disziplin, Umgang mit Frauen, Krankenbesuche, Diakonie und Alltagsfragen wie Exorzismus, Krankenheilung (Kap. 29, S. 87) und die Flucht vor möglicher Verfolgung (angesichts des Vandaleneinfalls, Kap. 30) geben einen Einblick in das Leben als Mönch und Christ in Hippo Regius. Der Bischof lebt bescheiden, er will keine teuren Kleidergeschenke entgegennehmen (S. 202 zu Kap. 22), und bewältigt rund um die Uhr ein enormes Arbeitspensum. So berichtet er, dass er am Tage an einem Buch-

manuskript, in der Nacht an einem weiteren gearbeitet habe („Elukubration“, S. 204, zu Kap. 24). Wichtig ist für Possidius auch Augustins letzte Krankheit und sein Tod (Kap. 29 u. 31, S. 84-107).

Possidius führt Augustins Schriften sowohl innerhalb der Biographie als auch vollständiger in einem separaten Verzeichnis auf (*Indiculum*, S. 114-137), das von Geerlings separat eingeleitet und mit ergänzendem Material veröffentlicht wird (S. 109-113; 138-186).

Die Behandlung von Possidius' Augustinusbiographie in universitären Lehrveranstaltungen zeigt, dass die Neuherausgabe notwendig war. Sie ist eine wichtige Ergänzung zur Lektüre der „Bekenntnisse“.

Jochen Eber, Schriesheim bei Heidelberg, Deutschland

Challenging Perspectives on the Gospel of John

John Lierman

WUNT II, vol. 219, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006, pb., xii+369 pp., € 69, -
***ISBN 3-16-149113-0

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In diesem von John Lierman herausgegebenen Band sind zwölf Aufsätze von Neutestamentlern zum Johannesevangelium zusammengestellt, die auf eine Konferenz des Tyndale House zurückgehen. Die Beiträge beleuchten in großer Bandbreite neue theologische, soteriologische, messianologische, kanongeschichtliche, den historischen und kulturellen Hintergrund beleuchtende, narratologische und Rezeptionsästhetische Aspekte zum Johannesevangelium. Dieses Buch will alte und neue Fragen zur johanneischen Theologie aufgreifen und neue Ansätze und Lösungen vorstellen.

SUMMARY

This volume edited by John Lierman contains 12 essays of New Testament scholars concerning the Gospel of John. These go back to a conference held by the Tyndale House. The essays here offer in a broad spectrum new insights on the Gospel of John concerning theology, soteriology, messianism, history of canon, historical and cultural background, narratology and reader-oriented aspects. This book takes up old and new issues of Johannine Theology and presents new approaches and solutions.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage contient douze articles émanant du groupe de travail sur le Nouveau Testament de la Tyndale Fellowship, en 2002. Ils remettent en question un certain nombre de points de vue communément répandus dans les études johanniques et proposent de nouvelles pistes concernant l'interprétation du quatrième Évangile, son origine et son contexte. Un large éventail de sujets y sont abordés en rapport avec l'Évangile de Jean, en particulier, les questions du messianisme, du rapport entre Jean et Luc, de la réception de cet Évangile au II^e siècle, et les rapports entre

l'empereur et Jésus. Comme dans la plupart des ouvrages collectifs, les articles ne forment pas nécessairement une collection cohérente, mais ils ouvrent des pistes qui appellent des études plus approfondies et dont on devra tenir compte dans les travaux académiques à venir.

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In diesem von John Lierman herausgegebenen Band sind zwölf Aufsätze namhafter Neutestamentler zum Johannesevangelium zusammengestellt. Seinen Ursprung hat dieser Band in einer vom *International Center for Biblical Research*, Tyndale House im Jahre 2002 in Cambridge abgehaltenen Konferenz. Wie der Herausgeber in seinem Vorwort „new insights“ und „creative approaches to John's Gospel“ ankündigt, so bietet dieser Band tatsächlich eine Vielzahl von wissenschaftlich hochkarätigen Beiträgen, die in großer Bandbreite theologische, soteriologische, messianologische, kanongeschichtliche, den historischen und kulturellen Hintergrund beleuchtende, narratologische und Rezeptionsästhetische Aspekte zum Johannesevangelium beleuchten. Diese bringen entweder methodisch neue Aspekte und Zugänge zum Evangelium oder fordern durch ihre inhaltliche Position die bisherige *opinio communis* der theologischen Forschung heraus oder stellen diese in manchen Punkten in Frage. Alle Artikel zeichnen sich durch eine gründliche Darlegung und Anwendung wissenschaftlicher Methoden aus.

David Wenham (Oxford) bietet in seinem Aufsatz „Paradigms and Possibilities in the Study of John's Gospel“ eine gewisse Übersicht und Einführung zu den folgenden elf Artikeln und fordert zu einer Neuorientierung in Fragen der johanneischen Forschung auf. In Bezug auf Verfasserschaft und Historizität des Johannesevangeliums plädiert er für eine Rückbesinnung, für die er mit internen Belegen argumentiert. Vor allem geht es ihm um eine Neuorientierung in der Frage der Traditionen, aus denen Johannes schöpft. Während er Zurückhaltung gegenüber religionsgeschichtlichen Bezügen äußert, betont er stark die Bezüge zu anderen Strömungen urchristlicher Theologie. So hebt er Parallelen zwischen johanneischer und paulinischer Theologie, zum Beispiel im Verständnis vom „Gesetz Christi“ und in der Sühnetheologie hervor. Wenham lokalisiert die Theologie des Johannesevangeliums im urchristlichen Mainstream und nicht – wie vielfach angenommen – in einer Außenseiterrolle. Ebenso widerspricht Wenham Auffassungen, das Johannesevangelium sei antisakramentalistisch und hätte ein rein individualistisches Glaubensverständnis. Stattdessen findet er im Evangelium ein ausgeprägtes Abendmahls- und Taufverständnis.

Peter W. Ensor (*Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Cameroon*) setzt sich in seinem Artikel: „The Johannine Sayings of Jesus and the Question of Authenticity“ mit der Frage der Authentizität der Aussagen Jesu im Johannesevangelium auseinander. Dabei stellt er zunächst die verbreitete Skepsis in der modernen johanneischen Forschung bezüglich der Echtheit der Jesus zugeschriebenen

Worte dar. Diese wird mit den deutlichen Unterschieden zu den Jesus-Worten in den synoptischen Evangelien und mit ihrer typischen johanneischen Färbung begründet. Zwar nimmt Ensor deutliche Unterschiede zwischen den Synoptikern und Johannes wahr, doch sieht er diese mehr in der Akzentuierung als in der Substanz, bezogen auf Stil, Theologie, Eschatologie und Christologie. In einer wortstatistischen Untersuchung weist er nach, dass der Bezug der Jesus-Worte bei Johannes zu denen der Synoptiker größer ist als der Bezug der johanneischen Jesus-Worte zum Sprachgebrauch des Verfassers. Was diesen Aufsatz besonders beachtenswert macht, sind neue Wege, die Ensor in seiner Untersuchung zur Authentizität der Jesus-Worte im Johannesevangelium geht. Mit einer differenzierten Definition von Authentizität (*ipsisima verba, ipsissima sententiae* und *ipsisima dicta*) arbeitet er im Johannesevangelium unterschiedliche Typen von Authentizität heraus.

Richard Bauckham (*St. Andrew's University*): „Messianism According to the Gospel of John“ untersucht das messianische Verständnis im Johannesevangelium auf dem Hintergrund frühjüdischer Messias-Erwartung des 1. Jh. n. Chr.

Mehr als auf das davidisch-messianische Konzept legt das Johannesevangelium besonderes Gewicht auf den prophetische Messias im Sinne einer Moses-Figur. Nach Bauckham ist die Erwartung des endzeitlichen Propheten nach dem Johannesevangelium nicht vom prophetischen Lehrer nach Dtn 18,15-19 abgeleitet, sondern von einem Propheten in der Art des Mose als Führer, Befreier und Wundertäter. Aus dieser gründlichen Recherche folgert er, dass nichts, was Johannes an messianischen Aussagen seine Akteure reden lässt, in Palästina in der Zeit vor 70 n. Chr. nicht nachvollziehbar wäre. In tiefgründiger und umfassender Weise erörtert Bauckham die sich im Johannesevangelium widerspiegelnden messianischen Titel und Konzepte (Erwartungen des davidisch-königlichen Messias, Elias, des eschatologischen Propheten, des eschatologischen Priesters, des Menschensohn).

Andreas J. Köstenberger (*Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary*): „The Destruction of the Second Temple and the Composition of the Fourth Gospel“ fragt nach dem historischen Ort, der den Hintergrund des vierten Evangeliums bildet. Er weist die ältere These zurück, wonach die rabbinische *birkat ha-minim* und die Trennung der (johanneischen) Gemeinde von der Synagoge für die Entstehung des Johannesevangeliums entscheidende Bedeutung gehabt hätte. Er vertritt die These, dass die Tempelzerstörung nicht nur vorausgesetzt wird (zum Bsp. Joh 4,23f), sondern den entscheidenden historischen Kontext für das Evangelium mit dessen Christologie und apologetischen Zweck bildete. Dem Trauma der Tempelzerstörung begegnet der Verfasser mit der Präsentation von Jesus Christus als „wahren Tempel“, als Erfüllung für die Tempel-Symbolik und für die Symbolik jüdischer Feste und Institutionen. Bei aller gründlichen Ausarbeitung des Tempel-Motivs im Johannesevangelium bleiben doch Fragen zu dieser These offen, die

eine stärkere Fundierung bedürften: Wer sind nach Köstenberger die intendierten Leser? Warum schließt diese These andere Hintergründe aus, wie die einer johanneischen Gemeinde?

Andrew Gregory (*University College, Oxford*) setzt sich in seinem Aufsatz: „The Third Gospel? The Relationship of John and Luke Reconsidered“ mit der Frage der Beziehung von Lukas und Johannes und speziell mit der These einer literarischen Abhängigkeit des Lukasevangeliums vom Johannesevangelium auseinander. Diese wurde bereits vor 30 Jahren von F. Lamar Cribbs vertreten und in den 90er Jahren von Barbara Shellard und Mark Matson neu aufgegriffen. Zunächst stellt Gregory in einem Überblick die Forschung des 20. Jahrhunderts zur Frage der Beziehungen zwischen beiden Evangelien dar. Als nächstes untersucht er eine entscheidende Parallele: die Erzählung von Petrus am leeren Grab (Lk 24,12 und Joh 20,3-10) mit einer markanten textlichen Überschneidung. Dann diskutiert Gregory theologische und historische Konsequenzen der Hypothese einer Abhängigkeit von Lukas zu Johannes. Während er ein solches Abhängigkeitsverhältnis als Möglichkeit durchaus erwägt, mahnt er zur Zurückhaltung bei Versuchen, hinter die Texte zurückzugehen, und hält es gerade für den Glauben von großer Bedeutung, dass sich uns die Jesus-Erzählungen in der Form des vierfältigen Evangeliums erschließen. Während Gregory zu dieser Frage mehrfach D. Moody Smith (*John Among the Gospels: the Relationships in Twentieth-Century Research*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992) anführt, sollte man auch den Aufsatz erwähnen: Michael Labahn, Manfred Lang, „Johannes und die Synoptiker. Positionen und Impulse seit 1990“, in: *Kontexte des Johannesevangeliums: Das vierte Evangelium in religions- und traditionsgeschichtlicher Perspektive*, hrsg. v. Jörg Frey, Udo Schnelle, unter Mitarb. von Juliane Schlegel, WUNT 175, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004, S. 443-515.

Charles E. Hill (*Reformed Theological Seminary, Orlando*) setzt sich im nächsten Aufsatz: „The Fourth Gospel in the Second Century: The Myth of Orthodox Johannophobia“ kritisch mit der These auseinander, wonach das Johannesevangelium in weiten Kreisen der alten Kirche im 2. Jh. auf Ablehnung oder zumindest auf Reserviertheit gestoßen sei oder gar unbekannt war. Gründe für diesen altkirchlichen Argwohn gegen das Johannesevangelium sei dessen Gebrauch durch heterodoxe Strömungen, zum Beispiel der Gnostiker Heracleon und die Valentinianer gewesen. Erst durch den Einfluss von Irenäus von Lyon und von Clemens von Alexandrien sei es zu einer allmählichen Akzeptanz des Johannesevangeliums gekommen. Hill nennt diese seit Walter Bauer (1934) und J. N. Sanders (1943) vertretene Auffassung „the Orthodox Johannophobia Paradigm“, mit der er sich ausführlicher in seinem Buch: *The Johannine Corpus in the Early Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) auseinander gesetzt hat und die er für gründlich revisionsbedürftig hält.

In der dann folgenden kirchenhistorischen Untersu-

chung stellt Hill zunächst die Verbreitung und Akzeptanz des Johannesevangeliums in der Zeit von 170-200 dar. Es gibt relativ wenige Hinweise auf explizite Ablehnung des Johannesevangeliums. Die Kritik stützt sich auf eine Aussage von Gajus, einem römischen Bischof zu Beginn des 3. Jahrhunderts, die nach Hill in der derzeitigen Forschung meist überinterpretiert wird, und auf die Erwähnung von „Alogern“ durch Epiphanius von Salamis, an dessen Ausführungen über diese ansonsten völlig unbekannte Gruppe es aber berechnete Zweifel gibt. Auf der anderen Seite weist Hill nach, dass die Gnostiker vor dem Jahre 170 das Johannesevangelium viel weniger gebrauchten als allgemein behauptet und dass sie in gleicher Weise wie das Johannesevangelium auch die synoptischen Evangelien und die paulinischen Briefe gebrauchten und deren Verwendung des Johannesevangeliums eher kritisch und polemisch als positiv war. Dann weist Hill auf frühe „orthodoxe“ Erwähnungen oder Anspielungen an das Johannesevangelium vor dem Jahr 170 hin (Melito von Sardis, Apollonius von Hierapolis, Tatian, Justin der Märtyrer) und acht Texte, die vor 150 zu datieren sind, um der These einer frühen Ignoranz der alten Kirche zu widersprechen. Mit dieser gründlichen Untersuchung altkirchlicher Texte zeigt Hill, dass das Johannesevangelium seit der ersten oder zweiten Dekade des 2. Jahrhunderts in der Kirche weit verbreitet und akzeptiert war und keineswegs ein von Doketisten, Gnostikern und Valentinianern beanspruchtes Evangelium war.

Mark Stibbe (*Vicar, St. Andrew's, Chorleywood*) plädiert in seinem Aufsatz: „Telling the Father's Story: The Gospel of John as Narrative Theology“ dafür, das Johannesevangelium nicht nur unter dem Aspekt der Christologie zu betrachten, sondern eigentlich theologisch als Offenbarung des Sohnes über den Vater. Damit greift er eine Aussage von Birger Olsson auf: „The Gospel of John is in form a narrative about Jesus, but its contents are in fact a narrative about what God has done and continues to do through Jesus.“ In der Anwendung von fünf Prinzipien biblischer narrativer Theologie stellt Stibbe das Johannesevangelium als „narrative Theologie des Vaters“ dar. Diese Untersuchung führt zur theologischen Deutung von Gott nach dem Johannesevangelium nicht primär als Richter, dem der liebende Sohn gegenübersteht, sondern als Leben spendender Vater.

Steve Motyer (London School of Theology) untersucht in seinem Aufsatz: „Narrative Theology in John 1-5“ insbesondere die Rolle des Erzählers. Von Dan R. Stiver übernimmt er das Modell von drei Typen narrativer Theologie und wendet sie auf das Johannesevangelium an.

John Lierman (University of Sioux Falls) schreibt seinen Aufsatz über die Messianität: „The Mosaic Pattern of John's Christology“. Während in anderer frühjüdischer und urchristlicher Literatur vor allem David Prototyp jüdischen Messianismus war, ist im Johannesevangelium Mose der entscheidende Vorläufer für die Messianität Jesu. Zwar steht auch bei Johannes die

Sohn-Christologie im Vordergrund, aber diese erfolgt in der Darstellung Jesu als neuen und besseren Mose. Dabei geht es Lierman nicht nur um die Darstellung eines einzelnen Aspekts (Christus als mosaischer Prophet) – wie in zahlreichen früheren Untersuchungen zum Thema, sondern um eine umfassende Darstellung des Mose-Motivs im Johannesevangelium (Zeichen des Mose, Glaube an Mose, Mose als König, als Sammler von Jüngern und als göttlicher Mose). Lierman schreibt: „Because Moses turns to be at the center of the total christological portrait laid out by John, it is fair to say that Jesus the Son appears in the Fourth Gospel as a Mosaic Christ.“

Gary Burge (*Wheaton College*) führt in seinem Aufsatz: „Revelation and Discipleship in St. John's Gospel“ eine literarische Analyse des Evangeliums durch, wobei er feststellt, dass es zur bewussten literarischen Konzeption von Johannes gehört, die Paradigmen von Doppelbedeutungen, Missverständnissen und Rätseln zu gebrauchen. Der Funktion dieser Ambivalenz in der Konzeption des Evangeliums geht er nach. So gibt es die Ambivalenz bei Begriffen und Ereignissen, bei Personen, die das göttliche Handeln verstehen, und andere, die es nicht verstehen.

Einer solchen Ambivalenz stellt sich Gabi Renz (*Oak Hill College, London*) in ihrem Beitrag: „Nicodemus: An Ambiguous Disciple? A Narrative Sensitive Investigation“. Unter Berücksichtigung von rezeptionsästhetischen Fragestellungen untersucht Gabi Renz den kommunikativen Prozess, in dem das Johannesevangelium die Nikodemus-Gestalt schildert. Dabei arbeitet sie heraus, dass die Nikodemus-Gestalt in der Erzählung nicht nur in Joh 3 ambivalent ist, sondern auch im Folgenden nicht eindeutig von der Finsternis zum Licht kommt, nicht eindeutig vom jüdischen Pharisäer zum Christuskirche wird, sondern in der Ambivalenz bleibt. Sie vertritt die These, dass die Deutungsvielfalt unterschiedlicher Leser(gruppen) in Bezug auf die Ambivalenz der Nikodemusfigur der Intention des Evangeliums keinen Abbruch tut, nämlich die Leser zu einer Hingabe an Christus zu führen.

Im letzten Beitrag dieses Buches: „Jesus, the Emperor, and the Gospel According to John“ deutet Bill Salier (*Moore College, Sydney, Australia*) das Johannesevangelium auf dem Hintergrund des Kaiserkultes.

Während sonst nur die Apokalypse in zahlreiche Untersuchungen im Kontext des Kaiserkultes interpretiert wird, deutet Salier auch das Evangelium in diesem Sinne, zwar nicht als das zentrale Thema, aber als ein bestimmendes Motiv unter anderen. Neun Bezüge zum Johannesevangelium arbeitet er heraus. Während einige Bezüge überzeugend sind, scheinen andere jedoch etwas fragwürdig und weit hergeholt zu sein, zum Beispiel das Weinwunder zu Kana auf dem Hintergrund der Dionysus-Verehrung im Kaiserkult. Es geht Salier darum, die pastorale Botschaft für die durch den römischen Staat bedrängten Leser des Evangeliums herauszustellen. So stellt Johannes das Portrait von Jesus dem Portrait des

römischen Kaisers gegenüber.

