

ne lui ôte pas son caractère hautement profitable et sa qualité scientifique.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der Kommentar zum Buch der Richter von Trent Butler stellt einen herausragenden Beitrag zur „Word Biblical Commentary“ Serie und zur wissenschaftlichen Literatur über das Richterbuch dar, der sich nicht nur leicht lesen lässt, sondern auch streng wissenschaftlich geschrieben ist. Butlers Ansatz tritt für ein frühes Abfassungsdatum ein und behandelt das Richterbuch als eine literarische Einheit und ist somit konservativ und auf dem neuesten Stand. Der Band beinhaltet eine umfassende und nützliche Bibliographie sowie einen Appendix mit Schautafeln. Die sporadische Aufteilung des Textes in Einheiten von drei oder mehr Kapiteln macht das Werk teilweise schwerfällig; außerdem gibt es etliche Tippfehler. Nichtsdestoweniger bleibt der Richterkommentar außerordentlich hilfreich und wissenschaftlich.

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Judges by Trent Butler is an outstanding addition both to the Word Biblical Commentary series and to scholarly literature on the book of Judges. The purpose of the WBC series is to publish exegetical commentaries that remain accessible and useful to those without a strong background in biblical languages. Butler's volume excels in both categories. It is consistently very readable while being insightful at the highest level and demonstrating a mastery of a remarkable range of scholarly literature. The bibliography is especially impressive and useful, being functionally a one-stop shop for what seems like almost every article, monograph or commentary published on Judges in the last 100 years.

Butler's method is measured, up-to-date and conservative. He avoids idiosyncratic interpretations and text reconstructions, typically giving the Masoretic text the benefit of the doubt. While acknowledging the likelihood of compositional layers, Butler largely deals with Judges as a literary unity. His dating of the book's final form is early by contemporary standards, somewhere in the reign of Rehoboam, which in his view accounts for the strong anti-Ephraim polemic and the less pronounced anti-Benjamin one. It would also appear to account for the book's mixed attitude toward kingship in Israel. One of Butler's most interesting contributions to the discussion of the structure of Judges is his assertion that Judges is strategically deconstructing everything that the book of Joshua constructs, thus arguing for intentional intertextuality. (Butler also wrote the WBC volume 7 on the book of Joshua.) The appendix contains 52 pages of tables containing a wide variety of helpful data conveniently arranged, many dealing with plot analyses according to the categories of both narratology and form-criticism.

The organisation of WBC is typically very helpful, each passage being divided into a translation by the author with textual notes, a section on Form/Structure/

Setting, a section labelled Comment (organised verse-by-verse or phrase-by-phrase) and a section labelled Explanation (to bring it all together). In most (but not all) WBC volumes I have encountered, the size of the passage of Biblical text for each section relates to the size of text one would single out for a sermon or basic exegetical paper, usually one chapter or less. Butler's volume is inconsistent in this respect. Particularly in the case of the Gideon and Samson stories, multiple chapters are grouped together (6-8 and 13-16). While the desire to look at these passages as a complete unit is laudable and even necessary, it does have the unfortunate side-effect of rendering these sections somewhat cumbersome to use. For example, if one were to want to see what Butler had to say on 6:11-24 (the appearance of the angel of the LORD to Gideon), a typical length of text for most standard usages, one has to flip among pages 181, 186, 192-196, 199-204 and 224-225 (not to mention any relevant information in the introduction), and it is possible that some comment Butler makes in the gaps might have significance as well. This is a lot of work for the person who is not aiming at mastery of the whole Gideon story, or who has a very specific enquiry of the text. Much better would have been for Butler to do with chapters 6-8 what he did with chapters 4-5: treat them separately and include an excursus at the end of the section that deals with overall issues. The grouping of 13-16 is even less justifiable, in my opinion, because of the even longer text and the less certain macro-structure. Another, less significant complaint is the surprising number of typographical errors. For example, in the printing of Hebrew words very often the vowel pointing was wrong, and either text note 6a is missing from page 185 or the superscript 'a' is a misprint.

