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Editorial

Pieter J. Lalleman

Welcome to the twentieth volume of the European Journal of Theology! I am grateful to Dr Stephen P. Dray (UK) for his help in preparing this issue. Again the New Testament is well represented in this issue – which might form a challenge to our readers to provide the editor with articles on other subject areas. We would also appreciate an increased variety among the nationalities of the contributors.

The article by Professor Howard Marshall is the edited version of a paper he presented in Berlin at the conference of the Fellowship of European Evangelical Theologians (FEET) in 2010. You will not be surprised that his presentation led to lively discussions. In the meantime the preparations for the 2012 FEET conference are well under way. In the conference theme, 'Beyond the Bible: Moving from Scripture to Theology and Practice', it is easy to detect the impact of Professor Marshall's paper. We look forward to seeing many of you, God willing, in Berlin on 24-28 August, 2012.

The website of FEET is being updated and I invite you to take a look at http://www.feet-europe.net. In the future we want to make public the abstracts of articles published in EJT on this site, as well as an overview of past articles. More details about the 2012 conference will also be added online as they become available. Our publisher is also on the web at http://www.paternosterperiodicals.co.uk/european-journal-of-theology.

I received a comment from Dr Robin Parry, formerly of Paternoster, on the editorial in the previous edition (19.2) of EJT. In it I referred to the 'demise' of Paternoster but Robin reminds me that Paternoster is not deceased and still going, albeit under new ownership, as can be seen on http://www.authenticmedia.co.uk. My apologies.

Aspects of the Atonement

Cross and Resurrection in the Reconciling of God and Humanity

I. Howard Marshall

The Christian understanding of the meaning of the death of Jesus Christ and its relationship to the salvation of sinful humanity is currently the subject of intense debate and criticism. In the first two chapters Howard Marshall discusses the nature of the human plight in relation to the judgment of God and then offers a nuanced defence of the doctrine of the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ for sinners. The third chapter examines the place of the resurrection of Christ as an integral part of the process whereby sinners are put in the right with God. In the final chapter Marshall argues that in our communication of the gospel today the New Testament concept of reconciliation may be the most comprehensive and apt expression of the lasting significance of the death of Christ. The papers are expanded versions of the 2006 series of Chuen King Lectures given in the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

I. Howard Marshall is Emeritus Professor of New Testament Exegesis and Honorary Research Professor at the University of Aberdeen. He has authored many books on the New Testament.

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Evangelical New Testament interpretation within the contemporary scene

I. Howard Marshall

SUMMARY

How do we as evangelical believers interpret Scripture to discover what it is saying (and also what it is not saying) to us in our situation? Historical critical methods explore exegetical and historical questions as to what the text meant and whether it was reliable, but offer little to help us to move to what it is saying to us. A bunch of methods evaluate what the text says from various standpoints and judge it, but say little about how we find out what it is saying. Contemporary evangelicalism is largely tied to principlizing and applying the text, which is good as far as it goes. The redemptive-movement hermeneutic is defended as one method applicable especially to ethical and practical instruction. Can something similar to it be used to understand theological statements? I conclude that a variety of methods must be used.

* * * * * * * *

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Wie deuten wir Evangelikale die Schrift in dem Bemühen, herauszufinden, was sie uns in unserer Situation sagt (und auch was sie nicht sagt)? Methoden der historisch-kritischen Forschung gehen exegetischen und historischen Fragen nach und erforschen, was der Text einst meinte und ob er zuverlässig war. Allerdings helfen sie uns wenig dabei, eine Antwort auf die Frage zu finden, was er heute für uns bedeutet. Eine bunte Auswahl von Methoden bewertet, was der Text von unterschiedlichen Standpunkten betrachtet sagt, aber sie geben wenig Aufschluss darüber, wie wir herausfinden können, was er heute aussagt. Die gegenwärtige evangelikale Bewegung befasst sich hauptsächlich damit, Prinzipien aus dem Text zu extrahieren und sie anzuwenden, was so weit es möglich ist auch gut und schön ist. Die Hermeneutik der redemptive-movement [Erlösungs-Bewegung] vertritt einen Ansatz, der besonders bei ethischer und praktischer Unterweisung angewandt wird. Könnte man nicht etwas Ähnliches anwenden, wenn es um das Verständnis theologischer Aussagen geht? Ich komme zu der Schlussfolgerung, dass eine Vielfalt von Methoden anzuwenden ist.