Zumindest zeigt Salier, dass dies eine Interpretationsmöglichkeit damaliger Leser gewesen sein könnte. Jedoch für die Behauptung, Anspielungen auf den Kaiserkults seien die bewusste Intention des Verfassers gewesen, müsste man die These noch stärker durch Dokumente und Textvergleiche fundieren.

Insgesamt besteht dieses Buch aus zahlreichen wissenschaftlich beachtenswerten Beiträgen, die zu weiterer Forschungsarbeit herausfordern. Die große Bandbreite der Ansätze und Akzente ermöglicht es den Leser ihre Schwerpunkte zu setzen.

Klaus Bensel, Overath, Deutschland

Christliche Spiritualität lehren, lernen und leben

Stefan Altmeyer, Reinhold Boschki, Joachim Theis, Jan Woppowa (Eds.)

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der Band enthält 29 Beiträge zum Thema „Didaktik der Spiritualität“, die dem katholischen Theologieprofessor Gottfried Bitter zu dessen 70. Geburtstag 2006 gewidmet wurden. In systematischen, geschichtlichen und praktischen Aufsätzen wird gezeigt, wie Spiritualität in Geschichte und Gegenwart gelebt und erlernt worden ist und auch heute noch vermittelt werden kann. So ist das Sammelwerk ein wertvoller Beitrag zu einem Thema, das in Deutschland bisher kaum bearbeitet worden ist.

SUMMARY

That volume contains 29 contributions on the topic of „the didactics of the Spirituality“, in honour of Catholic theologian Gottfried Bitter's 70th birthday in 2006. These systematic, historical and practical essays show how spirituality was lived and learned throughout history and how it can still be attained today. The compilation is a valuable contribution to a topic, which has seldom been addressed in Germany to date.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage collectif contient vingt-neuf contributions sur le thème de l'enseignement de la spiritualité, en l'honneur du théologien catholique Gottfried Bitter. Ces textes de théologie systématique, historique et pratique montrent comment la spiritualité a été vécue et apprise au cours de l'histoire et indiquent comment elle peut être recherchée aujourd'hui. L'ouvrage fournit un apport utile sur un sujet rarement traité en Allemagne de nos jours.

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Das bei *Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht unipress* und *Bonn University Press* erschienene voluminöse Werk ist von den Herausgebern ihrem Freund, Lehrer und Kollegen Gottfried Bitter CSSp zu dessen 70. Geburtstag am 24.

Oktober 2006 gewidmet. Es enthält aus gegebenem Anlass eine Auswahlbiographie des Jubilars. Gewissermaßen als Präludium entfalten die Herausgeber zu Beginn die Fragestellungen und Ziele des Bandes. Teil 1 enthält Grundfragen, Teil 2 Lebensformen, Teil 3 Lernwege. In einem Epilog interpretiert Stefanie Manthey Max Beckmanns große Gewitterlandschaft von 1932 im Sinne des Themas des Buches unter der Überschrift „Leinwand als Reflexionsraum spiritueller Symboltradition“. Beckmanns Bild bildet gleichzeitig das Titelbild des vorliegenden Werkes.

Da insgesamt 29 Artikel in dem Werk zusammengefasst sind, kann es bei einer Rezension, sofern sie eine überschaubare Größe behalten soll, nur um ein exemplarisches Eingehen auf bestimmte Beiträge gehen. Die Einleitung beginnt mit einer These Gottfried Bitters, der sämtliche Beiträge verpflichtet sind: „Spiritualität ist heute lebensnotwendig; Spiritualität ist lernbar, Spiritualität ist lehrbar; die ausdrückliche Reflexion, Orientierung und Begleitung spiritualitätsförderlicher Lernprozesse kann Spiritualitätsdidaktik genannt werden“ (S. 9). Die Herausgeber betonen, dass Bitter in seiner These von zwei Voraussetzungen ausgeht: der seit einigen Jahren zu beobachtende allgemeine Spiritualitätshunger kann sowohl als Krisensymptom als auch als ein säkularisierungsresistentes Hoffnungssignal gedeutet werden. Andererseits kann Spiritualität theologisch näher als Lebensweise charakterisiert werden, die dem eigenen Leben eine geistige Identität geben will, wobei christliche Spiritualität im engeren Sinne Leben aus dem Geist Jesu Christi ist und damit auf die christliche Lebens- und Glaubensüberlieferung verweist (S. 10). Ausgehend von diesen beiden Voraussetzungen will das vorliegende Buch auf wissenschaftliche und interdisziplinäre Weise dem „Megatrend Spiritualität“ (Zulehner) nachspüren und das Problem der Lehr-, Lern- und Lehrbarkeit von christlicher Spiritualität aus religionspädagogischer Perspektive behandeln (S. 11). Das Werk geht dabei in drei Schritten vor. Es setzt ein mit einer systematischen Grundlegung von Spiritualität und Didaktik, führt weiter zur handlungsorientierten Annäherung an das Phänomen christlicher Spiritualität und schließt ab mit konkreten Praxiserfahrungen, Konzepten und Impulsen (S. 11). Damit nimmt die Gliederung des Buches die These Bitters von der Didaktisierbarkeit christlicher Spiritualität auf. Spiritualität ist lebensnotwendig, sie ist lernbar und lehrbar (S. 12).

Schon der Teil 1 „Grundfragen“ gibt einen Einblick in die Vielschichtigkeit des Themas Spiritualität. Er setzt ein mit Rudolf Englerts Beitrag „Pilger auf verschiedenen Pfaden. Geistige und geistliche Suchbewegungen unserer Zeit“. Englert gibt darin eine Analyse der spirituellen Situation der Gegenwart. Wesentlich ist sein Hinweis, dass nicht so sehr Kausalzusammenhänge als vielmehr Zufälle die zentrale Rolle im Hinblick auf religiöse Entwicklungen spielen (so in Aufnahme von Überlegungen Niklas Luhmanns). Damit werden kulturelle Schmetterlingseffekte zum entscheidenden Wirk-

faktor religiöser Entwicklungen. Die Beiträge von Ernst Dassmann „Vater, gib mir ein Wort. Geistliches Lernen in frühmonastischer Zeit“ und von Heinz Robert Schlette „Christliche Spiritualität angesichts von Religionskritik und Theologie der Religionen“ beschreiben christliche Spiritualität in unterschiedlichen religiösen und kulturellen Kontexten, wobei beiden der religiöse Pluralismus gemeinsam ist. Ursula Frost und Wolfgang Krone verorten in ihrem Beitrag „Leben lernen. Zur geistlichen Dimension von Lernen und Bildung“ das spirituelle Lernen in den größeren Kontext des Leben-Lernens. Dazu nehmen sie vor allem Überlegungen Bernhard Waldenfels' und Martin Bubers auf. Menschsein spannt sich aus zwischen Pathos und Response. Grundlegend sind die beiden abschließenden Artikel des 1. Teils der vier Herausgeber. Im ersten Beitrag von Reinhold Boschki und Jan Woppowa geht es um die Frage nach der Didaktisierbarkeit von Spiritualität: Die didaktische Reflexion bewegt sich dabei zwischen den beiden Polen Lehrbarkeit und Unverfügbarkeit. Sie weisen daraufhin, dass in der deutschen religionspädagogischen Landschaft – anders als im angloamerikanischen und französischen Kontext – der Begriff Spiritualitätsdidaktik noch weitgehend unentdeckt ist. Dahinter steht im deutschsprachigen Raum die Überzeugung, dass Lebenssinn nur als Geschenk Gottes empfangen werden könne. Überdies scheine mit dem Begriff der Spiritualität die Gefahr einer individualistischen und privatistischen Verengung verbunden zu sein. Es gehe somit für eine zukünftige Spiritualitätsdidaktik darum, die Sackgasse von Machbarkeitsdenken und Rückzug ins Private zu vermeiden. Entscheidend sei deshalb der Gestus der Einladung, wie er von Bitter immer wieder hervorgehoben worden sei. Damit ist ein Wechselspiel aus Vermittlungs- und Aneignungsdidaktik begründet. Die Autoren stellen drei bildungstheoretische Grundüberlegungen im Hinblick auf die zu entwickelnde Spiritualitätsdidaktik heraus: Spiritualität ereigne sich in einem wechselseitigen Erschließungsprozess von Subjekt und Inhalt, unter Anerkennung der Fragmentarität und Unverfügbarkeit gelingender Lehr- und Lernprozesse und in gelebten Formen alltäglicher Bewährungen. Entscheidend für die Spiritualitätsdidaktik sei ein beziehungsorientierter Ansatz: indem ich die Spiritualität der anderen entdecke und befrage, finde ich zu einer eigenverantworteten Spiritualität.

Stefan Altmeyer und Joachim Theis thematisieren in ihrem Beitrag „Sensibilisierend einladen. Kommunikationstheoretische Grundlegung einer Spiritualitätsdidaktik alltäglicher Lebensformen“ ausgehend von einer Verhältnisbestimmung von Glaube und Spiritualität die kommunikationstheoretischen Voraussetzungen einer Spiritualitätsdidaktik, die von elementaren Lebensformen christlicher Spiritualität ausgeht.

Im zweiten Teil des Buches stehen Lebensformen christlicher Spiritualität im Zentrum. Wenn christliche Spiritualität im Gestaltwerden der Gottes- und Christusbeziehung besteht, fällt die Frage nach der Lernbarkeit

von Spiritualität mit der nach ihrer Lebbarkeit zusammen (so die Herausgeber auf S. 11). Die einzelnen Artikel des zweiten Teils haben heuristische Funktion. Sie wollen Wege aufzeigen, wie das Christliche im alltäglichen Leben entdeckt und zum Ausdruck gebracht werden kann. Dominik Blum tut dies in seinem einleitenden Artikel anhand des Verbs „Klein sein“. Christliches Leben ist in der Spannung zwischen Großwerden durch Gottes Geist und Demut angesichts bleibender fragmentarischer Identität zu verstehen. Wolfgang Lentzen-Deis versucht in seinem Beitrag: „Sich sehnen – lieben“ zu zeigen, dass hinter jeder echten Liebe ein transzendentaler Horizont sichtbar wird. Nur im Blick auf die Treue Gottes wird man dem Menschen, den man liebt, treu sein können. Der Autor stellt die These auf, dass in jeder wahren Liebe Jesus Christus anwesend ist. Biblisch begründet er diese These mit der Aussage Jesu aus Mt 25,40: „Was ihr für einen meiner geringsten Brüder getan habt, das habt ihr mir getan“. Erst wenn in einer Liebesbeziehung Gott mit einbezogen ist, gelangt die Liebe zu ihrer vollen Tiefe und Reife.

Klaus Wegenast: „Klagen“ will zeigen, dass Klagen Ausdruck tiefen Vertrauens auf Gott ist und nicht bloßer Ausdruck von Schwäche und damit für Glaubende unangemessen. Er begründet diesen Gedanken mit dem Hinweis darauf, dass nach biblischem Verständnis das Zentrum der Klage nicht etwa die Bitte um Abhilfe, sondern die Krise der Beziehung zwischen dem Beter und seinem Gott darstellt. Wenn die Klage im Alltag der Christen lange Zeit bloß eine Nebenrolle gespielt hat, so sei dies eher auf den Einfluss der Stoa als auf alttestamentliche Spiritualität zurückzuführen. In der Religionspädagogik haben sich durch Untersuchungen Ingo Baldermanns und Rainer Oberthürs die Klagelieder des Einzelnen in den Psalmen als Sprachhilfe erwiesen, die Kindern und Jugendlichen einen elementaren Zugang zu eigenen Nöten und umgekehrt zu biblischen Texten ermöglichen.

Ottmar Fuchs schließlich beschreibt in seinem Artikel „Reisen – eine vermittelbare Erfahrungsweise christlicher Spiritualität“ modernes Reisen als Chance, spirituell zu lernen. Besonders eindrucksvoll ist dabei die Schilderung seines Besuchs von Hitlers Hauptquartier Wolfsschanze in Ostpreußen. Er deutet die dort gemachte Erfahrung als Erkenntnishilfe der paulinischen Rechtfertigungstheologie: Dass ein Mensch sich erst dann für die Gnade Gottes öffnen kann, wenn er realistisch das eigene Sündensein und die eigene Potentialität dazu wahrnimmt.

Teil 3 „Lernwege“ beschreibt schließlich unterschiedliche Lernfelder für Spiritualität: das Theologiestudium, die Natur, Kirchenfenster, die Schule, den Weltjugendtag 2005, die katholische Weltkirche, die soziale Arbeit Lateinamerikas und den Religionsunterricht. Rolf Zeffass nimmt in seinem einleitenden Artikel: „Gott denken lernen. Theologiestudium als spirituelle Praxis“*** Überlegungen von Hugo von St. Victor auf. In dessen *Didascalicon studio legendi* beschreibt dieser die Elementarstruktur theologischen Lernens als Abfolge von fünf

Schritten: *lectio, meditatio, oratio, operatio, contemplatio*. Dabei zeigt Zerfass, dass Hugo von St. Victor sich der monastischen theologischen Tradition verpflichtet fühlt. Sein theologisches Programm ist paradigmatisch für spirituelles Lernen, weil es die faktische Abkoppelung der Spiritualität aus dem wissenschaftlichen Theologiestudium nicht kennt, vielmehr Theologie von ihrem Kerngeschäft her interpretiert: den Zugang zu Gott und den Weg, auf dem er uns entgegen kommt, zu erschließen. Konsequenterweise betrachtet Zerfass Seelsorger und Charitasleute, gemeindliche Gesprächskreise und ökumenische Initiativen als Gesprächspartner und Praxisbegleiter im Rahmen der theologischen Grundausbildung.

Hildegard Glee-Zur Bensen zeigt in ihrem Artikel: „Tage religiöser Orientierung. Spiritualität im schulischen Kontext“ die Möglichkeiten und Grenzen des Angebots spiritueller Tage zum Beispiel im Rahmen von Praxiswochen an Schulen auf. Angesichts der weitgehenden Entkirchlichung bzw. Säkularisierung der Schüler und Schülerinnen kommt solchen spirituellen Tagen eine große Bedeutung für die religiöse Sozialisation zu. Umgekehrt stehen sie allerdings vor der Schwierigkeit, dass viele Jugendliche aufgrund mangelnder Grupeerfahrungen und Angst vor religiösen Zwängen und vor Ruhe und Stille sich nur schwer auf ein entsprechendes spirituelles Angebot einzulassen vermögen.

Der abschließende Beitrag von Monika Tautz „Spiritualität und interreligiöses Lernen. Mit Beispielen zum christlich-islamischen Dialog im Religionsunterricht“ zeigt die Chancen und Gefahren des interreligiösen Dialogs brennpunktartig auf. Einerseits leuchtet sofort ein, dass die unterschiedlichen spirituellen Traditionen einen sinnvollen Weg zum Kennenlernen der jeweiligen Religionen darstellen, andererseits besteht jedoch das Problem, wie verhindert werden kann, dass es aufgrund der Teilnahme an spirituellen Übungen der unterschiedlichen Religionen zu einem immer stärker synkretistischen Charakter individueller Religiosität in unserer Gesellschaft kommt. Vielleicht müsste man an dieser Stelle deutlicher unterscheiden zwischen solchen religiösen Gebräuchen, an denen auch die Angehörigen der jeweils anderen Religion teilnehmen können und denjenigen, die den Gläubigen einer Religion vorbehalten bleiben sollten. Sonst kommt es unter der Hand zu einer Entwertung und Entleerung der religiösen Übungen.

Das vorliegende Buch schreitet den ganzen Horizont der Möglichkeiten ab, wie christliche Spiritualität gelehrt, gelernt und gelebt werden kann. Es ist deswegen unverzichtbare Grundlage für alle weiteren Überlegungen, christliche Spiritualität in Gemeinde, Schule und Universität zu didaktisieren.

Peter Zimmerling, Leipzig, Deutschland

Realistische Theologie
Eine Hinführung zu Adolf Schlatter
Heinzpeter Hempelmann, Johannes von Lüpke, Werner Neuer

Gießen: Brunnen, 2006, Pb., 144 pp., € 14,95
 ISBN 978-3-7655-1384-8

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Adolf Schlatter (1852-1938) war einer der prägenden konservativen Theologen in der Zeit vor dem Zweiten Weltkrieg. Von seinem großen Lebenswerk gingen zahlreiche Impulse besonders in der neutestamentlichen Exegese aus, die bis heute noch fortwirken. Die Autoren dieses Bandes haben selber Leben und Werk von Schlatter erforscht. Sie wollen mit dieser Einführung auch unter jüngeren Theologen das Interesse wecken, sich mit dem Leben, aber besonders auch der Theologie, Hermeneutik und Ethik des Tübinger Gelehrten zu beschäftigen.

SUMMARY

Adolf Schlatter (1852-1938) was one of the formative conservative theologians in the time before the Second World War. Numerous academic trends proceeded from his large life's work especially in the area of New Testament exegesis which are still being outworked today. The authors of this volume investigate the life and work of Schlatter aiming to arouse the interest of younger theologians with this introduction to his life, highlighting the theology, hermeneutics and ethics of this Tübingen scholar.

RÉSUMÉ

Adolf Schlatter (1852-1938) a été l'un des théologiens conservateurs influents dans la période qui a précédé la seconde guerre mondiale. L'œuvre importante accomplie au cours de sa longue carrière, notamment dans le domaine de l'exégèse du Nouveau Testament, a ouvert de nombreuses pistes qui sont encore explorées de nos jours. Les auteurs de cet ouvrage considèrent la vie et l'œuvre de Schlatter avec pour but d'éveiller l'intérêt des jeunes théologiens pour ce théologien de Tübingue, en mettant en avant sa théologie, son herméneutique et son éthique.

* * * *

Unter den konservativen Exegeten des 20. Jahrhunderts wird bis heute keiner so oft lobend erwähnt wie Adolf Schlatter (1852-1938). Der große Tübinger Gelehrte war nicht nur Neutestamentler. Er bearbeitete auch das Alte Testament, publizierte Historisches, unterrichtete Dogmatik, Ethik und Philosophie. Es ist nicht verwunderlich, dass sich zahlreiche wissenschaftliche Monographien bis heute mit seinem Lebenswerk beschäftigen.

Da die Pfarrergeneration, die von Schlatter und Karl Heim geprägt wurde, heute schon viele Jahre im Ruhestand ist, ist der Zugang zu dem viel zitierten, aber in der jüngeren Theologengeneration nicht mehr so oft gelesenen Wissenschaftler erschwert. Hatte er noch die Nachkriegsgeneration der Pfarrer durch seine Vorlesungen bleibend beeinflusst, so stehen wir heute vor der

Aufgabe, sein Lebenswerk durch Lektüre der Nachwelt zu erschließen.

Im vorliegenden Aufsatzband widmen sich drei Schlatterkenner und -liebhaber dieser Aufgabe. Der am Theologischen Seminar St. Chrischona lehrende Dozent Werner Neuer gibt einen kurzen Überblick über Leben, Werk und Wirkung Schlatters (9-41). Er hebt hervor, dass das Ziel von Schlatters Exegese die theologische Auslegung der Texte ist. Das rabbinische Judentum war der Horizont von Schlatters Forschungen. Der Tübinger Wissenschaftler hat nicht nur zahlreiche Pfarrer, sondern auch bekannte Professoren wie Otto Michel, Karl-Heinrich Rengstorff, Julius Schniewind und Kirchenleiter wie Theophil Wurm und Kurt Scharf geprägt bzw. beeinflusst.