Despite these cosmetic problems, because of its rigorous scholarship and consistent readability, *Judges* by Trent Butler should become and will remain a benchmark among commentaries on *Judges* which will more than adequately serve the needs of a variety of users.

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Pannenberg on the Triune God

Iain Taylor

London/New York: T&T Clark, 2007, 225pp, £61.75, hb, ISBN 0-567-03150-0

RÉSUMÉ

Ce livre écrit avec lucidité et fruit d'une recherche soignée apporte une contribution importante au plan académique à l'étude de la théologie de Wolfhart Pannenberg. Suivant l'ordre des sujets de la *Théologie Systématique* de ce penseur, Iain Taylor livre une présentation détaillée de la théologie trinitaire mûrie de Pannenberg avec une évaluation critique. Il considère que la doctrine de Dieu est la clé de voûte de la *Théologie Systématique*. Il réfute utilement

l'idée que la pensée trinitaire de Pannenberg ait été de tendance hégélienne. Il fait tout du long une lecture sympathisante de la théologie de Pannenberg, mais sans hésiter à énoncer de prudentes critiques. Tous les lecteurs de Pannenberg n'auront pas une appréciation aussi positive, mais sa pénétration de la dogmatique de Pannenberg fait toute la valeur de cet ouvrage pour qui souhaite explorer la théologie trinitaire de Pannenberg.

SUMMARY

Both carefully researched and lucidly written, Iain Taylor's *Pannenberg on the Triune God* makes a significant contribution to the scholarly literature on the theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg. Covering the doctrinal loci in the order in which they appear in *Systematic Theology* (ST), the work advances as a detailed exposition and evaluation of Pannenberg's mature trinitarian theology. Taylor contends for the doctrine of God as the organising centre of ST. Helpful in this discussion is his refutation of assumptions of Hegelianism in Pannenberg's trinitarian thought. Taylor demonstrates throughout a consistently generous reading of Pannenberg's theology without hesitating to articulate careful critiques. While all readers of Pannenberg may not concur with those appraisals, his grasp of Pannenberg's dogmatics makes this volume highly valuable to those hoping to explore Pannenberg's trinitarian theology.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Ian Taylors Buch *Pannenberg on the Triune God* [*Pannenberg über den Dreieinigen Gott*] ist sorgfältig durchdacht wie auch scharfsinnig geschrieben; es stellt einen bedeutenden Beitrag zur Forschungsliteratur über die Theologie Wolfhart Pannengers dar. Das Werk behandelt die jeweiligen doktrinen Loci in der Reihenfolge, in der sie in *Systematic Theology* (ST) [*Systematische Theologie*] erscheinen, und erweist sich darüber hinaus als eine detaillierte Darlegung und Bewertung von Pannengers ausgereifter trinitarischer Theologie. Taylor behauptet, dass die Lehre über Gott das strukturgebende Zentrum der ST darstellt. Hilfreich ist, dass er in seiner Diskussion Postulate eines Hegelianismus in Pannengers trinitarischem Denken zurückweist. Der Autor zeigt eine durchgehend wohlwollende Lesart von Pannengers Theologie, zögert aber nicht, sorgfältig abgewogene Kritik zu formulieren. Während nicht alle Leser Pannengers mit seiner Bewertung übereinstimmen mögen, so wird doch dieser Band durch das Verständnis seines Autors von Pannengers Dogmatik äußerst wertvoll für jene, die dessen trinitarische Theologie noch weiter erforschen möchten.

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Following the completion of *Systematische Theologie* in 1993 and the translation of its final volume (*Systematic Theology* [Eerdmans: 1999]), English readers have been treated to several sustained interactions with the mature dogmatics of Wolfhart Pannenberg (*1928), e.g. Grenz, *Reason for Hope*, 2nd ed. (Eerdmans: 2005); Christian Mostert, *God and the Future* (T&T Clark: 2002); Rise, *The Christology of Wolfhart Pannenberg* (Mellen: 1997).