* * * * * * * *

RÉSUMÉ

Comment procédons-nous, croyants évangéliques, pour interpréter l'Écriture et découvrir ce qu'elle nous dit (et ce qu'elle ne nous dit pas) dans notre situation concrète? Les méthodes de critique historique traitent de questions exégétiques et historiques pour déterminer ce que le texte signifiait et s'il était fiable, mais n'apportent que peu d'aide pour discerner ce qu'il nous dit à nous. Bien des méthodes servent à mettre en lumière, de divers points de vue, ce que le texte dit, et à en juger, mais elles ne permettent pas de dire grand-chose sur la façon de découvrir ce qu'il nous dit pour aujourd'hui. Les évangéliques se contentent souvent de nos jours de tirer des principes du texte et d'en dégager des applications, ce qui est une bonne approche dans les limites de ce qu'elle peut produire. L'herméneutique du mouvement de la rédemption est une méthode applicable spécialement à l'instruction éthique et pratique. Peut-on employer une méthode similaire pour la compréhension d'affirmations théologiques ? Marshall conclut en encourageant la mise en œuvre d'une diversité de méthodes.

* * * * * * * *

How do we as evangelical believers interpret Scripture to discover what it is saying (and also what it is not saying) to us in our situation?[1] The historical-critical or grammatico-critical approach was essentially concerned with establishing what Scripture was saying in its original situation and with evaluating it in terms of whether it was historically reliable. Conservative scholars tended to assume that what the original writers intended to say was the message for us also, granted that there might be some differences in application. More recent approaches evaluate the text from different perspectives and tend to impose some outside authority as the criterion of its truth and validity.[2] But how do evangelicals, or how should evangelicals, who accept the authority of Scripture, find out what it is saying and what it is not saying to us today? What is the value of an authoritative revelation from God if we are not sure what it actually says?

Mainstream types of evangelical interpretation

A recent symposium edited by Gary Meadors and entitled *Moving beyond the Bible to Theology,* brings together for comparison four apparently different methods of interpreting Scripture, in each case motivated by the concern to get from what the biblical writers wrote to what is the message that comes from them to the church today.[3]

It is a pity that, although the symposium has the word 'theology' in its title and the term does get mentioned in the body of the discussion, in fact the focus is *almost entirely on ethics and practice rather than on theology*. For example, the path from the New Testament to Chalcedon and onwards is not trodden. Nevertheless, what is attempted in the book is important for dealing with the ethical material. The first three of the four contributors to the book tend to agree that their methods are not in competition – with one being right and the others wrong – but rather that they are *complementary*. Collectively they recognise some merit in the fourth approach (the redemptive-movement method) but they also voice strong opposition to it.

A principlizing approach

The first contributor, Walter Kaiser, advocates a '*principlizing*' approach, in which the interpreter works upwards from the specific teaching of a passage of Scripture to the principles at different levels on a ladder of abstraction and generality that may lie behind it, and then tries to move down again to the application or concretisation of these principles in the context of our own culture. There is thus a two-way movement from the passage to the underlying more abstract principles and then from these principles to their application in the interpreter's world.

Writing in a book concerned with going '*Beyond* the Bible', Kaiser insists that this approach is not an exercise in *going beyond* Scripture but rather in *applying* it. He illustrates the method with the test-cases of euthanasia, women and the church, homosexuality, slavery and embryos. In each case Scripture provides ample principles to settle issues that were not necessarily in the authors' minds, so that there is no sense in which we have to go 'beyond' Scripture other than in widening the application of the timeless principles that it expresses.