In einem zweiten Beitrag stellt der Wuppertaler Systematiker Johannes von Lüpke Impulse von Schlatters Theologie für die Gegenwart zusammen (43-66). Interessant ist, dass schon Schlatter eine Reform des Theologiestudiums gefordert hat. Im Programm einer „gesunden Lehre“ ist Lüpke besonders der Aufsatz von 1905 über die „Atheistischen Methoden in der Theologie“ wichtig. Schlatters Theologie ist eine „Theologie der Wahrnehmung“ im „Akt des Sehens“. Lüpke ordnet Schlatter theologiegeschichtlich zwischen dem Neuprottestantismus und der Neubewertung auf die reformatorische Theologie in den zwanziger Jahren ein.

Heinzpeter Hempelmann, ehemaliger Direktor des Theologischen Seminars Bad Liebenzell, formuliert im längsten Beitrag des Aufsatzbandes sieben Herausforderungen von Schlatters Hermeneutik (67-110). Nach einer persönlichen Einleitung, in der Hempelmann die Bedeutung von Schlatters Ansatz für sein eigenes Denken schildert, fasst er hermeneutische Anregungen von Schlatters apologetisch orientierter Arbeit für die Gegenwart zusammen. Auch hier steht der Wahrnehmungsakt im Mittelpunkt, der zu einer Hermeneutik der Demut führt und unter anderem wichtige methodenkritische Impulse vermittelt (88-95).

In einem abschließenden Aufsatz fasst Werner Neuer die Grundlagen von Schlatters Theologie der Liebe zusammen (111-142). Neuer zeigt die biographischen Hintergründe des Theas bei Schlatter auf und skizziert die Gestaltwerdung von Gottes Liebe in Theologie und Kirche sowie in Schlatters persönlichem Dienst für die Kirche.

Keine konservative Theologiegeschichtsschreibung wird an Schlatter vorbeikommen! Auch andere Theologen sollten ihn wahrnehmen, wenn sie nicht nur die ideengeschichtliche Fortentwicklung kritischer Positionen darstellen wollen. Es bleibt zu hoffen, dass auch die jüngere Theologengeneration einen Zugang zu Schlatters wichtiger Arbeit finden wird.

Jochen Eber, Schriesheim bei Heidelberg, Deutschland

Der Finger in der Wunde: Die Geschichte des ungläubigen Thomas

Glenn W. Most

München: C. H. Beck, 2007, Hb., 315 pp., € 26,90

ISBN 978-3-406-55619-7

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die vorliegende Studie über den „ungläubigen Thomas“ untersucht die neutestamentlichen Hinweise (mit einem Schwerpunkt auf Joh 20) und die Hinweise in der apokryphen und gnostischen Literatur (u. a. Thomas-Evangelium). Ferner beleuchtet Most verschiedene Darstellungen des Thomas in der bildenden Kunst. Er betont, dass Thomas – entgegen dem landläufigen Verständnis – Jesus nicht berührt habe, trotz dessen Aufforderung dies zu tun. Eine tatsächliche Berührung war nicht mehr nötig. Most will an Thomas zentrale Fragen des Glaubens und Unglaubens, des Zweifels und Überzeugtseins thematisieren. Für Most ist Thomas weniger historische Person, als vielmehr literarisches Produkt im Erzählinteresse der Evangelisten.

SUMMARY

This study of 'doubting Thomas' examines the New Testament references (with an emphasis on John 20) and the references in the Apocryphal and Gnostic Literature (esp. the Gospel of Thomas). Furthermore, Most examines a variety of representations of Thomas in fine art. It stresses that Thomas – contrary to popular understanding – did not touch Jesus despite his request, because actual contact was not necessary any longer. Most wants to bring up for discussion the central question of faith and disbelief, doubting and conviction together, in Thomas. For Most, Thomas is less a historical person, and more a literary product in the narrative interest of the Evangelists.

RÉSUMÉ

Cette étude est consacrée à Thomas, « l'homme du doute ». L'auteur examine les textes faisant référence à ce personnage dans le Nouveau Testament (avec une attention particulière pour Jean 20) et dans la littérature apocryphe (notamment l'Évangile de Thomas) puis gnostique. Il s'intéresse aussi aux représentations de Thomas dans l'art religieux. Il souligne que, contrairement à l'opinion populaire, Thomas, en dépit de sa demande, n'a pas touché Jésus, car un réel contact physique n'était plus nécessaire. Most s'intéresse à la question centrale de la foi et de l'incrédulité, du doute mêlé à la conviction chez Thomas. Davantage qu'un personnage historique, Thomas est plutôt à ses yeux un produit littéraire créé pour les besoins de la narration en fonction de l'intérêt des évangélistes.

* * * *

Neben Jesus, Petrus und Paulus gilt in der Forschung der vergangenen Jahre das Interesse verstärkt auch anderen Einzelgestalten des Urchristentums. Neben einer ganzen Reihe von Studien zu Jakobus, Johannes Markus, Barnabas und den Mitarbeitern des Paulus belegt auch die Reihe *Biblische Gestalten* der Evangelischen Verlagsan-

stalt (Leipzig) das gegenwärtige Interesse an einzelnen biblischen Gestalten. Da es bisher zum ungläubigen Thomas wenig gibt, blickt man mit Interesse in den vorliegenden Band. Es handelt sich dabei um die deutsche Übersetzung des englischen Titels *Doubting Thomas* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005). Most schreibt einführend:

In der Gestalt des ungläubigen Thomas bietet sich uns eine vortreffliche Gelegenheit, den Finger auf zentrale Fragen des Glaubens und des Unglaubens, des Zweifels und des Überzeugtseins zu legen, uns zwar in zweierlei Hinsicht: zum einen quer durch verschiedene Medien und zum anderen entlang sich über Jahrhunderte erstreckender Überlieferungsstränge (9).

Im ersten Teil beschreibt Most nach Überlegungen zum Verhältnis von Sehen und Glauben seinen methodischen Ansatz, der aus einer Kombination von rhetorischem (Analyse der „in den Text eingewebten zielgerichteten Überzeugungsstrategien“, 25), literarischem und psychologischem Ansatz besteht. Dem folgt ein Überblick über Thomas in den synoptischen Evangelien und im Johannesevangelium als Ausgangspunkt späterer Überlieferungen (30-104). Most setzt das an Maria gerichtete Verbot, Jesus zu berühren in Johannes 20,17 in Beziehung zur Forderung des Thomas, Jesus zu berühren und zu Jesu anschließender Aufforderung, dies zu tun. Dabei betont Most, dass entgegen landläufiger Meinung und vielfacher Darstellung in der Kunst, Thomas von der Aufforderung Jesu, ihn zu berühren, keinen Gebrauch mehr gemacht hat: „Unter diesen Umständen braucht aber Thomas Jesus nicht mehr zu berühren, um sich seiner Identität zu versichern: Jesu Erkennen und Anerkennen des Zweiflers hat die von Thomas geforderten Beweise hinfällig gemacht, und Thomas kann nun auf sie verzichten, denn er bedarf ihrer nicht mehr“ (82). Most führt diese Interpretation auf die spätere Wirkungsgeschichte zurück, der es in Abgrenzung zur Gnosis darum ging zu betonen, dass Thomas den Leib des Auferstandenen nicht etwa nur hätte berühren können, sondern tatsächlich berührt hatte. Freilich ging es dabei auch um die Frage, wie man sich die Auferstehung Jesu und damit auch die eigene Auferstehung vorzustellen habe (268f); vgl. dazu D. L. Bock, *Die verschwiegenen Evangelien: Gnosis oder apostolisches Christentum: Muss die Geschichte des frühen Christentums neu geschrieben werden?* (Gießen, Basel: Brunnen, 2007), 178-215.

Für Most ist Thomas Produkt der theologischen Absichten des Evangelisten. Das theologische Anliegen wurde ohne historischen Anhalt auf den aus der Tradition namentlich bekannten Jünger übertragen „Die Figur des Zweiflers Thomas... wurde von Johannes wohl vor allem ersonnen, um den Zweifel zu provozieren, zu radikalisisieren und ihn dann aufzulösen und ihn ein für allemal zu begraben“ (267).

Teil zwei, „Reaktionen und Ausdeutungen“ (105-160), gilt – wie bei anderen Studien zu biblischen Gestalten – der reichen Wirkungsgeschichte des Thomas in drei verschiedenen Überlieferungssträngen. Nach einer Hin-

führung (u. a. mit Überlegungen zum Namen Thomas und zu „Zwilling“) geht es um die ntl. Apokryphen und weitere Texte, die sich in den vergangenen Jahren steigender Beliebtheit erfreuen (vor allem gnostische Texte, die den „ungläubigen Thomas“ als Gewährsmann für ihre Sache beanspruchten). Dann widmet sich Most den „Exegetischen Reaktionen von den Kirchenvätern bis zur Gegenreformation“ sowohl auf die ntl. Texte als auch auf die apokryphe Überlieferung (160-200). Ferner untersucht Most die Wirkungsgeschichte des Thomas in der sakralen Kunst (201-258). Abschließend beschreibt und interpretiert er die Reliquie des Fingers des Thomas, der Jesus berührt haben soll (258-265).

Dem Nachwort folgen mehrere „Bibliographische Essays“ (kommentierte Bibliographien), Register und Verzeichnis der Bibelstellen. Most kann anhand der Rezeptionstradition den Widerspruch aufzeigen

... zwischen einem knappen, aber äußerst bedeutsamen Gründungstext und seinen zahlreichen Kommentaren und Fortschreibungen, die zwar den Anspruch der Texttreue gegenüber der Vorlage erheben, gleichwohl aber ihren Wortlaut in einem wesentlichen Punkt gründlich missverstehen [nämlich die tatsächliche Berührung Jesu durch Thomas]... Die Rekonstruktion einiger Wege, auf denen dieser offenkundige, aber zweifellos nicht mehr aus der Welt zu schaffende Irrtum zweitausend Jahre Literatur- und Kunstgeschichte durchwandert hat, bietet reichlich Stoff zur Reflektion über die unauflösliche Verknüpfung von Verstehen und Missverstehen innerhalb der komplizierten Prozesse menschlicher Kommunikation (10f).

Die Behandlung der ntl. Stellen (Joh 20) geht inhaltlich an einigen Stellen über das hinaus, was sich auch in den großen Kommentaren zum Johannesevangelium findet. Die Darstellung der literarischen und bildlichen Wirkungsgeschichte des Evangelientextes ist gelungen. Sie ist auch für Leser von Interesse, die den ntl. Befund anders bewerten als Most und im Gefolge einiger neuerer Studien zum Johannesevangelium, dessen historische Glaubwürdigkeit höher einschätzen. Immer wieder zieht der klassische Philologe Most griech.-röm. Texte als zur Erhellung der biblischen Texte und ihrer Wirkungsgeschichte heran. Insgesamt ein interessanter Band zu einer schillernden Figur des Neuen Testaments und seiner vielfältigen Rezeption. Zur kritischeren Einordnung der ausführlich behandelten gnostischen Texte vgl. D. L. Bock, *Die verschwiegenen Evangelien* (siehe oben).

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**Die Werke Philipp Jakob Speners
Studienausgabe, Band II: Der christliche Glaube**

Beate Köster, Kurt Aland † (Ed.)

Gießen: Brunnen, 2006, Ln., XVIII+726 pp., € 89,90
ISBN 978-3-7655-9403-8

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die Edition an der Spener-Studienausgabe schreitet kontinuierlich voran. Aus den Planungen des 1994 verstorbenen Münsteraner Gelehrten Kurt Aland entstanden durch tatkräftigen Einsatz der am Münsteraner Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung arbeitenden Dr Beate Köster 1996 und 2000 die beiden Bände „Grundschriften“. Jetzt brachte sie nach größerem zeitlichen Abstand vier Schriften Speners zum Zentralthema „christlicher Glaube“ heraus. Hauptthemen sind 1.) der innere, geistliche Friede; 2.) das Leben des Christen aus der Wiedergeburt und in der Kirche; 3.) die falsche Auslegung von Bibelstellen, um ein laues christliches Leben zu rechtfertigen und 4.) die christliche Frömmigkeit, die aus Gottes Gnadengütern lebt. Der vorliegende Band zeigt deutlich, wie sich bei Spener Rechtgläubigkeit und die Bemühung um ein rechtes Leben aus dem Glauben miteinander verbinden. Deshalb wird er nicht umsonst als Vater der deutschen pietistischen Frömmigkeitsbewegung bezeichnet.

SUMMARY

The series of the study-edition of Spener's works goes steadily forward. Out of the plans of Kurt Aland of Münster who died in 1994, and through the energetic involvement of Dr Beate Köster who works at the Münster Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung two volumes of his main writings have been published, in 1996 and 2000. After a longer interval she has now produced four works by Spener on the central themes of Christian faith. The main themes of which are 1. inner spiritual peace, 2. the Christian life arising from the new birth and in the church 3. the false interpretation of biblical passages which would justify a lukewarm Christian life and 4. Christian piety which lives out of God's gracious benefits. This new volume clearly shows how for Spener right doctrine and exhortation to right living out of faith are joined together. Therefore to call him father of the German pietist movement is not unfounded.

RÉSUMÉ

Une édition d'étude des œuvres de Spener est en cours. Suivant le projet de Kurt Aland de Munster (décédé en 1994) et grâce aux efforts de Beate Köster, de l'Institut de Munster pour la recherche sur les textes néotestamentaires, deux volumes de ses œuvres principales ont été publiés, l'un en 1996, l'autre en 2000. Mme Köster vient maintenant de produire quatre ouvrages de Spener sur des thèmes centraux de la foi chrétienne. Les principaux sont : la paix spirituelle intérieure, la vie chrétienne découlant de la nouvelle naissance, notamment dans l'Église, les mauvaises interprétations de textes bibliques justifiant la tiédeur dans la vie chrétienne, et la piété chrétienne vécue en

conséquence de ce que Dieu nous accorde par grâce. Ce nouveau volume montre clairement que la doctrine correcte et l'appel à une vie juste découlant de la foi allaient de pair pour Spener. Il n'est donc pas infondé de voir en lui le père du mouvement piétiste allemand.

* * * *

Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705) ist der Vater des deutschsprachigen Pietismus. Deshalb wurde eine Spener-Werkausgabe in der Pietismusforschung immer als dringendes Desiderat empfunden. Die Geschichte gescheiterter Versuche ist lang; Erich Beyreuther (1904-2003) hat mit seiner Reprintausgabe, die heute von Dietrich Blauffuß herausgegeben wird, den Bibliotheken geholfen, in denen die Originalausgaben nicht greifbar sind. Doch eine kritische Ausgabe von Werken des großen Gelehrten, Predigers und Seelsorgers hat lange auf sich warten lassen. Johannes Wallmann leitet die seit 1992 erscheinende Spener-Briefedition. Kurt Aland, der die vorliegende Spenerausgabe geplant hatte, starb 1994. Seine Mitarbeiterin am Münsteraner Institut für neutestamentlichen Textforschung Dr. Beate Köster hat das Projekt weitergeführt. Unter ihrer Federführung ist es gelungen, 1996 und 2000 die beiden von Aland vorbereiteten Bände mit „Grundschriften“ von Spener herauszubringen (vgl. die Rezensionen in EJTh 7, 1998, 157-159 und 10, 2001, 182-184). Auch der neue Band zum Thema „Der christliche Glaube“ verbreitert die Basis der in modernem Druck verfügbaren Spener-Texte. Sie werden ihn endlich einer breiteren Öffentlichkeit über seine „Pia Desideria“ hinaus bekannt machen. Auch diese Sammlung wurde wieder mit Unterstützung von freikirchlichen (!) Privatleuten als auch mit Druckkostenzuschüssen des Afet und zweier Landeskirchen gefördert.

Um Speners Aussagen über den christlichen Glauben dem heutigen Leser repräsentativ vorzustellen, hat Beate Köster vier seiner Schriften ausgewählt: „Der innerliche und geistliche Friede“ (1686), „Wiederholungspredigten“ (1686), „Sprüche Heiliger Schrift“ (1693) und „Die laute Milch des Evangelii“ (1685). Wer die vier Beiträge liest, erhält einen lebhaften Eindruck von dem, was Speners Anliegen war und in welchen Frontstellungen er seinen Glauben und seine Lehre verteidigen musste. Die erste Schrift über den *geistlichen Frieden* entstand im Kontext der Diskussion über die pietistischen Erbauungsstunden (*collegia pietatis*). Ausgehend von Joh 16,33 bespricht Spener das Thema, das er schon in den Collegia behandelt hat (24), Es ist eine Wirkung des Teufels, dass Unfrieden in der Welt herrscht. Als Mittel, den Frieden Gottes zu erlangen, nennt Spener die bußfertige Reue über die Sünde (40). So erreicht man den Frieden mit und in Gott. Sünde, Leiden, Anfechtungen u.a. können den wahren Frieden zwar beeinträchtigen, ihn aber nicht ganz zerstören.

In den *Wiederholungspredigten* von 1686 hat Spener seine Lehre zusammengefasst, als er von Frankfurt nach Dresden wechselte. In einem großen Bogen umschlie-

ßen die langen Ansprachen die folgenden Themen: (1.) Buße, Rechtfertigung, Heiligung des Lebens, (2.) Erlösung, Taufe, Wiedergeburt, Erneuerung, (3.) Leiden und Kreuz, Gottesdienst, Heiligung, Heilige Schrift, Früchte des Glaubens, und (4.) Abendmahl, Predigtamt und Kirche. Das Thema Buße entfaltet Spener in einer Weise, die man aus heutigen Dogmatiken nicht mehr kennt (172-175). Wahrer Glaube ist für ihn am besten erkennbar aus den Früchten der Heiligung (178), die nicht zur Annahme von Sündlosigkeit verleiten darf (181). Die Wiedergeburt kann verloren und wiedererlangt werden (194). Nach Speners Ansicht haben unzählige „Christen“ ihre Wiedergeburt verloren (206). Am doppelten Weltausgang in ewiger Freude und ewiger Pein hält Spener fest (213). Interessant sind auch seine Ausführungen zur Predigt unbekehrter Prediger (267-269).

In einer Zeit, in der man Gottlosigkeit und laues Christentum noch mit Bibelsprüchen zu rechtfertigen pflegte, waren pseudo-biblische Ausreden für weltliches Sündenleben und gegen wahres innerliches und tätiges Christentum noch sehr im Schwange. Spener analysiert in „Sprüche Heiliger Schrift“ vier Gruppen von Schriftverdrehern und ihre Ursachen. Er hat diese Auslegungen in der Dresdener Schlosskapelle 1690 begonnen. Die Bibelsprüche aus dem Alten und Neuen Testament beschäftigen sich mit Themen, die man fälschlich für Werkgerechtigkeit, mangelndes Streben nach Heiligung, fleischliche Schwachheit des Glaubens, ja sogar den Alkoholismus (404) in Anspruch nehmen zu können meint. Geiz wird als Sparen für die Kinder deklariert (500, 559f); dass den Gläubigen „alles rein“ ist, muss zur Rechtfertigung der Augenlust, des Theaters und des Tanzens herhalten (504-506, vgl. 555). Es gibt keinen Vers, den man offensichtlich nicht verdrehen könne, stellt Spener betäubt fest (525). Strafen und Ermahnungen ist in diesen Fällen nicht nur Aufgabe des Pfarrers, sondern der ganzen Gemeinde (555).