Drawing adeptly from prior interpreters and charting territory of his own, Iain Taylor's *Pannenberg on the Triune God* makes a significant contribution to the scholarly literature on Pannenberg's theology. Both carefully researched and lucidly written, the book demonstrates a consistently generous reading of Pannenberg's theology without hesitating to articulate carefully formed critiques.

Taylor's exposition proceeds along two fronts. First, it advances as a detailed examination of Pannenberg's mature trinitarianism contained within *Systematic Theology* (ST) by covering the main dogmatic loci in the order in which they appear in ST: the Trinity, God's essence and attributes, creation, humanity, Jesus Christ, reconciliation, the Kingdom and the church, and the final consummation. Throughout the expositions and analyses that follow, Taylor evaluates the degree to which Pannenberg fulfils his said goal of writing a Christian dogmatics more 'thoroughly trinitarian' than any of which he was aware. Taylor finds Pannenberg's dogmatics largely successful, an 'impressive work that brooks few rivals' in which aspects of his theology rank 'with some of the most perceptive works on the Trinity available, and some at which he takes understanding of the being and action of the triune God further than it has been before' (187).

Second, Taylor contends for the doctrine of God as the organising centre of ST, that it should be seen as 'a detailed and articulate statement of the centrality of God, the Christian God, for understanding the world, our place in it and its salvation in the work of Jesus Christ' (11). Helpful in this discussion is his convincing refutation of persistent assumptions of Hegelianism in Pannenberg's trinitarian thought. Demonstrating an impressive grasp of the secondary literature on this topic, Taylor argues convincingly that there exist 'more fruitful avenues of enquiry into Pannenberg's intellectual context and inheritance' than the Hegelian one (20). Those attentive readers of Pannenberg, who find him not *Hegelian* but a careful and often critical interpreter of Hegel, will be helped by Taylor's thorough discussion.

Though he finds Pannenberg largely successful in his trinitarian ambitions, Taylor raises several criticisms. Two of the most significant are directed against the relationship between faith and revelation. First, Taylor questions whether Pannenberg's doctrine of the Trinity influences not only the dogmatic content but 'the presuppositions and practice of theology' as well (21). In other words, do the trinitarian pillars which support ST also provide guidance for the way in which the practice of theology is conceived and carried out? In this regard, Taylor finds 'a marked reticence to explicate the importance of the trinitarian God in the task of theology' (190). In Pannenberg's treatment of faith and the knowledge of God, he sees very little trinitarian language at all 'since it is not worked out in terms of the being and action of the divine persons' (191). Second, and along similar lines, Taylor finds Pannenberg equally reticent to explain

God's revelation in terms of the doctrine of the Trinity, so that 'The importance of the Trinity in how one comes to understand God's revelation is at best very much in the background' (198). In Taylor's opinion, by 'refusing to make the doctrine of the Trinity operative here', Pannenberg undermines the credibility of his claim to write a thoroughly trinitarian theology.

Some may suspect that Taylor's second criticism insufficiently appreciates how Pannenberg's pneumatology impacts his presentation of the knowledge of God and faith. By appropriating to the Spirit both the activity of giving life to all creatures and the actualisation of reconciliation, Pannenberg's account is a sustained attempt to understand the Spirit's activity as something not alien but inherent to the human person. For Pannenberg, the Spirit's work of leading to the knowledge of Jesus' sonship (ST 2, 395) by unfolding and revealing the significance of his history to us (ST 2, 454; ST 3, 5-6) 'takes place in full and continuous connection with his work in the world of nature as the origin of all life, and especially in humans as the source of the spontaneity of their 'spiritual' activities' (ST 3, 17). Thus, coming to understand God's revelation is very much a work of the Spirit, an activity that comes not from *outside* us but from *within*.