This raises the question of what it means to 'go beyond Scripture'. Fresh applications are good and Kaiser's definition of 'going beyond' is carefully worded so as to avoid excluding them. He thus wants to say that Scripture itself answers our questions and the problems are those of making applications rather than creating fresh principles. There are no new principles about releasing slaves that go beyond Scripture.[4]

Kaiser may appear to be simply representing the evangelical consensus approach to exposition. His approach becomes more individual, however, when he develops two additional axioms. The first is that there is a *progressive* revelation in Scripture that is *perfect*, at least in seminal form, at every stage.[5] The second is that the *authorial* meaning of a text remains constant and the same even when (for example) a New Testament author quotes an Old Testament passage. Kaiser thus rejects the concept of a *sensus plenior*.

His claim that at any stage in a progressive revelation of God the revelation is perfect needs unpacking to see if it is valid. I presume that he could be using the analogy of the growth of a baby which starts off by being a perfect example of what a newly born child should be, and develops into a perfect example of a young child, a teenager and eventually an adult. The difficulty is that whereas the one child develops from one stage to the next, we are dealing with separate episodes in a revelation which are, so to speak, 'frozen' in Scripture and therefore may appear incomplete and even misleading in certain respects when they are seen from a later vantage point. Taken on their own, statements about God visiting the sins of the parents upon the children are one-sided and misleading in the light of other statements, even if they contain partial truths.

When any problems arise, where Scripture appears to teach something that is unacceptable (whether because it is contradicted by other texts or because it goes counter to the interpreter's beliefs), Kaiser solves them at the level of the *exegesis* of the texts: the author did not mean what he is commonly thought to mean, and Kaiser offers a *fresh exegesis* of what he said.

This sounds beautifully simple and it is a standard approach that I (and many evangelical theologians) have frequently expounded and commended. It is, however, not immune from criticism.

1. Kaiser achieves his answers in some cases by adopting rather *unusual interpretations* that are unacceptable to some of the other contributors to the book and doubtless to many other scholars as well. His claim that Paul actually teaches the abolition of slavery is strongly contested by the fourth contributor, W.J. Webb, who argues (correctly in my opinion) that Paul does not go so far.[6] Elsewhere some of the argumentation seems a bit simplistic.

2. The new applications that are found and needed are often not different ways of dealing with the same problems that were faced in the Bible (like whether women may teach in church or how parents discipline children) but *ways of dealing with fundamentally different contemporary problems*; for example, we are not concerned to establish the ethics of relations between slave-owners and slaves but rather the ethics of relations between employers and employees, and, although these may be superficially similar, there are basic differences between the two situations. As a result Kaiser slides over the differences between the problems of how you treat your employees and of whether the biblical teaching permits (and merely regulates) slavery.

3. How do we decide *which applications of the biblical principles to specific problems are right and appropriate?* If the abolition of slavery is not advocated in the Bible, is abolition today a re-application of the biblical principles concerning slavery (and if so, which ones)? If so, is it a more legitimate and more binding application that takes precedence over the principles that govern the practice of slavery? Suppose that a slave-owner in some modern culture has slaves, what do we expect him to do when he gets converted? Do we say to him: 'keeping slaves is fine, so long as you treat them well; that's what the underlying principles of Paul's teaching say'? Or do we say, 'If you understood and applied biblical principles correctly, you would realise that you are wrong to continue owning slaves'? Alongside this question is the related one (which probably merges with it) of how one identifies which principles are appropriate for particular problems.