Das letzten Werk des Spener-Bandes ist die oft nachgedruckte „lautere Milch des Evangelii“, die – wahrscheinlich 1694 – zur Bekehrung des Freiherrn Hildebrand von Canstein geführt hat (582). In dieser Schrift stellt Spener langen Beleg-Bibelstellen kurze Thesen voran, die die biblischen Heilsgüter zusammenfassen. Der Gläubige soll durch sie in der reinen Lehre des Glaubens gegründet und gestärkt werden, seinen Glaubensstand prüfen und zu Dank und dankbaren Werken angeregt werden.

Auch dieser dritte Band der Studienausgabe regt zu neuer Beschäftigung mit dem Vater des Pietismus und dem pietistischen Erbe an. Er zeigt auf, welch reiches Erbe der klassische Pietismus hinterlassen hat und fordert heutige Frömmigkeitsbewegungen dazu heraus, davon zu profitieren. Es ist der Studienausgabe zu wünschen, dass sie in diesem und den folgenden Bänden fleißige Leser, Förderer und auch Bücherfreunde, die das Werk anderen schenken, findet!

Jochen Eber, Schriesheim bei Heidelberg, Deutschland

***God and History in the Book of Revelation:
New Testament Studies in Dialogue with
Pannenberg and Moltmann***

Michael Gilbertson

SNTS 124; Cambridge: CUP, 2003, £50,
ISBN: 0521824664.

SUMMARY

This volume represents a cross disciplinary study between biblical interpretation and systematic theology. The author examines to what degree a reading of the Book of Revelation supports or undermines the theologies of Wolfhart Pannenberg and Jürgen Moltmann on the theology of history. He does this by exploring the way in which the Book of Revelation employs the dimensions of time and space in order to establish a weltbild about God's relationship to history. The author concludes that Pannenberg and Moltmann's theologies are both continuous and discontinuous with the Book of Revelation and its approach to God and history.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieser Band repräsentiert eine interdisziplinäre Studie aus den Bereichen der Bibelinterpretation und der systematischen Theologie. Der Autor untersucht, bis zu welchem Grad die Interpretation der Johannesoffenbarung die Geschichtstheologien Wolfhart Pannengerbs und Jürgen Moltmanns unterstützt oder unterminiert. Dies geschieht, indem der Autor untersucht, wie die Dimensionen von Raum und Zeit in der Offenbarung benutzt werden, um ein Weltbild der Beziehung Gottes zur Geschichte zu errichten. Der Autor kommt zu dem Ergebnis, dass Pannengerbs und Moltmanns Theologien sowohl in Kontinuität als auch in Diskontinuität zur Offenbarung und ihrem Ansatz im Blick auf Gott und Geschichte stehen.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage est un travail interdisciplinaire d'interprétation biblique et de théologie systématique. L'auteur pose la question de savoir dans quelle mesure une lecture du livre de l'Apocalypse appuie ou récuse la pensée de Wolfhart Pannenberg et celle de Jürgen Moltmann sur la théologie de l'histoire. Il procède en considérant comment l'Apocalypse utilise les dimensions du temps et de l'espace pour établir une vision du monde quant au rapport de Dieu à l'histoire. Il parvient à la conclusion qu'il y a à la fois continuité et discontinuité entre la pensée de Pannenberg et de Moltmann et l'enseignement de l'Apocalypse sur Dieu et l'histoire.

* * * *

The objective of Gilbertson's study is to examine the relation of the divine reality to the world of historical events. In chapter one, Gilbertson opens with discussion of twentieth-century debates about the relationship between history and faith. He surveys the work of Ernst Troeltsch who argued that the historical-critical method could not accommodate divine interaction

with the world, Rudolf Bultmann who posited a strict dichotomy between history and God via his neo-Kantian dualism that separated fact from value, Wolfhart Pannenberg who advocated that the divine self-communication occurs through historical events, and finally he surveys Jürgen Moltmann who endeavoured to draw the horizons of God's ultimate future and the human present together in order for their to be real hope in Christian thought.

In chapter two, Gilbertson examines the relationship between scripture and systematic theology. He draws attention to Krister Stendahl's two-stage model which begins with the descriptive task of biblical theology followed by the practice of a normative systematic theology in order to prevent theological commitments from damaging the interpretation of the text. Gilbertson questions, however, whether 'descriptive' and 'normative' are really antithetical and whether the differentiation between what the text 'meant' and what it 'means' is really straightforward. Instead, Gilbertson prefers Nicholas Lash's dialectic model of a more dynamic interface between exegesis and theology. On the role of scripture in theology, he accepts Alister McGrath's defence of the cognitive-propositionalist approach which maintains an external referent in the story of Jesus.

Gilbertson addresses the overall perspective of Revelation in chapter three by focusing on Revelation's representation of history, the rhetorical situation of the text, and the genre of Revelation. He examines preterist, historicist, and salvation-historical accounts of Revelation's representation of history and finds fault with all three. Instead, Gilbertson argues that the framework of Revelation is temporal (= not about abstract principles) yet not chronological (= not about speculative future events). He locates the text in an environment that was not necessarily in crisis but the Seer aims to reveal the true nature of the situation to his readers. Accordingly, Gilbertson rejects seeing the symbology of Revelation as functioning as a psychological mechanism designed to induce certain states. He maintains that due regard should be given to the truth claims that the text makes. Thus, however the rhetorical function of the book is construed it must remain rooted in the truth-claims that the book itself makes about reality. On genre, Revelation is an apocalypse, though lacking some features of an apocalypse (e.g. pseudonymity), and the Seer attempts to influence his audience by locating the earthly present in the context of ultimate spatial and temporal horizons.

Chapters four and five deal with the spatial and temporal dimensions of Revelation. Gilbertson argues that Revelation is concerned with 'the expansion of spatial horizons to include a transcendent spatial reality and the expansion of temporal horizons include transcendent temporal reality' (p. 82). He finds that the juxtaposition of 2:1-3:22 and 4:1-11 create a dissonance between the crisis situation of John's audience and the absolute sovereignty of God. This dissonance is resolved, spatially,

by the future descent of the New Jerusalem from heaven to earth, and temporally, by the everlasting sovereignty of God being manifest on the earth at the same time. Although, as he points out, this imagery can also intensify the dissonance since the spatial and temporal transitions are yet to take place.

Gilbertson then compares his findings about Revelation with the theologies of Pannenberg and Moltmann in chapter six. He focuses on the dynamics of history, proleptic revelation, eschatological consummation, and the relationship of the present to the eschatological horizon. He notes the differences between Pannenberg and Moltmann not the least of which is that Pannenberg emphasizes the unity and coherence of history with God's self-revelation, while Moltmann emphasizes discontinuity and contradiction between the present historical reality and the coming of God. Beyond this, Gilbertson adds a caveat that the conceptual worlds of John of Patmos and twentieth century theologians such as Pannenberg and Moltmann are very different, but what they have in common is a theology whose orientation is towards the ultimate future and the impact of this ultimate future upon the present. Where Pannenberg and Moltmann appear to depart from Gilbertson's analysis of Revelation, is that the Seer can identify God's rule as a hidden reality, whereas for Pannenberg and Moltmann, God's rule is of the future.

In his conclusion, Gilbertson finds Pannenberg and Moltmann's theology as being continuous and discontinuous from his analysis of Revelation. In line with the intention of the text, Moltmann and Pannenberg both posit a vision of the ultimate power of God that will ultimately shape the future but such power is for the moment hidden and not publicly manifest. Overall, a theological reading of Revelation is both a welcomed and profitable exercise if done with historical sensitivity and theological acumen. Gilbertson does both fairly well and succeeds in bringing the disciplines of biblical and theological studies together. The only misgiving I have is that while Gilbertson rejects Stendahl's two-stage model for biblical and systematic theology, in the end his monograph is a perfect example of it as he moves from analysis of the text of Revelation (chapters 3-5) to systematic observations (chapter 6). Apart from that, this volume is a good example of how biblical interpretation and systematic theology can and should be brought together.

Michael F. Bird, Dingwall, Scotland

*Zion Symbolism in Hebrews:
Hebrews 12:18-24 as a Hermeneutical Key to the
Epistle*

Kiwoong Son

(PBM; Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2005), p/b,
978-1842273685, £19.99.

SUMMARY

This study argues that the theology and hermeneutics of Hebrews find their central theme in the Sinai and Zion symbolism of Hebrews 12:18-24. The author contends that citations of the Old Testament, the rhetorical features, and the structure of Hebrews are all indebted to the Sinai/Zion contrast. Hebrews is not an expression of Platonism or Gnosticism, but has its backgrounds in Jewish reflections on Zion and in apocalyptic hopes for restoration.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die Studie argumentiert, dass die Theologie und die Hermeneutik des Hebräerbriefes ihr zentrales Thema im Symbolismus von Sinai und Zion in Hebräer 12,18-24 finden. Der Autor behauptet, dass die alttestamentlichen Zitate, die rhetorischen Merkmale und die Struktur des Hebräerbriefes sich alle dem Sinai/Zion Gegensatz verdanken. Der Hebräerbrief sei kein Ausdruck von Platonismus oder Gnostizismus, sondern habe seinen Hintergrund in jüdischen Reflektionen über Zion und in apokalyptischen Hoffnungen auf Wiederherstellung.

RÉSUMÉ

L'auteur tente de montrer que la théologie et l'herméneutique de l'épître aux Hébreux ont pour thème central le symbolisme du Sinaï et de Sion exposé au chapitre 12 (v. 18-24). Il soutient la thèse que les citations de l'Ancien Testament, les procédés rhétoriques, la structure de l'épître découlent du contraste entre le Sinaï et Sion. La teneur de l'épître n'est donc ni platonique, ni gnostique, mais elle a ses racines dans les réflexions du judaïsme sur Sion et dans l'espérance de restauration nourrie par l'apocalyptique.

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In his opening chapter Son examines the use of the Old Testament in Hebrews, the background of Hebrews, and the central theme and structure Hebrews. For Son, the hermeneutics of the author of Hebrews can only be evaluated (and thus potentially replicated) if one has already identified the theological presuppositions which make his exegesis appropriate. Rather than posit the background of Hebrews in any single direction (e.g. Philo, Platonism, Gnosticism, etc), Son argues that Hebrews should be set against the backdrop of the socio-history of the first century context since no single source/influence can adequately describe the whole framework of the epistle. He regards Hebrews as a multi-themed letter whose coherence is grasped through a text-linguistic approach that illuminates the single task of the letter.

Chapter two gives a historical survey of the Sinai and Zion symbolism of Hebrews. Son overviews the Sinai

symbolism against its background in Israelite religion and surveys Zion symbolism against its background in the OT, Judaism, and the NT. He concludes that Zion evokes a cluster of symbols that expresses the religious and political ideology of Israel and their relationship with Yahweh in the world. Sinai on the other hand was symbolic of Israel's disobedience and the judgment they were to receive if they disobeyed the law. Son notes the rise of a tradition that attributed a transcendent quality to Zion over Sinai which was frequently described in spatial terms as a contrast between heaven and earth. In Hebrews the Zion symbolism serves to show the superior nature of Jesus Christ over various institutions and figures from the OT.

In chapter three Son attempts to demonstrate the relationship of the Sinai and Zion symbolism to the themes, background, and hermeneutics of the letter. It is Son's contention that the Sinai/Zion symbolism can be related to the structure and rhetoric of Hebrews, most of the theological subjects can be derived from this Sinai/Zion symbolism, and the background of Hebrews lies not in platonic metaphysics but in apocalyptic traditions concerning the restoration of Zion.

The contents of chapter four centers upon "The Son as the King of Zion is Superior to the Angels of the Sinai Revelation". Son investigates why the Son has to be superior to the angels and how the author of the letter proves that it is so. The mention of angels according to Son is not related to angel worship but to their role as mediators of the Sinai revelation. Jesus is superior to them just as he is superior to other Sinai figures like Moses, Aaron, the old covenant, the instituted sacrifices, and the tabernacle. Jesus' superiority to the angels is established by a christological interpretation of several royal Psalms as the King of the heavenly Zion.

Son focuses on "The Superiority of Jesus to Moses in Hebrews 3:1-4:13" in chapter five. The Sinai theme is reflected here more strongly than any elsewhere in the letter, as Jesus emerges as the figure who leads the Christian community into their heavenly Sabbath-rest. In Son's view, the Sinai/Zion contrast underpins the contrast of Jesus and Moses and the concept of rest. Much the same continues in chapter six "Zion and the High Priesthood of Jesus (Heb. 4:14-7:28) where Son argues that Jesus' priesthood is according to the pattern of Melchizedek and anchored in a Zion/Sinai contrast over and against the Levitical priesthood.

The final segment, chapter seven, looks at "Zion and the Temple Symbolism in Hebrews". Son argues that the background to Jesus as the priest/king and the superior nature of the heavenly temple is to be found in Ps. 110:1 and Jer. 31:31-34. Zion is the essential locus of both the Son's exaltation to the heavenly sanctuary and the eschatological restoration of the new covenant. This enables the author of the epistle to provide assurance to his readers based on the superior nature of the Christian faith (Heb. 9:24-25) and also to encourage/warn his readers to remain faithful until Christ appears again (Heb. 9:27-28).

In the conclusion, Son summarizes his findings as: (1) Sinai and Zion are theological symbols that embrace all the theological subjects discussed in the epistle especially in terms of explicating the person and ministry of Jesus, the high priesthood, the new covenant and the new temple. (2) Sinai and Zion are invested with cosmological and eschatological symbolism. Jesus has entered the heavenly sanctuary and there is no going back to the old order of things. Thus, believers must complete their journey until they enter their final "rest". (3) The Sinai and Zion imagery possesses rhetorical implications as it shows the superiority of Zion over Sinai. Sinai is earthly whereas Zion is heavenly and the ministry of Zion is qualitatively superior to that of Sinai.

This is a well-written thesis that makes a significant contribution to the background of Hebrews. Some elements of the Zion/Sinai typology that Son posits throughout the epistle are stronger than others (e.g. importation of the Sinai theme in Hebrews 1-2 via the role of angels as mediators of the Sinai revelation is considerably weaker than his exposition of the contrast between Jesus and Moses in Hebrews 3-4). I also think that the platonic philosophical background, while often over-emphasized in scholarship, probably has a lot more mileage in it than what Son allows. Nonetheless, Son successfully moves the debate about the background, hermeneutics, and theological framework of Hebrews forward. Moreover, he shows through careful exegesis that *Jesus is better*.

Michael F. Bird, Dingwall, Scotland

Faith: A Practical Theological Reconstruction

F. Gerrit Immink

Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003, 301pp., pb/\$32.00

IBN: 0-8028-2793-4

SUMMARY

Utrecht Professor F. Gerrit Immink's book evidences a wide-ranging familiarity with the many strands of Anglo-American and German practical theology while being grounded in the classic Christian tradition of Reformed doctrinal theology. The focus of this book is on faith as a practice, and Immink develops this idea as a methodological background for the various empirical and practical sub-disciplines that make up practical theology. This is a doctrinally if not materially rich account of a discipline that in English treatments is most often marked by the opposite priority.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Das Buch des Utrechter Professors F. Gerrit Immink zeigt eine weitreichende Vertrautheit mit den vielen Strängen anglo-amerikanischer und deutscher praktischer Theologie und ist gleichzeitig in der klassischen christlichen Tradition der reformierten dogmatischen Theologie verwurzelt. Das Augenmerk dieses Buches liegt auf dem Glauben als einer Sache der Praxis, und Immink diese Vorstellung als

methodischen Hintergrund für die verschiedenen empirischen und praktischen Gebiete, aus denen die praktische Theologie besteht. Das Buch ist eine dogmatisch, wenn auch nicht material reiche Darstellung eines theologischen Gebietes, das in englischen Abhandlungen oft mit den entgegen gesetzten Prioritäten dargestellt wird.

RÉSUMÉ

F. Gerrit Immink, professeur à Utrecht, fait preuve dans ce livre d'une connaissance étendue des nombreuses tendances de la théologie pratique anglo-saxonne et allemande, tout en étant lui-même bien enraciné dans la tradition classique de la dogmatique réformée. Il s'intéresse ici au thème de la pratique de la foi et le développe pour en faire le socle des diverses branches empiriques et pratiques de la théologie pratique. Il aborde ainsi sa discipline sous un angle doctrinal riche alors que celle-ci est le plus souvent traitée dans le monde anglophone avec la priorité opposée.

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The Dutch have always played a bridging role in European culture, and happily their strong Reformed heritage and their proximity to German theology has become all the more accessible with their recent shift to writing in English. Utrecht Professor F. Gerrit Immink's book evidences a wide-ranging familiarity with the many strands of Anglo-American and German practical theology while being grounded in the classic Christian tradition of Reformed doctrinal theology. If nothing else, we can be thankful for this introduction that discussion in English, and to many modern (and untranslated) Dutch works in practical theology.

The book's first part lays out a theological account of faith that begins with God's prior act, but insists that human faith is an act imbedded in the human mind and social activity. Faith is *human* and must be *formed*, but Immink's Reformed reservations about ritualistic and institutional elements of the church turns his attention away from currently popular approaches in which point the church's worship is the main location of this formation by the Spirit. He makes the suggestive allusion that this happens in the church's diaconal ministry in the world, in which the church learns lessons that it may, in turn, bring to the task of reforming its intuitional structures.

The book's second part deploys the traditional Reformed concepts of justification and sanctification to clarify how God works to reform human lives in the activity of faith. This discussion ends with an illuminating comparison of Reformed and Puritan-Methodist accounts of sanctification and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Whereas the Puritan-Methodist strand of evangelical theology deploys definitions of sanctification which emphasise the concepts of development and growth, and so assume a receding prominence of sin in the life of believers, the Reformed work from concepts of restraint and discipline to yield a picture of sanctifica-

tion as a continual struggle with broken sinfulness.

Part three follows up the individual and internal emphasis of part two with a turn to the intersubjective, communal and institutional dimension of faith. Here Immink emphasizes the interrelation of speech and conversation with social structures. His Reformed account of this connection is laid out via a sustained and informative engagement with the practical theologies of Schleiermacher and Van der Ven.

A final section compares the "revelation model" of practical theology of Barth and Thurneysen, in which priority is assigned to preaching and witness, with the "anthropocentric model" of Tillich, Kaufman, and Buttrick, with its emphasis on pastoral care and therapeutic psychology. He concludes that the two approaches must be wed in a manner that illumines the daily life of every believer. "Both our involvement in everyday life and our relationship with God and his salvation present themselves in the human mind. I believe that it is theologically incorrect to deny the presence of God in our consciousness; but it is of crucial importance to underscore the intersubjective character of that presence" (285). This conclusion comes after a plea for the discussion of foundations in practical theology that draws on the work of Alvin Plantinga to defend the claim that our concepts of language, reality and our theological beliefs cannot be pulled apart and will deeply influence any analysis of praxis in practical theology.

While appreciative that Immink has pulled the main strands of thinking in practical theology into contact with important Christian doctrines, his remains yet another book on method in practical theology. It occasionally has the feel of a scholastic analysis of theological concepts (exacerbated by recourse to the philosophical distinctions of Plantinga and Wolterstorff), rather than drawing attention to how these concepts might illumine the variegated life of faith. The closing application of his concept of faith to the practices of preaching and pastoral care covers a mere nine pages, and his most interesting practical suggestion, that Christians are formed not in liturgy but in diaconal care, is confined to passing comments on a single page. Nevertheless, his is a salutary reminder that practical theology, with all its interest in the dynamics of human life, can only be about following an active God.