Even when readers demur from his proposals, Taylor's grasp on the breadth of Pannenberg's dogmatics and the clarity of his presentation make this volume highly valuable to those hoping to explore Pannenberg's trinitarian theology.

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The Future of Christology

Roger Haight, S.J.

London/New York: T&T Clark, 2005, 214pp, £10.55,
hb, ISBN 0-8264-1764-7

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Das Buch von Roger Haight *The Future of Christology* [Die Zukunft der Christologie] folgt der Linie seines umstrittenen Bestsellers *Jesus Symbol of God* [*Jesus Symbol Gottes*], der von der Glaubenskongregation des Vatikan als mit „schwerwiegenden doktrinen Fehlern“ behaftet zensiert wurde. Das Nachfolgewerk *The Future of Christology* deckt ähnliche Bereiche ab, obgleich in einem leichter zugänglichen Format. Mit dem Ziel, eine Christologie zu gestalten, welche die Realität des religiösen Pluralismus und der Postmoderne berücksichtigt, greift Haight Themen auf wie die Forschung über den historischen Jesus, christologische Methodologie, Theorien zur Erlösung, Theologien des Kreuzes, religiöser Pluralismus sowie die Aufgabe der Kirche. Leser, die hoffen, in diesem Buch ein solides Bekenntnis zu Aussagen zu finden wie die absolute Einzigartigkeit der Inkarnation, die Bestätigung göttlicher Initiative beim Leiden Christi zur Erlösung, die Anerkennung der Errettung durch Glauben an Christus allein, oder die tradi-

tionelle Anschauung der Auferstehung, werden durchweg enttäuscht sein.

SUMMARY

Roger Haight's *The Future of Christology* follows his controversial and best-selling book *Jesus Symbol of God* which was denounced by the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith as containing 'grave doctrinal errors'. *The Future of Christology* covers similar ground as the previous book though in a more accessible format. Toward fashioning a Christology that attends to the realities of religious pluralism and postmodernity, Haight addresses historical Jesus research, Christological method, conceptions of salvation, theologies of the cross, religious pluralism and church mission. Readers hoping to find in *The Future of Christology* a robust confession of the incarnation's sheer uniqueness, affirmation of divine initiative in the suffering of Christ for salvation, an acknowledgement of salvation by faith in Christ alone, or a traditional view of the resurrection will be consistently disappointed.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage fait suite au livre du même auteur intitulé *Jésus, symbole de Dieu*, livre à la fois controversé et devenu un best-seller, que la congrégation du Vatican pour la doctrine de la foi a dénoncé comme contenant « de graves erreurs doctrinales ». Le présent ouvrage traite du même sujet, mais sous une forme plus accessible. Cherchant à élaborer une christologie tenant compte des réalités du pluralisme religieux et de la postmodernité, l'auteur traite de la recherche du Jésus historique, des méthodes mises en œuvre en christologie, des conceptions du salut, des théologies de la croix, du pluralisme religieux et de la mission de l'Église. Les lecteurs ne doivent pas compter y trouver une confession nette du caractère unique de l'incarnation, ni une affirmation de l'initiative divine à l'origine de la souffrance rédemptrice de Christ, ni une adhésion à la doctrine du salut par la seule foi en Christ, ni la conception traditionnelle de la résurrection.

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Roger Haight's *The Future of Christology* follows his controversial and best-selling book *Jesus Symbol of God* which was denounced by the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith as containing 'grave doctrinal errors'. *The Future of Christology* covers much of the same ground as the previous book though in a more accessible format. While *Jesus Symbol of God* was written as a textbook, this collection of occasional essays has a wider audience in mind and attempts to respond to particular questions raised by *Jesus Symbol of God*.

In an attempt to fashion a Christology that attends to the realities of religious pluralism and postmodernity, Haight addresses historical Jesus research, Christological method, conceptions of salvation, theologies of the cross, religious pluralism and church mission. In the final chapter, he helpfully interacts with and responds to negative reviews of *Jesus Symbol of God*. The dialogue and debate into which he enters here remains accessible for