4. There needs to be some analysis of whether there are any rules for making progress up and down the ladder. *How do we move from applications to principles?*

5. How do we know which biblical principles to apply to *problems not tackled in Scripture* (e.g. medical research)?

6. Kaiser's illustrative examples are all concerned with ethics rather than doctrine, and so his essay does not get to grips with the problem indicated in the book's title of 'Moving… to *Theology*'. Is his approach not one that is by its nature limited to ethical principles? Maybe he is like J.I. Packer, who was prepared to change the time-bound applications of ethical principles but said nothing about the spiritual truths.[7]

Now admittedly the boundary between theology and ethical principles and applications is fuzzy and there is a considerable amount of merging. But there are real difficulties on the theological side that cannot be solved by minting ever more abstract principles.[8] It would be a useful exercise to ask how the process can be freed from these methodological problems.

I do not think that the problems are such as to condemn the method: Searching for underlying principles of conduct and extending their application is a legitimate and necessary procedure. My main point is that it is mistaken to claim that nothing more is ever required or that it is always appropriate.

A redemptive-historical model

The next two essayists in the book may well seem not to go much further. David Doriani offers a '*redemptive-historical*' model. Like Kaiser he holds that Scripture in itself is sufficient to equip the believer for every good work, and thus we do not really go beyond it when we apply it. But, first, he wants to stress *the importance of narrative* alongside didactic, propositional material. Basically he wants to add a use of biblical narratives as commendations of types of conduct (or warnings): 'Where a series of acts by the faithful create a pattern, and God or the narrator approves the pattern, it directs believers, even if no law spells out the lesson.' Teaching may be drawn from narratives, especially where several narratives point in the same direction. This helps us 'to address issues that never attract the direct interest of Scripture'.[9]

The second part of his method is to set up *a* *framework of questions to ask about four aspects* of the biblical data; these are concerned with what we can learn from a passage about duty, good character, worthy goals and gaining a biblical worldview.[10] In this light he examines specific questions about gambling, architecture (i.e. safe roofs) and especially women and ministry, where he gives an exegesis of biblical passages to support male leadership and affirms 'that women may not preach or teach authoritatively among God's assembled people'.[11]

I am puzzled by the way in which Doriani's interpretative conclusions regarding the specific passages and the theme that he discusses here appear to be based purely on his exegesis rather than on his use of questions about the four aspects from which one can approach the biblical data, and I feel that he has not done justice to his proposed method. Further, I am puzzled as to what 'redemptive-historical' means in the title of his essay.

As with Kaiser, we find for the most part the same limitation of attention to ethical issues of behaviour. It may also be worrying that by practising essentially the same methods Kaiser and Doriani arrive at different conclusions on the place of women in the church.[12] And neither of them attempts to examine the contemporary world (both Christian and non-Christian) to see what factors make people unhappy about the hierarchicalist position.

The drama of redemption

The approach of the third contributor, Kevin Vanhoozer, is close to that of Tom Wright in speaking of an ongoing *drama* of redemption in which we are shaped by what has gone on in the earlier scenes; we take our place on stage, not knowing how the play will end or reach its denouement, but resting on the direction that is set by what has gone before and the divine assurances and pre-pictures of what the future will be like. Interpretation means acting out the biblical teaching in life rather than simply in our minds. Vanhoozer is essentially concerned with this our involvement as actors in this drama, who are to show our understanding of Scripture by *doing* God's will and not just talking and arguing about it. An essential, indispensable part of evangelical biblical interpretation must be the working out of what the text is saying in our own personal lives, both individual and as members of various communities including the congregation to which we belong. Otherwise the intended effect of Scripture does not take place. Application is an essential part of preaching. Preaching is meant to change the hearers or to encourage and re-emphasise the changes that should already be taking place. Performance of what Scripture says is a vital aspect of interpretation, without which we cannot really say that Scripture has been interpreted.

So, then, we need to interpret and to act, unlike those who ignore one or other of these tasks. The Bible story is

> a series of events that, when taken together as a unified drama, serve as a lens or interpretative framework through which Christians think, make sense of their experience, and decide what to do and how to do it.[13]

As participants in a theodrama we must develop a 'canon sense' to find out what is fitting. Key questions to ask about any scene in the drama are: Who is speaking? Where are we in the drama? What is going on when seen from a divine perspective? This approach is then applied to consideration of two case studies (Mary; transsexuality).