Brian Brock, Aberdeen, Scotland

The Person of Christ

Stephen R. Holmes and Murray A. Rae
[Editors]

London/New York: T & T Clark, 2005, 205pp,
£57.00, hb, ISBN 0567030245

SUMMARY

The Person of Christ is a collection of conference essays originally presented at the Research Institute in Systematic

Theology at King's College, London. The ten contributors (Murray Rae, John Webster, Richard Burridge, Robert Jenson, Stephen Holmes, Douglas Farrow, Brian Horne, Douglas Knight, Sandra Fach, and Christoph Schwöbel) all share a commitment to the orthodox theological tradition in Christology as expressed in the creedal heritage of the Christian church and together attempt to explore the ongoing coherence and importance of that theological tradition. Topics discussed include New Testament Christology, Christ in the Trinity, the baptism of Christ, the person and nature of Christ, the ascended Christ, and the reconciling work of Christ. In contrast to the impenetrable prose that unfortunately characterizes far too much theological writing, those who appreciate the clarity and succinctness often found in the best conference papers will not be disappointed here.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

The Person of Christ ist eine Sammlung von Essays einer Konferenz, die ursprünglich am Research Institute in Systematic Theology am King's College, London, präsentiert wurden. Alle zehn Referenten (Murray Rae, John Webster, Richard Burridge, Robert Jenson, Stephen Holmes, Douglas Farrow, Brian Horne, Douglas Knight, Sandra Fach und Christoph Schwöbel) sind der orthodoxen christlichen Tradition der Christologie verbunden, wie sie im Erbe der Bekenntnisse der Kirche ausgedrückt ist. Gemeinsam versuchen sie, die bleibende Kohärenz und Wichtigkeit dieser theologischen Tradition zu untersuchen. Die diskutierten Themen beinhalten: Neutestamentliche Christologie, Christus in der Trinität, die Taufe Christi, die Person und das Wesen Christi, der aufgefahrene Christus und das Versöhnungswerk Christi. Im Gegensatz zu der unzugänglichen Prosa, die leider zu viele theologische Erzeugnisse charakterisiert, werden hier diejenigen Leser nicht enttäuscht, die die Klarheit und Knappheit schätzen, die oft in hervorragenden Konferenzbeiträgen zu finden ist.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage consacré à la christologie reprend les exposés donnés à la conférence de l'Institut pour la Recherche en Théologie Systématique, au King's College de Londres. Les dix auteurs (Murray Rae, John Webster, Richard Burridge, Robert Jenson, Stephen Holmes, Douglas Farrow, Brian Horne, Douglas Knight, Sandra Fach et Christoph Schwöbel) souscrivent tous à la tradition christologique orthodoxe telle qu'elle a été exprimée dans les confessions de foi de l'Église chrétienne et s'efforcent de mettre en lumière la cohérence et l'importance actuelle de cette tradition. La christologie du Nouveau Testament, Christ dans la Trinité, le baptême de Christ, la personne de Christ, Christ siégeant à la droite du Père, et l'œuvre de réconciliation de Christ figurent parmi les sujets abordés. Alors que beaucoup d'écrits théologiques se caractérisent par une prose impénétrable, ces textes manifestent une clarté et une concision appréciables.

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The Person of Christ is a collection of essays originally presented at the Research Institute in Systematic Theol-

ogy at King's College, London. Topics discussed include New Testament Christology, Christ in the Trinity, the baptism of Christ, the person and nature of Christ, the ascended Christ, and the reconciling work of Christ.

The book opens with an introduction by Murray Rae who observes that theology finds its starting point not with a set of supposedly self-evident philosophical assumptions – both an ancient and modern tendency – but with “attentiveness” before the Word (p. 2). This sets the tone for the essays to follow. Each contributor attends to the words of God, Scripture and tradition in the hope of re-shaping a testimony, a retelling, of the story of Christ's person and nature for our time. Toward this goal, the book succeeds. All contributors pick up central themes of Christological doctrine and explicate them in ways that are faithful, *attentive*, to the orthodox theological tradition in Christology. Robert Jenson and Stephen Holmes' essays on the *Communicatio Idiomatum* are excellent as are those by Murray Rae and Douglas Knight on the Baptism and Confession of Christ respectively. As in any edited volume, certain essays stand out as particularly representative examples of the overall intent and this is no exception: those of John Webster and Sandra Fach.

Webster's essay, “Prolegomena to Christology: Four Theses” deals not specifically with the person or nature of Christ as the object of Christological inquiry, but with the one who is the self-giving *subject* of Christology, Jesus Christ. Webster contends for the primacy of the one who reveals himself – the self giving Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is known, and the parameters of that knowing are determined not by the knower, but by virtue of Christ's own self-giving. Thus, Christology's knowing is a humble and reverent knowing, a knowing not determined by the craftiness or creativity of its practitioners but by “virtue of the movement of his being”, by his free self-bestowal. Christology, then, does not “labour towards” Christ but “moves easily and freely” in the light of the reality that Christ has already given himself to be known and created the sphere in which he can be known (p. 28).

The “given-ness” that characterizes the knowledge of Christ leads Webster to several distinctive conclusions. Christ's free self-bestowal means that Christology is both a joyful and reverent science: joyful because it is undertaken in the “sphere of Christ's presence and promise” and reverent for it is the “astonished gratitude” of those who stand amazed at the goodness of the one in whose presence they stand (p. 27). Christology's given-ness leads as well to an affirmation of the Spirit's work of edifying the church through its “orderly explication of the knowledge of Christ” (p. 33), a refreshing emphasis too rarely heard in discussions of Christological method. Finally, Christology's given-ness determines the theological space occupied by the Scriptures as the collection of texts which serves the presence of Jesus Christ by “indicating or bearing testimony” to his address of the church (p. 34). By understanding prolegomena to be determined solely by Christ's own self-giving, Webster

develops an atmosphere in which not *demonstration* but *testimony* finds priority.

Sandra Fach, “The Ascended Christ: Mediation of our Worship”, explores the liturgical development of the early centuries contending that the change from giving “Glory to God through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit” to ascribing “Glory to God *with* the Son, together with the Holy Spirit” led to a loss in recognized mediation and with it an atmosphere of distance between worshippers and God. While maintaining emphasis on the unity of God, the loss of mediation led to God becoming distant and potentially abstract. Hoping to recapture lost intimacy in worship, Fach argues for a renewed theological emphasis on Christ's present and ongoing mediatorial role in heaven as “the one who is God *as a human*” (p. 155). In a way that dovetails well with the overall flavor of “attentiveness” in these essays, Fach's concern here is not only to regain a renewed emphasis on the mediation of Christ, but to guard against abstraction in theology. Fach would have theology attend first to the economic Trinity, for here is found the work of the Lamb who continues to mediate the worship of the saints before the Father.

Despite its steep price tag this is a book worthy of recommendation both for its commitment to attentiveness to the Scriptures and the historical creedal traditions of Christology and for its eagerness to develop what is heard into a coherent retelling for the twenty-first century church. One would hope that T & T Clark will begin making valuable books such as this more accessible.

Kent D. Eilers, Aberdeen, Scotland

***Paul's Understanding of the Church's Mission:
Did the Apostle Paul Expect the Early Christian
Communities to Evangelize?
(Paternoster Biblical Monographs)***

Robert L. Plummer

Bletchley, Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2006, xviii + 190 pp., £24.99, pb, ISBN 978-1-84227-333-3

SUMMARY

Robert Plummer takes up the question of whether or not the apostle Paul encouraged his converts to share the gospel. This topic has previously suffered from superficial answers and specious arguments that have failed to look at all of the evidence in the pauline corpus. For Plummer, Paul's letters demonstrate that he expected both overt gospel proclamation and a more ‘passive’ witness of morality and Christ-likeness. Though this study does not lack depth or occasional insight, the contingent nature of Paul's letters prevent a fully convincing argument to be made for active ‘evangelism’. Nevertheless, Plummer does advance the scholarship on this matter in many areas and engages on a matter of importance for the church.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Robert Plummer widmet sich der Frage, ob der Apostel Paulus seine Konvertiten ermutigte, das Evangelium zu verbreiten, oder nicht. Dieses Thema ist bisher nur oberflächlich behandelt worden; fadenscheinige Argumentationen haben nicht einmal die gesamte Evidenz des Corpus Paulinum berücksichtigt. Laut Plummer zeigen die Paulusbriefe, dass er sowohl eine offene Verkündigung des Evangeliums als auch das eher „passive“ Zeugnis der Moral und Christusähnlichkeit erwartete. Obwohl es dieser Studie nicht an Tiefgang und gewissen Einsichten mangelt, verhindert doch der situationsbezogene Charakter der Paulusbriefe, dass eine überzeugende Argumentation für eine aktive „Evangelisationstätigkeit“ aufgebaut werden kann. Dennoch treibt Plummer die wissenschaftliche Behandlung dieses Themas voran und behandelt eine Angelegenheit, die für die Kirche wichtig ist.

RÉSUMÉ

Robert Plummer traite ici la question de savoir si Paul encourageait ou non ses convertis à communiquer l'Évangile. Ce sujet a reçu par le passé des réponses superficielles ou a été abordé à l'aide d'arguments spécieux, sans examen rigoureux de l'ensemble des données fournies par le corpus paulinien. Aux yeux de Plummer, les lettres de Paul montrent que l'apôtre attendait à la fois des chrétiens qu'ils proclament ouvertement l'Évangile et qu'ils rendent témoignage par leur moralité et leur vie à l'exemple de Christ. Bien que cette étude fasse preuve de profondeur, et à l'occasion de perspicacité, le caractère circonstanciel des lettres de Paul ne permet pas de démontrer de manière pleinement convaincante que Paul attendait de chaque chrétien une part active dans l'évangélisation. Le travail de Plummer fait néanmoins à divers égards des avancées dans le traitement académique de cette question importante pour la vie de l'Église.

* * * *

When one thinks of the biblical imperative to expand the Christian mission by relating the gospel to others, Matt. 28.18-20 probably comes to mind: 'Go and make disciples...'. History has shown that this statement was taken seriously by the church throughout the ages. But, Robert Plummer begs an important question: What role did Paul and his letters play in prompting the earliest churches to further the Christian mission in their locales? In this revision of his doctoral thesis at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Plummer argues that significant evidence can be culled from the Apostle's epistles to affirm that Paul did, in fact, encourage his churches to evangelize.

His first chapter, essentially reviewing the history of scholarship on this matter, is divided into two main categories: one focusing on scholars who have affirmed that some continuity existed between the apostle's evangelistic endeavours and his churches, and the other on scholars who argue for discontinuity. He concludes this treatment with a concern that previous studies have

lacked an exclusive focus on Paul that is both methodologically consistent and exegetically rigorous. It is apparent from his summary of the latest research that Plummer is significantly influenced by the work of Peter O'Brien, though he expects to offer a more extensive analysis of Paul. On the other side of the spectrum, Plummer sets up W.P. Bowers as a debating partner. Bowers, both scholar and missionary, argues that there is no evidence that Paul actively promoted outward-focused evangelism as an activity for his churches to participate in. In some ways, Plummer's thesis is aimed at refuting Bowers' proposal.

Plummer establishes, in his second chapter, the theological link between the apostolic mission and that of the Christian communities that accepted the Gospel. Previous arguments, such as the influence of the Great Commission, are correctly presented as improbable sources for Paul's thinking on this matter. Rather, Plummer finds the solution within the Gospel itself – it is a '*powerful, effective, and dynamic force*' (51) that 'propelled both [Paul] (as an apostle) and the churches (as gospel-created and gospel empowered entities) into the further spread of God's word' (67). The origin of this concept is traced back to the understanding of the 'word of the Lord' in the Old Testament.

If Paul *did* expect his churches to 'evangelize', then it stands to reason that he made it a didactic priority. Plummer's third chapter is occupied with gathering the evidence for arguing that he taught his converts to share the Gospel. Two topics are treated: (1) Paul's commands to witness *actively* (looking especially at Philippians, Ephesians and 1 Corinthians), and (2) Paul's commands to witness *passively* (especially the Pastoral epistles). Plummer concludes that both of these elements are present.

In his final chapter, Plummer surveys 'incidental' evidence for Paul's expectation of evangelism for his churches. In particular, he turns his attention to the testimony of miracles, and also of 'suffering' which imitates both the apostles and Christ himself and demonstrates a continuity of sharing in the natural result of living out and proclaiming a message that provokes hostility. A brief conclusion follows which is a précis of his various arguments and also includes a discussion of the implications of his investigation.

Plummer's study has much to commend itself. He has chosen a topic that has suffered from misdirected and superficial interest. He has correctly identified a number of issues that demand deeper exploration. However, his overall goal of proving that Paul taught his churches to evangelize is blunted by a number of factors. First, though he admits this limitation, one cannot help but wonder if we can really assess this matter from Paul's very context-laden contingent letters that deal primarily with pastoral problems. Second, he confirms quite easily the *passive* expectation of witnessing, but struggles to make a compelling argument for the *active* elements. What he labels 'commands' from Paul are not really imperatives, and many are interpretatively ambiguous. Third,

one wonders if the terms 'mission' and 'evangelism' are not a bit anachronistic and deserving of more nuance and explanation vis-à-vis their socio-historical context. In fact, Plummer nowhere expounds upon his definition of 'the gospel' – perhaps a seemingly innocuous issue, but understanding the content of the message is critical to determining its heralds.

This work will be of interest to pastors and theology students who are seeking an in-depth investigation of the church's role in the world from the Apostle Paul's perspective. Though we have little information in the pauline corpus, Plummer offers a detailed analysis of several strands of Paul's thinking that focuses on this neglected area of importance for the church.

Nijay K. Gupta, Durham, England

The Earliest Christian Artifacts Manuscripts and Christian origins

Larry W. Hurtado

Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006, xiv + 248 pp.,

\$22.00, pb, ISBN 0-8028-2895-7

SUMMARY

Hurtado discusses the form of the oldest manuscripts of the Christian Scriptures, in particular the transition from roll to codex and the so-called *nomina sacra* abbreviations. This interesting book is full of data and will increase our respect for the transmission of the Scriptures.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Hurtado diskutiert die Form der ältesten Handschriften der christlichen Schrift, insbesondere den Übergang von der Schriftrolle zum Kodex und den so genannten *nomina sacra* Abkürzungen. Dieses interessante Buch ist eine große Datensammlung und wird unseren Respekt vor der Überlieferung der Schrift erhöhen.

RÉSUMÉ

Hurtado étudie la forme des plus anciens manuscrits du Nouveau Testament. Il s'intéresse en particulier à la transition du rouleau au codex et aux abréviations des noms sacrés. Cet ouvrage intéressant fourmille d'informations et invite au respect pour la transmission des Écritures.

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This is a book about biblical manuscripts but not about textual criticism. Instead Hurtado, professor of NT at Edinburgh University, looks at the physical characteristics of the earliest Christian manuscripts. The result is an attractive presentation that will even appeal to those who find textual criticism too technical or just boring. Hurtado argues convincingly that we can learn more from manuscripts than which text-form they represent. He shows for example how a single fragmentary sheet of a codex enables scholars calculate the size of the entire codex from which it came.

In the first chapter the author introduces us to the large number of preserved Christian manuscripts which date from the second and third centuries. For example, there are 18 fragments which contain fragments of the Psalms (LXX), 16 of John's Gospel, 12 of Matthew, 11 of the Shepherd of Hermas and just 1 of Mark. Not all books of the OT and the later NT are represented in what survives from this earliest period. Although the vast majority of the manuscripts stem from Egypt, Hurtado presumes that the situation in that country is representative for early Christianity in general. Writings that were later declared apocryphal are far less represented than books of the later NT. There are very early indications that Paul's epistles and the Gospels were copied together into one codex, and from around the year 300 there is a fragment which points to a collection of all Johannine writings (Gospel, Revelation and Letters) in one codex. This is physical evidence for the formation of a kind of canon.

The second chapter focuses on the Christian adoption of the codex over against the roll, which also happened very early on. As our sources do not discuss the reasons for this transition, it is left to later scholars to make out why it happened. Although certainty in this regard cannot (yet) be achieved, Hurtado argues that practical advantages cannot have been the only reason. Anyway, the codex should be seen as an expression of a Christian "material culture". They never used a new roll for any NT text, although they did recycle old rolls. The fact that two of the three preserved fragments of the Gospel of Thomas are on rolls would suggest that "Thomas" was not regarded as Scripture.

Chapter 3 deals with the *nomina sacra*, that is the habit of abbreviating words such as God, Jesus, Lord and Christ. This appears to be a typically Christian convention, not copied from the Jews although possibly inspired by their reverent approach to the divine Name. Hurtado argues that the phenomenon of the *nomina sacra* is not a device to save space but rather an expression of faith. It testifies to the early worship of Jesus as God. Chapter 4 discusses the stauogram, an early combination of the Greek letters tau and rho which was used in many manuscripts to abbreviate the words for cross (*stauros*) and crucify, and which looks like a person on a cross. Hurtado regards it as the earliest visual representation of the crucifixion, far older than any other such picture. The fifth and final chapter deals with various other subjects such as the size of codices, margins, lines per page, reader aids such as spaces, and corrections. It is interesting that Christian codices are generally smaller than non-Christian ones.

For me as an Evangelical scholar the book gave ample evidence of the care the early copyists took in passing the sacred texts on. Although we do not have the autographs, the transmission and reliability of the New Testament text are nothing short of impressive. The book is well-written, illustrated with graphs and photos, and it has the usual indexes. It deserves a place next to Alan

Millard's *Reading and writing in the time of Jesus* (Sheffield Academic Press, 2000) and Harry Gamble's *Book and readers in the early church* (Yale University Press, 1995). Knowledge of Greek is useful to appreciate the contents but not essential. Those who have read Hurtado's scholarly articles on the subject will not find many new elements here.

Pieter J. Lalleman, London, England

*The Thirteenth Apostle:
What the Gospel of Judas Really Says*

April D. DeConick

London: Continuum, 2007, xxi + 202 pp., £16.99,
hb, ISBN 978-0-8264-9964-6

SUMMARY

In April 2006, the National Geographic (NG) Society published a transcription and a translation of the gospel of Judas and featured a televised documentary which portrayed Judas as the closest of Jesus' disciples. In her most recent monograph, April DeConick acts as a spokeswoman for a group of scholars arguing that this new gospel does not rehabilitate Judas, but rather understands him within a Sethian gnostic context as a demon. Her reassessment is based upon six corrections to the original NG translation.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Im April 2006 veröffentlichte die National Geographic (NG) Society eine Abschrift und Übersetzung des Judasevangeliums und sendete einen Dokumentarfilm im Fernsehen, in dem Judas als der Jünger dargestellt wurde, der Jesus am nächsten stand. In ihrer neuesten Monographie spricht April DeConick für eine Gruppe von Gelehrten, die argumentieren, dieses neue Evangelium sei keine Rehabilitierung des Judas, sondern es verstehe Judas innerhalb einer sethianischen Gnosis als eine Dämon. Ihre Neubewertung basiert auf sechs Korrekturen an der ursprünglichen NG-Übersetzung.

RÉSUMÉ

En avril 2006, la Société Nationale de Géographie (britannique) a publié une transcription et une traduction de l'évangile de Judas, et a présenté un documentaire télévisé qui faisait de Judas le disciple de Jésus le plus proche du Maître. Dans cette récente monographie, April DeConick se fait la porte-parole d'un groupe de spécialistes soutenant la thèse que ce nouvel évangile, loin de réhabiliter Judas, le présente comme un démon en le situant dans un contexte gnostique. Cette interprétation se fonde sur six corrections apportées à la traduction initiale de la SNG.