At the end of Vanhoozer's exposition I am still baffled as to how I am to find out what I am expected to *do* in order to interpret difficult texts and live them out. It is all far too vague, a set of what are more like goals without any clear indication of how to attain them. Vanhoozer is certainly right that Scripture reading is meant to *lead to changed action and character* rather than just intellectual understanding, and his contribution is compatible with all the others, but it doesn't provide any guidance for dealing with obscure, ambiguous or culturally-shaped texts.

Certainly Vanhoozer has written more widely on the subject elsewhere. Here he makes it clearer that instead of looking for deculturalized principles (as he calls them) we would do better to follow 'canonical practices', and not so much doctrinal statements as rather 'patterns of judgment', but recognising that 'the same judgment can be rendered in a variety of conceptual terms'. His illustration is the way in which the council of Nicea has the same judgment about Christ as is expressed in Philippians 2 with its statement about Christ's 'equality with God'. Instead of systematising the concepts in Scripture (as by Packer) or extracting principles (Kaiser) we should discern and continue *the biblical patterns of judgment*, following '*canonical practices*' as we 'make the same kind of judgments about God, the world, and ourselves as those embedded in Scripture'.[14] As it stands, it is impossible to see what this means in practice.

A redemptive-movement approach

If the first three contributions hang together fairly closely, the fourth is rather different and demands closer attention. William Webb advocates a *redemptive-movement* hermeneutical method in which we discover what he calls the trajectories in understanding and practice that exist in Scripture itself and then allow ourselves to be carried along further by them. In this way we find new patterns of living that are in continuity with Scripture and are scripturally based but take us beyond what Scripture actually says, and may show up the inadequacies of the earlier stages in revelation.[15] We can trace in Scripture a set of shifts to a more 'redemptive' style of behaviour compared not only with that of some of Israel's neighbours but also with earlier teaching in their Scriptures.

This trajectory is particularly clearly seen in the laws and customs regarding *slavery* which make for a more humane practice as time goes by. But the trajectory does not stop there. Although the New Testament authors accept slavery as an institution and for the most part merely try to regulate it, there are latent tendencies in thinking and attitudes (particularly in Paul's appeal to Philemon to regard Onesimus as a brother, not only in the Lord, but also in the flesh) that point to the realisation, which was slow in coming, that slavery is incompatible with Christian theology and ethics. One might say that the principles that lead to the abolition of slavery are there in the canonical, final revelation, but the application of these principles to that issue has not yet taken place.

A second example concerns the use of *corporal punishment*. Here Webb shows how even those evangelical scholars and teachers who insist on retaining the biblical teaching regarding physical chastisement of children nevertheless quietly ameliorate it, apparently without realising that they are doing so. He argues that the trajectory found in Scripture has been and is being traversed further in Christian history, as in the abolition of slavery, on the basis of broader biblical teaching. Granted that the biblical revelation is final and definitive, it nevertheless contains the momentum to take its application further. The movement cannot cease with canonisation. Scripture must be read in the light of this momentum and acted upon.

One particular characteristic of this approach is that it is *canonical* in the sense that it is concerned with the search for material on particular topics throughout the Bible. It recognises that the canon is the result of a progressive revelation, which means that the whole of Scripture must be taken into account as a possible source for material and that there is a fuller revelation from one stage to another. This applies to such periods as that from the creation to the calling of Abraham, from Abraham to Moses, from Moses through the Old Testament period, from the birth of Jesus Christ to his death and resurrection, and from the resurrection through the period of the early church. Although the coming of Christ is the centre of Scripture and revelation, the full significance of that event is not made clear until the period of the apostles who unpack what was latent earlier in terms of the work of the Spirit, the opening of the church to Gentiles and the superseding of the law of Moses by the law of Christ or the law of the Spirit. The revelation given in the life and teaching of Jesus is *not complete* but required the further revelation that the disciples were not ready to receive until after his resurrection and the beginning of the ongoing work of the Spirit in the church.

But the main point to emphasise is that this method deals with the Bible as canon and underlines that *individual texts may not be final*. For example, in the matter of wives Ephesians 5 is incomplete in that it says nothing about wives loving their husbands, and it must be complemented by Titus 2:4.

Webb is well aware that this approach might be misappropriated to generate trajectories that would be false developments from biblical teaching. In particular he rejects any attempt to 'move on' from the biblical teaching that condemns homosexual practices as sinful. He is therefore at pains to set up some procedures for *testing whether a proposed trajectory is valid or not*, and in this particular case he argues strongly that there are no grounds for seeing in the Bible any movement away from the negative stance on homosexual behaviour, but rather that the unanimity of the biblical teaching forbids such a move. The major part of his first book, *Slaves, Women & Homosexuals*, is concerned with the principles that may be invoked to test whether a proposed trajectory is actually there and to lay down limits that forbid the creation of trajectories that are not justified, still less demanded, by the biblical revelation.

Here, then, is a new approach that leads beyond the Bible, not only in the sense of fresh applications but also in the recognition of divine principles which were not fully patent and explicit to the New Testament writers but which are thoroughly and deeply biblical and which lead to conduct that may be rather different from biblical practice.[16] Like the other contributions to Meadors' symposium it deals with principles of conduct rather than doctrine, but it operates by laying bare theological truths that are expressed in Scripture or that must be postulated in order to account for what Scripture says on the surface and then using them to move beyond Scripture.

Consequently, this approach may on occasion propose conduct that would not have been allowed in biblical times. The main (and controversial) example here is the freedom given to women over against their husbands or the men in the church. It may also prohibit behaviour that was acceptable and permitted or even encouraged in some biblical texts, such as the beating of a recalcitrant child or slave and the ownership of slaves. In some cases there may be instances where the culturally conditioned application of a principle has become inappropriate in a different culture. (A holy kiss may send out the wrong messages in some cultures.)

Webb notes as an argument in favour of the validity of his approach that some of those who attack his method nevertheless actually follow it themselves when dealing with such matters as restricting the degree of physical punishment permitted in Scripture. Even if the Bible allows you to go to a particular degree of punishment, they forbid it. They are tacitly and perhaps unconsciously saying that we are not permitted to do what Scripture permits, not because of a cultural shift but because the Scriptural principle does not take us far enough. So Webb's proposal goes beyond a shift of application in changing culture.

It must be emphasised that this approach is not one to be applied to every bit of scriptural teaching and practice, as if everything were up for grabs. There are major areas of biblical teaching that remain unaffected by the process. It is appropriate for dealing with attitudes and conduct where Scripture already operates with setting limits to sinful oppression and we need to go further. Specific questions that should be investigated could be:

1. Does biblical teaching takes us beyond 'just war' to pacifism?
2. What should be the conventions accepted in situations of war? I am not thinking of the changes due to changing culture but of those due to the need to reformulate biblical principles in relation to new kinds of weaponry (including poison gas and viruses; nuclear weapons; the use of torture), the indiscriminate slaughter of prisoners (genocide), the distinction between targeting armed forces and civilians, and so on.
3. How do we deal with questions regarding adultery, divorce and treatment of divorced persons?
4. Is medical care (and other services) for all people something that a state should be required to provide?