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One can categorize DeConick's corrections into three groups. Although she cites semantics and grammar in each case, other factors play a significant role. Two of her corrections deal with lexical semantics (44:21, 46:17-

18), three deal primarily with context (46:5-7, 56:18-19, 56:23), and one deals with an emendation of the Coptic text (46:25).

In the two cases dealing strictly with lexical semantics, DeConick argues convincingly that the NG translators forced the translation to produce a beneficent Judas. Her next three corrections derive largely from context and not grammar. If the extensive lacunae around these three passages were to be restored, the discussion might be renewed. DeConick's analysis of the second passage from this group could be enhanced; in 46:5-7, she correctly cites the particle ω as emphatic, but she translates and references it in a footnote as an interjection (pp. 53, 187 en. 29). Likewise, DeConick's gloss could be improved here by reassessing her uses (1) of the Greek loan word $\gamma\eta\eta\tau\alpha\kappa\kappa\epsilon$ and (2) of the difference between transitive/intransitive and active/passive (pp. 79, 188 en. 9). This passage should read "Master, never does my (emphatic) seed submit to the archons!" Whereas the NG team interpreted this statement by Judas as a question, DeConick correctly renders it as an exclamation. The decision is one that derives more from context than from grammar, however.

One of DeConick's corrections concerns an emendation in the Coptic transcription. Unfortunately, the NG non-disclosure policy forced DeConick to rely on second-hand information in 46:25, where the emendation involves an entire word-phrase rather than one letter as she states (p. 54). The problem is not a supplied <N> as DeConick supposes, but is the correction of the original noun phrase which followed the <N> to a wholly different verbal phrase (<N> $\eta\eta\kappa\kappa\tau\eta$ → $\eta\eta\kappa\kappa\omega\kappa$). DeConick's thesis, however, is firmly supported by the reinterpretation of the phrase "will curse" as "to you and" in this passage, but this is only secondarily related to the text critical/paleographic reconstruction termed "a terrible mistake" (ibid.).

DeConick's most compelling argument for her reassessment of the gospel of Judas does not rest in these revisions to the NG translation. Her Sethian gnostic reading is far more natural than NG team's translation which appears to have been influenced by the patristic descriptions of the gospel of Judas. In particular, she maintains that the appellation "O Thirteenth Demon" (pp. 77, 109-124, 44:21) is an immediate association with the Demiurge, the evil God of the Old Testament. Ironically, the demon Judas understands Jesus better than his disciples – parallel to the demons in Mark's gospel (pp. 103-108). In this manner, the gospel of Judas parodies the "Apostolic" gospels, and argues for a Sethian gnostic worldview (ch. 8).

In the main text of the book, DeConick is generally conservative in her criticism of the NG project, but she is less sympathetic in "Appendix 4: Q&A with April DeConick." She describes the NG team's monopoly of the document as having "robbed the academic community of the opportunity to freely discuss this Gospel..." (p. 181) and as "at the expense of our field... in terms of

our reputation as professors and scholars.” This criticism is now known at the popular level through an editorial in the *New York Times* (1 Dec 2007) and at the scholarly level through her *SBL Forum* article ‘More on the Gospel Truth’ in which she notes another significant text critical emendation in 35:26 (article ID 743).

DeConick asserts (pp. 148-154) that the post-Holocaust media has habitually rehabilitated Judas, and that the NG interpretation derived and benefited from this guilt (pp. 180-181). I believe that the post-Holocaust guilt motive was far less influential on the original NG reconstruction than the accounts of the gospel of Judas in the Church fathers which DeConick provides in Appendix 3 (pp. 174-177). I also wonder to what degree the gospel of Judas encouraged the early church (e.g., Origen) to perfect the ransom theory of the atonement (p. 182) as this theological stance already seems mature in the earliest Christian texts (e.g., Mark 10:45, Rom 3:24, Col 1:13, 1 Tim 2:5-6).

This monograph will no doubt continue to play a central and positive role in redefining the consensus on the gospel of Judas and on the ethics of scholarship. Future editions will iron out the wrinkles mentioned above and incorporate recent and future findings related to the topic. DeConick has succeeded in presenting a scholarly argument in a form also accessible to a popular audience. Both audiences will appreciate the appendices which summarize and comment on related literature topics (scholarly, gnostic, patristic, and popular), and many will also find the online discussion questions helpful.

Christian Askeland, Cambridge, England

***The Significance of Salvation:
A Study of Salvation Language in the Pastoral
Epistles
(Paternoster Biblical Monographs)
George M. Wieland***

Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2006, xxii + 344 pp.,
£24.99, pb, ISBN 1-84227-257-8

SUMMARY

George Wieland provides an excellent exegetical study of salvation language in the Pastoral Epistles. Because of the contingent nature of the letters, he analyses each letter separately in order to see the distinctive expression of soteriological concepts within the continuities between the letters. Wieland rightfully recognises how the Pastoral Epistles present a balanced soteriology with a focus not only on this world but also on a strong eschatological hope.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

George Wieland bietet eine exzellente exegetische Studie zur Sprache der Erlösung in den Pastoralbriefen. Aufgrund der situationsbezogenen Art der Briefe analysiert er jeden

Brief separat, um die besonderen Ausformungen der soteriologischen Konzepte innerhalb der kontinuierlichen Linien zwischen den Briefen zu erkennen. Wieland bemerkt richtig, auf welche Weise die Pastoralbriefe eine ausgewogene Soteriologie präsentieren und nicht nur die Betonung auf diese Welt legen, sondern auch eine starke eschatologische Hoffnung enthalten.

RÉSUMÉ

Cette étude exégétique de la terminologie du salut dans les épîtres pastorales par George Wieland est excellente. Par respect du caractère circonstanciel de ces lettres, il analyse chacune d'elles séparément dans le but de mettre en lumière les diverses expressions de concepts soteriologiques dans le cadre de la continuité entre les lettres. Il fait ressortir à juste titre que ces épîtres contiennent une soteriologie équilibrée qui tient compte à la fois de la vie en ce monde et d'une forte espérance eschatologique.

* * * *

George Wieland, a lecturer at Carey Baptist College in Auckland, New Zealand, provides an excellent study in the often-neglected Pastoral Epistles (hereafter PE). In particular, he analyses each passage within 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy and Titus that contains salvation language (i.e., sw|zw, swth/r, swthri/a, swth/rion). The book is divided into five parts – an introduction, an exegetical analysis of the three letters, and conclusions.

As the fruit of his PhD studies at University of Aberdeen supervised by I. Howard Marshall, this monograph is targeted squarely at the academic community, with its close attention to exegetical detail in the Greek text without losing sight of larger issues. At the end of each letter's analysis he provides a summary of key soteriological issues: the benefits of salvation, God and Christ in relation to salvation, Paul and salvation, and those who are saved. Ultimately, Wieland argues the three letters share a common view of salvation with past, present, and future aspects: God provides eternal life through Christ to those who believe in the true message of Christ and remain faithful to him in the midst of difficulty, and this is consummated at the return of Christ (cf. p. 265).

Wieland notes the regular dependence of previous studies upon prior assumptions that led them to privilege 'certain strands of evidence over others' (p. 11). Accordingly, he seeks to evaluate these letters on their own terms with a focus upon internal evidence. Wieland argues that '...the three PE present exhibit aspects of a common soteriological perspective. There are also, however, particular features that give each letter its own distinctive profile in terms of its presentation of salvation' (p. 244). As a result, 'an appreciation of the viewpoint of each in this regard is more satisfactorily achieved by evaluating their uses of the vocabulary separately rather than by attempting a synthesis of all three, and reading back the results of that synthesis into the usage of each letter' (p. 246). He finds especially distinctive, though not contradictory, emphases with regard to swth/r, epi-

fancia/, epifai/nw, and euse/beia language based on the contingent nature of each letter.

Wieland notes several implications of his study. In particular, his study adds more evidence against Dibelius-Conzelmann's *christliche Bürgerlichkeit* (or 'Christian Citizenship') view. The PE are not only concerned with present moral life and the institutionalisation of the church, but they also contain a fully already/not yet eschatology, whose soteriology is based consummatively in the future. Wieland also argues that the cult and the power of cultic leaders do not play the central role that Donelson has asserted and that the PE do not present a 'Paulology' as Läger maintains. Finally, Wieland contends that the salvation language shows particular affinity to the Pauline already/not yet schema and that when analysed individually, the PE are not as theologically distinct from the *Hauptbriefe* as is often asserted.

Understanding the three letters as written within the larger context of Hellenistic Judaism, Wieland asserts that the PE present a salvation historical theology of God and salvation based on the OT. However, the author also has 'a concern to translate aspects of the Christian faith that had their origin with Judaism into terms intelligible to a Hellenistic thought world' (p. 234). This 'translation' is most evident in Titus. With this strong emphasis on the salvation historical basis of the PE theology, Wieland only briefly mentions the potential relation of soteriological language to the Imperial cult (p. 22). Later, when discussing Titus 3.1-8 Wieland writes: 'Even if the title swth/r may have invited comparison with other Graeco-Roman benefactors, however, the content of the saving in vv. 5-7 is distinctive, drawn from the religious traditions of Judaism and early Christianity' (p. 220). I agree with his analysis but the prevalence of the Imperial cult debate in current studies invites a more extended discussion to justify his position, especially since soteriological language plays a central role in the debate. In addition, a central presupposition as this could lead Wieland to fall into the same problem of privileging 'certain strands of evidence over others,' of which he accuses others (p. 11).

Overall, his study achieves a good balance between larger issues (such as human agency and universalism) and exegetical detail. Though his summaries are helpful, his exegesis of specific passages provide a resource for specific insights. In addition, his focus upon the contingent nature of the three letters helps the reader to see distinctive aspects within these letters while also showing their overall agreement on key soteriological points. One cannot be too dogmatic about distinctives with a relatively small sample size within three contingent letters, but Wieland strikes a careful balance between noting continuities and discontinuities.

Benjamin C. Blackwell, Durham, England

Stricken by God?

Nonviolent Identification and the Victory of Christ

Brad Jersak and Michael Hardin, eds.

Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2007,
527pp., £17.95, pb, ISBN 978-0-8028-6287-7

SUMMARY

In recent years, a wave of publications has appeared on the relationship between violence and the doctrine of atonement. *Stricken by God?*, edited by Brad Jersak and Michael Hardin, is a wide-ranging contribution to the ongoing discussions similar to Maret Trelstad's *Cross Examinations* (Fortress, 2006). The twenty collected essays are categorized under six subheadings related to the significance of the cross event: the historical Jesus, sacrifice, forgiveness, justice, nonviolent victory, rebirth and deification. By drawing together a diverse array of contributors the issues and questions orbiting around nonviolent atonement are explored from various angles, perspectives, and traditions with a panorama of alternative outlooks offered to the penal substitution theory. Though readers will not find an entirely unified formulation of nonviolent atonement, some common threads are found running throughout: bountiful use of Girardian mimetic theory, reappropriation of Irenaeus' recapitulation model, and frequent appraisal and critique of Hans Boersma's *Violence, Hospitality, and the Cross* (Eerdmans, 2004) which often stands in for sacrificial ideology in general.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die letzten Jahre haben eine Welle von Veröffentlichungen zur Beziehung zwischen Gewalt und der Lehre von der Sühne gesehen. *Stricken by God?*, herausgegeben von Brad Jersak und Michael Hardin, ist ein umfassender Beitrag zur laufenden Diskussion, vergleichbar mit Maret Trelstads *Cross Examinations* (Fortress, 2006). Die 20 Essays werden unter sechs Kategorien eingeordnet, die sich auf die Bedeutung des Kreuzesereignisses beziehen: der historische Jesus, Opfer, Vergebung, Gerechtigkeit, gewaltloser Sieg, Neugeburt und Vergöttlichung. Durch die Beiträge einer großen Bandbreite an Autoren werden die Fragen um die gewaltlose Sühne aus unterschiedlichen Blickwinkeln, Perspektiven und Traditionen untersucht und ein Panorama alternativer Ansätze zur Theorie der stellvertretenden Sühne angeboten. Auch wenn die Leser keine ganz einheitliche Formulierung der gewaltlosen Sühne finden, gibt es doch einige gemeinsame Stränge, die sich durch die Beiträge ziehen: es wird großzügig von der mimetischen Theorie René Girards Gebrauch gemacht, das Rekapitulationsmodell des Irenäus findet neu Verwendung und Hans Boersmas *Violence, Hospitality, and the Cross* (Eerdmans, 2004) wird mehrfach gepriesen und auch kritisiert, ein Buch, das oft für eine allgemeine Opferideologie einsteht.

RÉSUMÉ

Ces dernières années, bien des publications consacrées à la question du rapport entre la violence et la doctrine

de l'expiation ont vu le jour. Le présent ouvrage collectif est une contribution au débat en cours abordant un large spectre de sujets. Ses vingt chapitres se répartissent en six thématiques ayant trait à la signification de la croix : le Jésus historique, le sacrifice, le pardon, la justice, la victoire par la non violence, la nouvelle naissance et la déification. Les travaux d'auteurs très divers étant ici rassemblés, les questions qui se posent en rapport avec le sujet d'une expiation non violente sont explorés sous différents angles et perspectives, dans le cadre de traditions diverses, et un panorama d'options autres que la théorie de la substitution pénale est offert. On ne trouvera pas dans ce livre une formulation totalement unifiée de la théorie de l'expiation non violente, mais tout de même certains fils conducteurs communs : un usage abondant de la théorie mimétique de René Girard, une réappropriation du modèle de la récapitulation repris à Irénée, et une fréquente référence critique à l'ouvrage de Hans Boersma qui apparaît souvent comme le représentant de l'idéologie sacrificielle.

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"Atonement is all about violence and how we perceive God's relation to violence" (p. 76).

In recent years, a wave of publications has appeared on the relationship between violence and the doctrine of atonement. *Stricken by God?*, edited by Brad Jersak and Michael Hardin, is a wide-ranging contribution to the ongoing discussions similar to Maret Trelstad's *Cross Examinations* (Fortress, 2006). The contributors include familiar advocates for nonviolent atonement (Mark Baker, J. Denny Weaver, and Anthony Bartlett), reprinted essays from Old and New Testament scholars (James Alison, N.T. Wright, and Marcus Borg), and well-known theologians not typically associated with this discussion (Miroslav Volf and Rowan Williams). The twenty collected essays are categorized under six subheadings related to the significance of the cross event: the historical Jesus, sacrifice, forgiveness, justice, nonviolent victory, rebirth and deification.

By drawing together a diverse array of contributors the issues and questions orbiting nonviolent atonement are explored from various angles, perspectives, and traditions with a panorama of alternative outlooks offered to the penal substitution theory. Though readers will not find an entirely unified formulation of nonviolent atonement, some common threads are found running throughout: bountiful use of Girardian mimetic theory, reappropriation of Irenaeus' recapitulation model, and frequent appraisal and critique of Hans Boersma's *Violence, Hospitality, and the Cross* (Eerdmans, 2004) which often stands in for sacrificial ideology in general.

When approaching a volume of collected essays one hopes it will be characterized more by its outstanding contributions than by its disappointing ones. Thankfully, this certainly is the case here. Some pieces, such as those by Brito Miko and Ronald Dart, while highly creative, appear to do little more than serve the goal of painting a wide panorama of perspectives but do little to further

the argument for nonviolent atonement. Also, instead of putting forth a convincing exegetical argument, Brad Jersak's and E. Robert Ekblad's all-too brief reinterpretations of Isaiah 53:4 only muddy the waters considerably and create further questions.

On the other hand, Michael Hardin's exploration of the hermeneutical presuppositions operative in various atonement theories may be this volume's most valuable contribution. His analysis is particularly beneficial for it teases apart the divergent *a priori* commitments working behind the scenes of competing atonement accounts and their relationship to violence, both divine and human.

Hardin divides the various theories as either "sacrificial" or "nonsacrificial" based on whether or not they read the Scriptures according to René Girard's mimetic theory or interpret them as fully inspired, or "flat" (Hardin's terminology). On his account, the later approach is both blessing and curse. It is blessing for it properly focuses attention on the intersection of Old and New Testaments as the place in which the message of the atonement is revealed. On the other hand, he contends, a hermeneutic such as this is a curse inasmuch as it "locks up a sacrificial rendering of the Biblical text" (p. 62). He argues instead, with mimetic theory, that revelation should be read as progressive in that the biblical tradition is "self-critical literature"; it is constantly "probing meaning" (p. 62). The New Testament doesn't teach a theory of sacrifice, he urges, but tears it down and "gives us a developing anti-sacrificial project" (p. 70).

The issue of God's relationship to violence, then, is determined by the approach taken to the Scriptures. For example, those who approach the Old and New Testament as fully inspired and revelatory in a "flat" sense will often pursue questions related to its redemptive use, specifically by God in the cross but not isolated to this instance only. Hans Boersma's *Violence, Hospitality and the Cross* is just one example of which Hardin is stridently critical. On the other hand, according to mimetic theory, if biblical revelation posits violence and its correlates (substitution, satisfaction, reciprocity) not as a divine but an "anthropological datum", then Jesus' death and resurrection serve a revelatory function; God doesn't use violence redemptively but is in fact anti-violent. Whether or not one consents to Hardin's reading of the Scriptures or finds mimetic theory persuasive, his contention, "How one uses the Bible is a key as to how one will understand atonement" (p. 60), is certainly correct and should be kept at the forefront among participants active in the ongoing discussions about the relationship between violence and the atonement.

Disappointingly, the relationship between divine and human action, an issue that also underlies and influences the theological moves and commitments being made by participants in this discussion, was only scarcely discussed in this collection. As we continue to wrestle with the issues and questions associated with God and his relation to violence, one hopes future work on the doctrine of the atonement will engage vigorously with

the doctrine that has historically sought to articulate this relationship: the doctrine of Providence.

Kent D. Eilers, Aberdeen, Scotland

*Hear, O Lord:
A Spirituality of the Psalms*

David G. Firth

Calver, Derbyshire: Cliff College Publishing, 2005, viii
+ 134 pp., £9.99, pb, ISBN 1-898362-37-8

SUMMARY

In order to understand how the psalms apply to the lives of God's people, one should always remember that they convey particular spirituality. This review highlights the method employed in Firth's book as he examines this spirituality. Adopting Brueggemann's methodology as set forth in *The Message of the Psalms*, Firth investigates how the psalms aid the believer in interpreting life in a fallen world. By additionally emphasising the eschatological nature of the Psalter, he furthers his purpose in the book, which is to help other believers interpret, apply and pray the psalms for themselves.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Will man verstehen, wie die Psalmen auf das Leben des Gottesvolks anzuwenden sind, sollte man sich immer daran erinnern, dass sie eine besondere Spiritualität vermitteln. Diese Rezension widmet sich besonders der Methode, die Firth in seiner Untersuchung dieser Spiritualität anwendet. Unter Benutzung der Methode Brueggemanns aus *The Message of the Psalms* untersucht Firth, wie die Psalmen den Gläubigen anleiten, das Leben in einer gefallen Welt zu interpretieren. Durch die zusätzliche Betonung des eschatologischen Wesens des Psalters unterstützt er die Absicht seines Buches, die darin besteht, anderen Gläubigen zu helfen, die Psalmen selbst zu interpretieren, auf sich anzuwenden und zu beten.

RÉSUMÉ

Pour comprendre comment les Psaumes s'appliquent à la vie du peuple de Dieu, il faut se souvenir qu'ils véhiculent une spiritualité particulière. Cette recension s'intéresse à la méthode employée par Firth pour étudier cette spiritualité. Adoptant la méthodologie exposée par Brueggemann dans son commentaire sur les Psaumes, Firth montre comment les Psaumes aident le croyant à comprendre la vie dans un monde déchu. En soulignant en outre la nature eschatologique du psautier, il aide encore le croyant à interpréter les Psaumes, à se les approprier et à les prier pour lui-même.

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While there are various approaches in psalms studies that add insight to our reading and understanding of the Psalter as religious literature, it must always be remembered that this collection of Hebrew poetry was intended to convey a spiritual message about living as God's people.

The wide range of prayers within the Psalter (intentionally) reflects the holistic manner of life for the faithful, and consequently, conveys a coherent spiritual perspective that should not be overlooked in the overall study of the psalms. On this note, in *Hear, O Lord: A Spirituality of the Psalms*, David G. Firth examines this spirituality and illustrates how it is significant for the modern day Christian.

To do this, Firth adopts the general approach offered by Brueggemann in *The Message of the Psalms* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984) of categorising of psalms in three groups: psalms of orientation, disorientation and new orientation. Using this grid, Firth examines how the psalms paint an understanding of the ordered world, disordered world and reordered world. Simply put, psalms of an ordered world tell us that God has made a basic order for life and creation. They lead us to organise our lives in accordance to God's ways, as well as trust and praise him in view of his character. Psalms of a disordered world, however, remind us of the reality in which we live. Though there is general order, the presence of sin and evil has brought about the presence of disorder, and these psalms help us to grasp the reality of pain in this life. Subsequently, psalms of a reordered world lead us from order and disorder to a place of restoration and deliverance. In these ways, the psalms as a whole bring us through the experience of faith as we discover the reality of God's reign over life in this fallen world.

While Firth employs much of Brueggemann's method, he notes that 'his anti-royalist tendencies have tended to see him diminishing the role of the so-called "Royal Psalms", those explicitly associated with the king. As a result, the theme of the reign of God, and the tension with which this exists alongside our human experience and the eschatological expectations of the Psalter, is underplayed' (11). Thus, in contrast to Brueggemann, Firth emphasises the importance of seeing the 'eschatological edge to the final message of the Psalter' (125). He does so by examining the 'hope beyond order' that the Psalter conveys and thereby shows that the psalms anticipate something yet to come, which is particularly applicable for the believer.

Overall, this book achieves the purpose for which it was written. It is both profitable for understanding the spirituality of the Psalter, and practical for considering how New Testament believers in the twenty-first century can (and should) pray these ancient prayers in their own life-experience. For anyone seeking to better understand and apply the psalms in their own spiritual pilgrimage, Firth's work will prove helpful.

Michael G. McKelvey, Dingwall, Scotland

***Bible and Mission:
Christian Witness in a Postmodern World*
Richard Bauckham**

Carlisle: Paternoster Press/Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003, xiv + 112 pp., £6.99, pb,
ISBN 1-84227-242-X, ISBN 0-8010-2771-3

SUMMARY

Richard Bauckham makes the proposal that *mission* is the hermeneutic for reading the Bible's grand metanarrative. He analyses the metanarratives of modernity, postmodernity, and economic globalisation which compete with a biblical worldview. For Bauckham, the issues of particularity and universality are foundational elements in the biblical narratives and mission is the component that mediates the two. He demonstrates these convincingly in biblical narratives spanning both testaments. Bauckham powerfully presents a biblical theology that is refreshingly relevant to the witness of the church globally. Readers interested in biblical theology or mission will need to engage with his argument.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Richard Bauckham schlägt vor, Mission sei die Hermeneutik, um die großartige Metaerzählung der Bibel zu lesen. Er analysiert die Metaerzählungen der Moderne, Postmoderne und der ökonomischen Globalisierung, die mit einer biblischen Weltansicht konkurrieren. Die Fragen von Partikularität und Universalität sind für Bauckham grundlegende Elemente der biblischen Erzählung, und Mission ist die Komponente, die zwischen beiden vermittelt. Er zeigt diese Zusammenhänge überzeugend in biblischen Erzählungen aus beiden Testamenten auf. Bauckham präsentiert kraftvoll eine biblische Theologie, die für die weltweite Kirche erfrischend relevant ist. Leser, die an biblischer Theologie oder Mission interessiert sind, müssen sich mit seiner These auseinandersetzen.

RÉSUMÉ

Richard Bauckham soutient la thèse que la mission est la clé herméneutique pour la lecture de la grande métanarration biblique. Il analyse les métanarrations de la modernité, de la postmodernité et de la mondialisation économique qui sont en compétition avec la vision du monde biblique. Les thèmes du particularisme et de l'universalité sont à ses yeux des éléments fondamentaux du récit biblique et le thème de la mission est celui qui fait le lien entre les deux. Sa démonstration à partir des récits des deux Testaments est convaincante. Il élabore ainsi une théologie biblique tout à fait pertinente pour le témoignage global de l'Église. Tout ceux que la théologie biblique ou la missiologie intéressent tireront profit de cet ouvrage.

* * * *

Richard Bauckham makes the ambitious proposal that *mission* is the hermeneutic for reading the Bible's grand metanarrative. Along the way Bauckham analyses the metanarratives of modernity, postmodernity, and economic globalisation which compete with a biblical

worldview. For Bauckham, the issues of particularity and universality are foundational elements in the biblical narratives and mission is the component that mediates the two. This is a fruitful approach making it relevant to postmodern particularity and modern and globalized universality, as well as identifying a key pattern running through Scripture. He organizes his argument into four sections. First, he justifies his hermeneutic. Secondly, he applies this hermeneutic to narratives found in both testaments. Thirdly, he elucidates the significance of geography in the biblical metanarrative. In the fourth part of the argument he applies the resulting theology to three current and competing metanarratives. In each step of the argument the significance of the Bible's pre-modern worldview, with its ubiquitous dialectical particularity and universality are clarified.

Bauckham is keenly aware of global trends. In the first chapter he describes postmodernism and its promotion of diversity and the particular. Then he describes the ideologies postmodernism confronts: the modern, economic globalization, and Islamic metanarratives. His description of the first two metanarratives contains a short but savvy socio-political critique of Western hegemony. Bauckham then skillfully critiques the shortcomings of postmodern ideology from a biblical perspective. Unfortunately, he does not critique Islam's metanarrative(s).

Bauckham then describes and justifies his hermeneutic. For Bauckham, the main theme of the Bible is the development of the Kingdom of God. The Bible's proposition that all creation coalesces in the absolute rule of God is a universal that, until its consummation, continually appears in a diversity of local particulars. The movement in biblical narratives from the particular to the universal is *mission*. This understanding and the proposal that mission is the hermeneutical key for understanding this development is made clear by two related methods of reading the Bible, canonical and narrative. Bauckham assumes that the development of the Kingdom of God is the Bible's grand metanarrative, unfortunately not demonstrating it. In the final chapter he acknowledges the long debate in biblical studies concerning whether or not a biblical metanarrative is discernable. He also acknowledges that not all biblical narratives fit cleanly into his proposed theme. In spite of this he holds that the primary plot in the Bible is the Kingdom of God.

In the second chapter Bauckham effectively advances his argument by summing up the entire biblical narrative in four smaller stories: the narrative of Abraham, the development of the nation of Israel, the kingship of David, and the ontology of humble origins which characterizes most biblical protagonists. In the latter, Bauckham focuses on Paul's Corinthian experience. He gives rich insight into how these trajectories provide their own nuanced contribution to understanding the Kingdom. In each instance the movement from the particular to the universal is made by means of God's mission to extend his rule over all creation.

Bauckham devotes a chapter to elucidating the significance of geography in the Bible, its move from the particular to the universal, and the Bible's tendency to use it symbolically in both testaments. Bauckham convincingly demonstrates that in biblical narrative and missionary movement there is no longer any one particular geographic centre.

In Bauckham's impressive application of his biblical theology he answers the postmodern charge that metanarratives by definition are oppressive and authoritarian. In contrast to the postmodern perspective, the Bible's metanarrative embraces both particularity and universality. The two do not conflict but make up the whole. The biblical worldview opposes the modern metanarrative and its concept of human mastery and the myth of progress. In opposition to the globalised economical worldview, the Bible rejects the totalizing notion that capitalistic economics is the universal panacea. The biblical God is true and requires witness in mission to this truth. However, due to the limits of human understanding the claims of universal truth must remain humble and open to debate and clarification. Missing in Bauckham's description of NT mission is the necessity of establishing witnessing communities (churches) in the multitude of particular localities globally. But overall, Bauckham provides good practical application.

In summary, Bauckham has presented a compelling argument for the organic way that mission provides the interpretive key for the biblical story. It is remarkable that he provides so much content and insight in such a concise fashion. However, some key issues, such as the Kingdom of God being the Bible's grand metanarrative are left undemonstrated. There is no bibliography or indices. Regardless, Bauckham has powerfully presented biblical theology in a way that is refreshingly relevant to the witness of the church globally. Readers interested in biblical theology or mission will need to engage with Bauckham's argument.

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***Blood Ritual in the Hebrew Bible:
Meaning and Power***
William K. Gilders

Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2004, x + 260 pp., £24.09, hb, ISBN 0-8018-7993-0

SUMMARY

Due to source-critical considerations, William K. Gilders argues that the theological meaning assigned to blood ritual in Lev. 17:11 was a late development within Israel. Therefore, he urges scholars to refrain from using it as an interpretive key for blood rituals elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. Alternatively, Gilders contends that a lack of theological explanation accompanying blood rites indicates that these served the practical function of "indexing" relations within the cultic realm and that this "indexing" was

intended to map an ideal social reality onto Israelite life.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Aufgrund quellenkritischer Überlegungen argumentiert William K. Gilders, dass die theologische Bedeutung, die in Leviticus 17,11 dem Blutritual gegeben wird, eine späte Entwicklung in Israel widerspiegelt. Er bittet daher die Gelehrten eindringlich, diesen Text als interpretativen Schlüssel für Blutrurale an anderen Stellen der Hebräischen Bibel zu verwenden. Alternativ behauptet Gilders, das Fehlen einer theologischen Erklärung bei Blutruralen weise darauf hin, dass diese die praktische Funktion des "Katalogisierens" von Beziehungen innerhalb des kultischen Raumes einnahmen und dass dieses "Katalogisieren" dazu gedacht war, eine ideale soziale Realität auf das israelitische Leben zu projizieren.

RÉSUMÉ

Soumettant le texte de Lévitique 17 à une analyse selon la critique des sources, Gilders conclut que le sens théologique du rituel sacrificiel et du rôle du sang exposé dans le verset 11 constitue un développement tardif en Israël. Il recommande donc qu'on évite de se fonder sur ce texte pour y trouver la clé d'interprétation du rituel sacrificiel dans les autres textes de la Bible hébraïque. Il considère au contraire que l'absence d'une explication théologique du rôle du sang dans les textes décrivant ou mentionnant les rites sacrificiels indique que ces rites avaient simplement pour fonction de traduire des relations au sein de la sphère culturelle ayant pour but de représenter une organisation sociale idéale destinée à façonner la vie israélite.

* * * *

This published doctoral thesis argues that Lev. 17:11 should not be used as the interpretive key for blood rituals in the OT. William K. Gilders suggests that this misuse arises from a tendency on the part of scholars to supplement the lack of theological explanation accompanying blood rites in the OT. By contrast, he infers from this absence of explanation that these texts are more concerned with formal ritual practice than theology.

Drawing on the socio-cultic approaches of Catherine Bell, Jonathan Z. Smith and Nancy Jay, Gilders recommends that one ought to describe the practical outcomes of blood manipulation rather than hypothesise about its theological meaning. He views rituals as signs which "index" relationships within the ritual-realm. These relationships are "existential," no different from that established between oneself and an object to which one points. On this assumption Gilders proceeds to document the relationships "indexed" by blood-rites rather than assign theological significance to the latter.

In Chap. 1 Gilders argues that textual support is lacking for the traditional explanation for why blood is placed on the altar, namely that as a symbol of "life" it must be returned to the "source of life" (i.e. YHWH). Though he observes that Lev. 17:11 conceptualises blood as "life" within a cultic context, he considers that this verse is not applicable in the interpretation of P's

blood-rites because it is part of the later H-redaction (cf. Knohl and Milgrom).

Chap. 2 is transitional within Gilders' thesis. On the one hand, it continues to test the traditional assumption that blood ("life") belongs to YHWH ("source of life"). On the other hand, it proposes that the notion of "indexing" makes more sense of the passages examined. For example, in Exod. 24:3-8 he claims that Moses' tossing of blood onto both altar and people "indexes" an existential relationship between YHWH (represented by the altar) and his people. In Chaps. 3-6 he applies his "indexing" hypothesis to the exegesis of blood rituals within some P texts and within Ezekiel and 2 Chronicles. Putting aside the traditional assumption, based on Lev. 17:11, that the blood (i.e. "life") makes "atonement" (*kipper*) for the offerer in these texts, he concludes that the various blood rituals "index" cultic relationships, thereby mapping an ideal social reality onto Hebrew life.

In the final chapter (Chap. 7) Gilders examines Lev. 17:11 in its own right. He observes that elsewhere in H texts the formula *kipper-al nephesh* refers to the "ransoming" of a life. Therefore, he speculates that Lev. 17:11 represents "an attempt to import the concept of 'ransom payment' [i.e. *kopher*; cf. Exod. 30:11-16; Num. 31:48-54] into the sacrificial context by playing on the uses of the verb *kipper* to refer to blood manipulation" (173).

Some of Gilders' criticisms of previous interpretations of blood ritual are compelling. It would seem difficult to refute his criticism of the view that blood is applied to the altar because "all life belongs to God." Nevertheless, despite the carefully argued nature of his thesis, one may question the validity of two of Gilders' presuppositions. The first is his presupposition that, since there is no interpretation of blood as "life which ransoms life" outside Lev. 17:11 it did not have such a meaning elsewhere in the OT. On the one hand, one may respond to this argument by postulating that the meaning of blood was so widely assumed that it possibly did not require explanation. If this were the correct then it may only have been necessary to explain the significance of blood when its symbolic meaning was threatened. This would seem to have been the case in Lev. 17. On the other hand, since the blood rites are never explained as "indexing" relationships, one may argue that this presupposition of Gilders' undermines his own hypothesis.

Gilders' second presupposition is that the chronological sequence of the relevant sources proceeds from P to D and then H. Yet there are scholars who maintain that the chronological sequence of P and H is more complex than this (e.g. Wagner; Blum; Ruwe); that P is later than D (e.g. Otto) and those who argue that D post-dates H (e.g. Milgrom). The adoption of one of these positions would undermine confidence in Gilders' proposal that H invented a new meaning for blood within a cultic context (Lev. 17:11) that was unknown to P and D.

Finally, I would question Gilders' contention that there is "no evidence of a *penal* theory of substitution" lying behind Lev. 17:11 (185). He arrives at this con-

clusion because it is "life" which "ransoms" the offerer rather than death. However, one could argue that the placing of such "life" on the altar, to ransom its offerer, presupposes an animal's "death."

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*Narrative, Religion and Science:
Fundamentalism versus Irony, 1700 - 1999*

Stephen Prickett

Cambridge, CUP, 2002, viii + 281 pp., p/b, £21.99,
0-521-00983-9

SUMMARY

The basic argument of this book is revealed in the subtitle *Fundamentalism versus Irony*. Fundamentalism refers to the rational and scientific worldview that knowledge consists of the observation, recording and classifying of data with the assumption that we know the objective world objectively. Irony means the growing awareness of our subjective interpretation of reality that makes reality less 'objective'. Prickett argues that you have either a fundamentalist or an ironic understanding of the world.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die grundlegende These dieses Buches zeigt sich im Untertitel *Fundamentalismus versus Ironie*. Der Begriff Fundamentalismus bezieht sich auf die rationale und wissenschaftliche Weltansicht, in der Wissen aus der Beobachtung, Erfassung und Klassifizierung von Daten besteht, unter der Annahme, dass wir die objektive Welt objektiv erkennen. Ironie meint das wachsende Bewusstsein von unserer subjektiven Interpretation der Wirklichkeit, die die Wirklichkeit weniger „objektiv“ erscheinen lässt. Prickett argumentiert, dass man entweder einem fundamentalistischen oder einem ironischen Verständnis von der Welt anhängt.

RÉSUMÉ

L'argument principal de ce livre se révèle dans son sous-titre : *Fondamentalisme ou ironie ?* Par fondamentalisme, on entend ici la conception rationnelle et scientifique selon laquelle le savoir résulte de l'observation, de la description et de la classification de données, et qui se fonde sur l'idée que nous connaîtrions le monde réel de manière objective. Par ironie, on entend la prise de conscience croissante de ce que notre interprétation subjective de la réalité rend celle-ci moins « objective ». Prickett soutient que chacun a soit une compréhension fondamentaliste, soit une compréhension ironique du monde.

* * * *

Irony is the awareness that there is more to reality than what meets the eye. A famous metaphor of irony is the anonymous print of the tomb of Napoleon on display in the Royal Library in Copenhagen. Kierkegaard took this print as a metaphor of irony and very appropriately Prickett used it as the front cover of his book. In the

centre of the picture are two trees with an empty space between the trees. The irony is that the empty space is not empty and when following the contours of the inside of the two trees Napoleon emerges. Irony is the awareness of the narrative character of reality, and that our stories will always be incomplete interpretations of reality due to the fact that part of narrative reality is constructed within the narrative itself.

Prickett gives an excellent overview of two ways of knowing reality i.e. a fundamentalist understanding or an ironic understanding. In a nuanced way he manages to trace the roots of irony back to the seventeenth century and even beyond, and illustrates how this perception of knowing reality has its tentacles rooted in philosophy, literature, religion and science as the prominent domains that engage with the search for an understanding of reality.

Chapter one deals with the post-modern understanding of story-telling that is aware of the subjective constructiveness of any version of reality and therefore the rejection of any grand narratives. Chapter two discusses the naïve understanding of reality within the context of the sciences that has prevailed at the beginning of modernity. The scientific worldview then was to see reality as an objective and external reality, but the detection of paradigms within any scientific theory brought the notion of irony within the scientific context closer home. Chapter three reflects upon the shift within literature as the fragmentation of reality became more apparent, hence the prominence of the 'I' as subject in literature. Chapter four reflects how Christianity became the Grand Narrative of religion, but as the notion of irony stretched its tentacles, the way people reflect upon religion also changed. Not only has the detection of the role of paradigms in the construction of theories had its effects upon the scientific world but also in the context of religion, as well especially with regard to theories of language. Chapter five then is about language and how meaning is structured within the parameters of our language. Chapter six is about the influence this had on the way we 'structure' theology. The notion of irony and the awareness of the provisional and constructed character of language have its influence on how we speak about God as an objective reality. Finally, chapter seven (is there some biblical symbolism in the fact that the book has seven chapters – an irony?) gives an overview of the current situation regarding an ironic understanding of the world. With the prominence of irony as a way to perceive reality in contrast to the fundamentalist view the modern scientist became partakers in this story-telling culture. A rediscovery of metaphors and the new understanding of language is symptomatic of the fact that scientists realise more and more that they have to 'read God's other book, the book of nature' in a way that attest to the fact that our understanding of reality even in the context of science is about ever-changing stories on the nature of our world. For Prickett this is in itself a consilience of a special kind. In the context of this growing disregard for

Grand Narratives and growing tendency towards fragmentation, consilience regarding the ironic understanding of the world is ironically a consilience of a special kind as it moves against fragmentation. Prickett's point, however, is that the fabric of the 'narrative universe' is not hospitable to fundamentalists of any hue.