Critiquing Webb

A critique of Webb's method needs to look in turn at the two stages in the process.[17] The first is whether there are redemptive *trajectories through Scripture itself* and how they are to be recognised and tested. Webb finds them by comparison of different passages and external evidences. A trajectory may be spotted in a particular passage, but the exercise requires a synthetic treatment of the material. His book discusses in great detail the principles for identifying the presence or absence (or weakness) of proposed trajectories. He lists places where Scripture modifies an original cultural norm in a manner that can be seen as open to further future modification, or where Scripture contains a seed idea that encourages further movement, or where social norms in one part of Scripture are 'broken out of' in other texts, or where following a text literally no longer achieves the originally intended intent or purpose, or where the basis of a practice lies in the fall or the ensuing curse. He lists other less persuasive criteria as when a biblical practice is preferred to competing practices or scripture speaks out strongly against a practice, and he also lists other inconclusive criteria. Important is the question of customs that are contrary to present-day scientific evidence.[18]

The second area for questioning Webb's method is whether these trajectories set *paths that must be followed further beyond Scripture* to fuller redemption in the course of time. Are there new principles or is it just a matter of re-application of known principles? And are these developments in accordance with Scripture or do they render some of it obsolete? Do they lead to what might be regarded as contradictions of Scripture? Consider how following the trajectory on corporal punishment forbids doing what Scripture allows, so that it is no defence for a person who beats a child excessively to claim that Scripture permits it.

We all do go beyond Scripture in developing patterns of Christian behaviour (e.g. the care for the environment that it is a bit of a struggle to get out of New Testament teaching), and the question would be whether this is simply a case of fresh applications or rather of redemptive movement that is more than mere application. What is going on seems to me to be partly the recognition of the relevance of principles that may not have been applied to a specific problem in Scripture rather than simply a revised application of the principles that were in mind. I would regard this as doing something fresh that may lead to applications that go beyond straight scriptural teaching and that may involve not doing what Scripture allows or commands and doing other things that Scripture may have prohibited. Redemptive movement is a fact of Christian living.

Another area might be where a Christian practice may have been based on the surface on principles that no longer apply but may still be justified on the basis of other principles that may be scriptural or in harmony with Scripture. The Old Testament prohibitions on eating certain foods because they were regarded as ritually unclean may no longer apply with the shift in covenants, but might be seen as still worth enforcing in hot countries with a danger of the food going off and becoming unsafe for human consumption. In modern times an analogous case might be the earlier intuitive belief that tobacco should not be used by believers for a variety of somewhat inarticulate reasons (waste of money; unpleasant atmosphere created for non-smokers; possibly some health reasons such as development of catarrh) but this prohibition is now set on absolutely firm, clear ground because use of tobacco causes lung cancer and death. A concern for the sanctity and preservation of life, both one's own and that of others, is surely biblical. Similarly, the Christian principle of concern for the welfare of other believers that led Paul to forbid eating food or drinking alcohol for fear of setting a bad example (and so encouraging idolatry and immorality) may well need to be taken up with regard to alcohol because of the horrendous health and social evils that accompany its widespread availability and use.

Beyond the Bible: theology

As developed by Webb, the redemptive-movement tool deals mainly with principles of conduct which are affected by thinking through the application of redemptive principles in Scripture, but inevitably this involves theological principles from which the conduct is derived. Here various issues arise. I mention three but only the last of these can be discussed here.

a. The *systematisation* of theology. This includes the synthesising of biblical teaching with all the problems inherent in constructing a theology of the Bible or of its component testaments.

b. The search for a Christian theological understanding with reference to *problems that were as yet unknown to the Scriptural authors*. These include broader philosophical questions but also particular issues that raise questions of principle: Is a foetus a person or an entity to be treated as a person with rights? Are some forms of contraception unacceptable in that they are essentially abortions? Is the with-holding of life support in any sense murder? What is life?