This is an excellent book, and reveals Prickett's exceptional interpretation of the current perception of reality. As Christians, who for obvious reasons have a tendency towards fundamentalism, this is a good reminder that God's 'narrative universe' is not hospitable to fundamentalists of any shade. Rather we should be aware of the ironic reality of our understanding of God than to stray into a false fundamentalist's understanding as if we could possibly know anything, let alone God, in an exhaustive way.

Innes Visagie, Dingwall, Scotland

***Divinity and Humanity:
The Incarnation Reconsidered
Current Issues in Theology***

Oliver D. Crisp

Cambridge: CUP, 2007, ix + 187 pp., £15.95, pb,
ISBN 0-521-69535-X

SUMMARY

Oliver Crisp's *Divinity and Humanity* is a technical and constructive account of Christology that takes its starting point from the Chalcedonian marker that Christ is both 'truly God and truly man'. From here Crisp probes, tests and analyses important doctrines, particularly as they are understood in reference to the relationship between the divinity and humanity of Christ. These include perichoresis or interpenetration, the hypostatic union of Christ, kenotic Christology or self-emptying and the issue of whether or not Christ assumed a sinful nature.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Oliver Crisp's Buch *Divinity and Humanity* ist eine technische und konstruktive Darstellung der Christologie, die ihren Ausgangspunkt in der chalzedonischen Kennzeichnung Jesu als „wahrer Gott und wahrer Mensch“ nimmt. Von dort prüft, testet und analysiert Crisp wichtige Dogmen, insbesondere im Hinblick darauf, wie sie mit Verweis auf die Beziehung zwischen der Gottheit und Menschheit Christi verstanden wurden. Behandelt werden u. a. Perichorese oder gegenseitige Durchdringung, die hypostatische Einheit Christi, kenotische Christologie oder die Selbsterniedrigung sowie die Frage, ob Christus ein sündiges Wesen annahm oder nicht.

RÉSUMÉ

Voici un ouvrage technique et constructif traitant de la christologie en prenant pour point de départ les affirmations de Calcédoine selon lesquelles Christ est à la fois vrai Dieu et vrai homme. Crisp explore, évalue et analyse

ensuite des doctrines importantes en considérant en particulier comment elles s'articulent avec l'affirmation de la divinité et de l'humanité de Christ. Il s'agit de la périchorèse, de l'union hypostatique de Christ, de la christologie kénotique ou de la manière dont Christ s'est dépouillé en devenant homme, et de la question de savoir si Christ a adopté une nature pécheresse.

* * * *

Oliver Crisp's *Divinity and Humanity* comes as the fifth instalment in the 'Current Issues in Theology' series and takes up the task of Christology. It is a technical and constructive account that takes its starting point from the Chalcedonian marker that Christ is 'truly God and truly man'. From here Crisp probes, tests and analyses important doctrines, particularly as they are understood in reference to the relationship between the divinity and humanity of Christ. These include perichoresis, the hypostatic union of Christ, kenotic Christology and the issue of whether or not Christ assumed a sinful nature. This task involves Crisp bringing these doctrines into dialogue with the concerns and questions of "philosophical theologians." As he goes about the process of negotiating the meaning and validity of these doctrines, his goal is to clarify any ambiguity surrounding them and in so doing, to establish the plausibility of the doctrine of Christ's Incarnation.

In chapter 1, Crisp's discussion of the relation of Christ's two natures in the hypostatic union includes what one might expect: an appeal to the doctrine of the communication of attributes. Yet in addition to this, Crisp argues that an account of perichoresis will remove any residual uncertainty, especially when it comes to making sense of Christ's omnipresence in relation to his humanity. The argument runs as follows: if Christ is truly divine and assuming that one of the essential properties of divinity is omnipresence, how is it that Christ, in his divinity, can be everywhere, including his own human nature, yet doing so without compromising it? To this Crisp responds with nature-perichoresis which means that in the "hypostatic union Christ's two natures are united in such an intimate fashion that the divinity of Christ because of his omnipresence penetrates the humanity of Christ, but the converse is not the case (p. 34)."

In chapters 2 and 3, Crisp deals more specifically with the nature of Christ's humanity. He begins his argument in chapter 2 from the same point of departure made in the first chapter, though here he takes a significant detour from Chalcedon (AD 451) via the Sixth Ecumenical Council of Constantinople (AD 681). From this, Crisp defends the simple proposition that Christ is one person with two wills (dyothelitism). After giving a brief historical-theological context, he moves quickly to interact with the works of Alvin Plantinga and Michael Rea, showing how the positions of each square with his own proposal. In chapter 3, Crisp adds more precision to the argument he has already established in the previ-

ous chapter by clarifying the *an-enlypypostasia* distinction vis-à-vis the accounts set forth by Plantinga and Rea, respectively.

Turning to the topic of Christ's human nature and whether it "had the property of fallenness" or "the property of unfallenness (93)," chapter 4 is a bold and rigorous argument. As can be expected, Crisp returns faithfully to the tradition and argues that contemporary notions affirming Christ's human nature as fallen but yet denying its sinfulness is a patent failure to deal with the traditional understanding that fallenness is the condition of being sinful (which includes guilt and corruption). To say that Christ has a fallen human nature, therefore, is to say that Christ's human nature is morally corrupt.

Divine kenosis is the theme of chapter 5 and while this doctrine may not have the force or appeal it once had, Crisp turns his attention to a specific school of philosophical theologians who have recently found this doctrine to be a valuable way of "explaining how Christ could be 'fully God and fully man' at one and the same time (p. 119)."

While the chapters thus far have dealt with various ways of explaining a Chalcedonian Christology, in the final chapter Crisp addresses the influential work of John Hick, who proposes to replace Chalcedon with a 'non-incarnational theology', that identifies Jesus merely as a human being. This account understands the incarnation as a metaphor that can readily be applied to, or found, in other religions.

Divinity and Humanity makes a significant contribution to the study of Christology, particularly as Crisp's exploration of perennial questions provides important clarification of the fundamental philosophical issues. Yet, since the majority of Crisp's conversation partners are restricted to the philosophical, the scope of the discussion inevitably becomes quite narrow. In such a way, the aim of demonstrating the plausibility of the incarnation takes on a mode of argumentation that is more defensive in tone, where one might have preferred an account furnished with scripture as well as church doctrine and also included connections with other important loci. With that said, Crisp models a confident display of theology in negotiation with philosophy. He is not reluctant to engage the concerns of the latter and in so doing he obtains a good deal of conceptual clarity that moves the dialogue in a positive direction and leaves the reader grateful for the labour.

Mark McDowell, Aberdeen, Scotland

***A Pauline Theology of Church Leadership*
(Library of New Testament Studies)**

Andrew D. Clarke

Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2007, 224 pp., £65.00, hb,
ISBN 978-0-567-04560-7

SUMMARY

While always paying close attention to the social context of the early Pauline communities, this book collates Paul's fundamental teachings on church leadership. The author begins with a detailed discussion of theological method and modern hermeneutics. The book then shifts to define and differentiate between the titles used for leaders in the Pauline literature, primarily the roles of overseers, elders, and deacons. Clarke then proceeds to address the hierarchical status of church leaders in relation to their congregations and evaluates Paul's exercise of apostolic power in light of modern social theory. Finally, the author surveys the fundamental tasks of leaders before examining the necessary tools for ministry. Clarke's theological analysis of Pauline leadership is recommended for anybody interested in the topic.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieses Buch trägt die grundlegenden paulinischen Lehren über die Leitung der Kirche zusammen und achtet dabei immer auf den sozialen Kontext der frühen paulinischen Gemeinden. Der Autor beginnt mit einer detaillierten Diskussion der theologischen Methoden und moderner Hermeneutik. Das Buch wendet sich dann der Definition und Unterscheidung von Titeln zu, die in der paulinischen Literatur für Leiter verwendet werden. Hauptsächlich werden die Rollen der Aufseher, Ältesten und Diakone angeschaut. Clark widmet sich dann dem hierarchischen Status der Kirchenleiter in Beziehung zu ihren Gemeinden und bewertet Paulus' eigene Ausübung apostolischer Macht im Lichte moderner Sozialtheorie. Abschließend gibt der Autor einen Überblick über die grundlegenden Aufgaben der Leiter, bevor er für den Dienst notwendigen Werkzeuge begutachtet. Ich empfehle Clarkes theologische Analyse der Leiterschaft bei Paulus allen, die an dem Thema interessiert sind.

RÉSUMÉ

Tout en prêtant soigneusement attention au contexte social des communautés pauliniennes primitives, ce livre rassemble les enseignements fondamentaux de Paul sur la direction d'Église. L'auteur commence par une présentation détaillée de la méthode théologique et de l'herméneutique moderne. Il définit et distingue ensuite les titres employés pour les dirigeants d'Église dans la littérature paulinienne, principalement les évêques, les anciens et les diacres. Il poursuit en s'intéressant au statut hiérarchique des dirigeants dans leurs communautés et porte une évaluation sur l'exercice par Paul de son autorité apostolique à la lumière des théories sociales modernes. Finalement, l'auteur fait un survol des tâches fondamentales des dirigeants puis considère les outils nécessaires à l'exercice du ministère. Son

analyse théologique se recommande pour quiconque s'intéresse au sujet de la direction d'Église.

* * * *

A Pauline Theology of Church Leadership fills an important gap in contemporary scholarship by collating the fundamental teachings of Paul on an important ecclesiological theme. This treatise could be regarded as the theological counterpart to the author's prior, historically reconstructive works concerning the influences and actual practices of leadership in the early Pauline communities. Here Clarke consummates those publications by putting into somewhat systemized fashion the leadership ideals Paul sought (and struggled) to implement in his churches.

Chapters 1 and 2 frame the study by establishing its limits and laying the methodological groundwork for the chapters to follow. The scope of the data, as revealed in chapter 1, is particularly interesting considering the contemporary climate of Pauline studies. Although Clarke never proposes that Paul wrote all of the epistles attributed to him, he openly consults all thirteen explaining that the ecclesiological divergences often cited between the earlier and later epistles are not wide enough to eliminate the latter from consideration in this analysis. Chapter 2 then enters into a discussion of modern hermeneutics in order to argue for the viability of the present study.

Chapter 3 commences the body of the research by defining and differentiating between various *titles* used for leaders in the Pauline literature. Clarke pays closest attention to the roles of overseer, elder, and deacon. Based on Tit 1:5-7 and 1 Tim 5, he argues that overseers and elders were *not* synonymous terms. Rather, overseers were heads of households who individually led, managed, and taught house-churches, while elders formed a local body of leaders consisting of overseers and those additionally appointed to make decisions on behalf of a Christian community. Deacons then assisted overseers in the leadership of house-churches, though not necessarily in a servile manner as often assumed.

Chapter 4 examines the *status* of leaders within the Pauline communities. Clarke envisages a 'complex hierarchy of ranks' in these communities which is indicated by Paul's use of official titles and instructions to recognize and submit to leaders. Clarke then spends sufficient time rebutting the arguments in support of an egalitarian model of leadership before closing the chapter with a segment pertaining to 'servant leadership'.

Chapter 5 explores and evaluates Paul's exercise of *power* within his churches. Here Clarke enters into a complex discussion with modern social theorists regarding the nature of power. Clarke's primary goal, in addition to identifying how Paul exercised his apostolic power, is to defend Paul's method of persuasion. Whereas Elizabeth Castelli and other critics accuse Paul of abusing his power, Clarke maintains that Paul's references to his apostolic authority were intended to counter the claims of his opponents and protect his ministry.

Chapter 6 surveys the fundamental *tasks* performed by leaders. In recognizing the primary objective of leaders as 'building up' the church, Clarke draws upon two Pauline church metaphors suggestive of their duties. First, the church is a 'body' with many parts and, although some parts are more honorable than others, none are dispensable. Paul's early leaders were therefore responsible for recognizing and honoring all members of the church, as well as encouraging them to contribute to corporate up-building. The second metaphor is the 'household'. As fathers of God's household, Paul's leaders provided paternal guidance characterized by love; yet as slaves, they served the church sacrificially. Clarke also casts leaders as teachers who were responsible for instructing the church.

Chapter 7 examines the essential *tools* Paul prescribed for leading churches. Clarke specifically highlights two: *rhetoric* and *imitation*. Despite Paul's criticisms of rhetoric, Clarke asserts that the apostle, who was fully competent in the art of persuasion, frequently applied rhetoric to elicit emotional responses in his audiences. Furthermore, Paul's imitation motif served as an important instrument to illustrate Christian living. Thus, leaders were expected to exemplify the faith personally as they in turn emulated the life of Christ.

Clarke's compilation of Pauline leadership principles is an excellent contribution in many ways. His awareness of significant tensions within both the Pauline literature and contemporary scholarship deeply informs his theological queries. Moreover, Clarke's expertise in NT social history surfaces throughout as he illuminates many details pertaining to the original context of Paul's letters. Finally, Clarke's analyses of concepts such as power, rhetoric, and imitation demonstrate his attentiveness to the inner workings of the apostle, which have previously been overlooked in shallower theologies. Clarke's treatment, however, is by no means exhaustive. Certainly, more could have been said concerning both the role of Scripture as the leader's primary tool for directing and protecting the church, and Paul's teaching on the relationship between Scripture and authority. Clarke's theses might have also been clearer had he differentiated more consistently between apostolic and non-apostolic leadership privileges and responsibilities. Nevertheless, Clarke has produced an erudite and thought-provoking volume which will be a tremendous resource for any scholar, pastor, or student interested in this topic.

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Jesus: A Question of Identity

J. L. Houlden

London/New York: Continuum, 2006, vii + 136pp., \$19.95, pb, ISBN: 9780826489418.

SUMMARY

In this book, Leslie Houlden weaves together history, biblical studies, theology and apologetics in an effort to explore what we can know about Jesus. He does not shy away from some of the hard questions and tensions involved in such a quest, but with humility and a non-technical style invites us to engage seriously with the question of Jesus' identity both as a historical figure and as the object of faith.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In diesem Buch bringt Leslie Houlden Geschichtswissenschaft, Bibelwissenschaft, Theologie und Apologetik im Hinblick auf die Untersuchung dessen zusammen, was wir von Jesus wissen können. Er drückt sich nicht vor einigen der schwierigen Fragen und Spannungen, die so eine Suche beinhaltet. Mit Demut und in verständlicher Sprache lädt er uns ein, uns ernsthaft mit der Frage nach der Identität Jesu sowohl als historischer Figur als auch als Gegenstand des Glaubens zu befassen.

RÉSUMÉ

Dans ce livre, Leslie Houlden explore ce que nous pouvons savoir de Jésus à l'aide de diverses approches, historique, biblique, théologique et apologetique. Il ne recule pas devant certaines des questions difficiles et des tensions que peut rencontrer une telle quête, mais, avec humilité et sans adopter un style technique, il nous invite à considérer sérieusement la question de l'identité de Jésus à la fois comme une figure historique et comme l'objet de la foi.

* * * *

At a time when the print run of new books seems to expire almost while the ink is still drying on the copies as they first arrive on the shelf, any volume that is still being republished fourteen years after its initial appearance probably ought to deservedly attract our attention.

In this primer, which grew out of lectures given at King's College, University of London, J. Leslie Houlden, Emeritus Professor of Theology at King's College, cogently interweaves together history, biblical studies, theology and apologetics in an effort to explore what we can know about Jesus. While not shying away from some of the perennial 'problems' and tensions involved in such a quest, Houlden, with eloquence, humility and non-technical style, invites his readers to engage seriously with the question of Jesus' identity, not only as a Galilean carpenter's son, but as God's; as not merely the object of cool enquiry but as the subject and centre of living faith. He asks: 'What are we now to make of Jesus, both as a historical figure and as involved with belief?' (pp. 8-9).

Houlden is acutely aware that with the history of Jesus, both as recorded in the centuries following his

death, and its subsequent developments, we have to do with interpreted history. 'In this sense', he writes, 'theology takes precedence over history in the Christian story' (p. 11). 'The Gospels', he contends, 'are slanted. They were not written to answer our modern questions, about the order of events, causality and psychological awareness, but to commend faith' (pp. 42-3). That is why Houlden turns first to Paul, and then the Gospels, while properly steering clear of driving any wedge between the Christ of faith and the Jesus of history. He is well aware throughout the essay that the modern 'quest for a neutral view of Jesus and of Christian origins, one fully and solely evidenced from "the facts" (for example, from the Jewish context of his life), is a chimera' (p. 124). He characterises the historians' task thus:

The historian's assessment has to steer a careful course: between seeing Jesus as so distinctive that he makes no sense in the context of his times and seeing him as so ordinary, so thoroughly part of his background, that the massive and speedy effects of his life become incomprehensible. Two extremes are unlikely: on the one hand, that our accounts of Jesus are wholly shaped by faith and that in reality he was nothing very remarkable; and on the other hand, that the accounts owe nothing to faith and that all happened and was said exactly as told. What is hard is to know at what point between the extremes truth lies. (pp. 53-4)

Tracing the story of Jesus – and the 'vast yet specific tradition' (p. 111) that pertains to him – as interpreted from the first century through to the early ecumenical councils, from Pliny and Ignatius of Antioch to Aberlard and Julian of Norwich, from John of the Cross and Aquinas to Schleiermacher and Schweitzer, from Reimarus and Strauss to Hengel and Sanders, from Kant, Tillich and Cupitt to Bonhoeffer, Barth and Moltmann, Houlden offers us a portrait of Jesus impressed with the wrestle marks of the Christian community.

But, as Houlden insists, no matter which of the many different postures about Jesus one adopts, in order to be 'meaningful', Jesus cannot be coolly and disengagedly observed from a distance: 'Jesus *must* be (at least) *my* saviour: in that sense subjectivity has to be part of the picture. We are concerned with a *religion*, at whose heart he stands, not in the first instance a theory, which must be consistent if it is to be satisfactory' (p. 113).

Houlden possesses a gift all too rare among Christian theologians and biblical scholars – the ability to harness the breadth of the Church's thinking regarding its Lord and communicate it in a way that is palatable, uncondescending and clear to a readership still finding its footing both inside and outside of the Church and the Academy. While some readers may wish to question some of Houlden's presuppositions regarding the dating of divine recognition among Jesus' first disciples, for example, and not all will follow all of Houlden's theological conclusions, nor perhaps even the route taken itself, his essay remains both informed and constructive, suitably identifies many of the important issues at stake, avoids most of the usual pitfalls, and provides us with some direction for how we might proceed. To this end, the volume includes – in addition to an index – a helpful list of suggestions for further reading linked with each chapter.

While Houlden's opusculum is intended for the enquiring lay person – both 'sceptics and enthusiastic believers' (p. 118) – who wishes to 'understand more about Jesus as a historical figure and as the object of devotion and faith' (p. vii), it will not fail to educate and inform those more conversant with the technical issues at stake not only in the life and ministry of Jesus but also how that life and ministry touches our life and that of our multi-faith world. A commendable contribution to an ever-growing library of Jesus studies.

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