c. The third problem is that of relating the teaching of particular passages to what appears to be the central or the fullest revelation of theological truths in Scripture. This is especially important when dealing with *passages that present prima facie difficulties in interpretation and application*. I return to one delicate topic that I have looked at elsewhere,[19] the nature of divine judgment. There is what I regard as clear, mainline teaching in Scripture that God is the supreme judge, who acts in wrath against sinners, and who will condemn the unrighteous to eternal punishment. However, some biblical imagery apparently depicts God as acting like a human torturer or tormentor. The picture of God provided by some of the parables of Jesus is horrendous if it is taken literally or if it is applied metaphorically to say that God does spiritually whatever it is that corresponds to human torture (Matthew 18:35; 24:51; 25:41; Luke 12:46; 16:25, 28; 19:27). And of course this language is not confined to parables and analogies where we might more easily find ways of saying that what God does analogously may be different from what human rulers do literally. God is also described in Scripture as acting through horrific human disasters and through the cruelty of pagan rulers who torture his sinful people (Isaiah 10:5-7). God exercises whatever is the spiritual equivalent to torture on the devil and unrepentant sinners. On earth human rulers bear the sword on his behalf (Romans 13).

1. A redemptive trajectory through Scripture and beyond would forbid the *human* use of torture as inhuman, granted that there may be a fuzzy line between doing something

unpleasant to criminals to dissuade them from repetition of the offence and doing something that is too cruel.[20] But if cruelty is forbidden to human beings, must it not all the more be forbidden to God by his just and righteous nature, to say nothing of his mercy? Can we have a religion in which God is permitted to do what would be regarded as evil if a human being did it? The point may be made all the more emphatically by reflecting that no evangelical preacher today is likely to say in an evangelistic sermon: 'Think of the most appalling ways that Hitler or Saddam Hussein treated their enemies: I assure you that the fate that will befall sinners at the hand of God will be infinitely worse than their acts of torture.'

2. Human beings are forbidden to take vengeance at all. This command is linked to the allotment of this role to God alone. Private vengeance is forbidden, though state action is authorised. The implication is that God will act in a way that avoids the injustices that easily attach to the human action (Romans 12:19). We are not told how God does so, perhaps in case we should try imperfectly to imitate it. But, so far as the final judgement is concerned, it would seem likely that the human aspects that are forbidden would include torture, and it is hard to think of a divine equivalent action that would somehow be acceptable where human torture is not.
3. A more difficult point to decide might be whether the suffering of intense and lasting pain is necessary to wipe out the guilt (or whatever we may call it) of the suffering and pain that the offender may have caused to somebody else. If an offender murders my infant son, is the offence somehow cancelled out by executing him or killing his son? We face the difficult question of the relation between restitution as a way of undoing an evil action and its effects and retribution in the sense of inflicting pain upon the offender. This is an area that needs further investigation, the result of which might well be to ask whether my suffering of pain can somehow cancel out my evil action in causing pain to somebody else.
4. We might also raise the question: how does the principle of an 'eye for an eye' do me as the bereaved father any good? Do I get some sort of satisfaction out of it? Do I know that justice has been done and feel satisfied as a result? And how in any case can one measure the offence and the punishment in relation to one another?
   Can we find an alternative way of taking full account of the biblical insistence on God's justice, his wrath and judgment, and his action at the last judgment that does not involve something akin to torture? The way to solve the problem may be to note that the outcome of divine judgment is the exclusion of sinners from the future kingdom of God so that they will not destroy the peace and love that reign there (Matthew 7:23; 8:12; Luke 13:27-28); this would be a combination of restraint from further evil activity and deprivation of the blessings of the kingdom, in other words a fitting punishment.
5. This exclusion consists in spiritual death rather than the ongoing torment of seeing the bliss of the kingdom from outside and knowing that you will never experience it. The alternative to eternal life is eternal death or destruction, not eternal life in torment.[21]
6. Alongside this imagery of eternal death as exclusion from the kingdom of God there is a second type of imagery: ongoing conscious torment inflicted by God. It would seem right to regard the former as the controlling image, and the second as the use of human imagery intended to bring home to sinners how dire are the consequences of sin: it uses the analogy of human despotic behaviour with the limited aim of showing that the consequences of sin are dreadful but without seeing them as a divine version of torture.

This discussion is part of the wider issue of the nature of the final judgment, whether it is (simply) exclusion from the kingdom of God or the new Jerusalem, which is tantamount to spiritual death, or is a never-ending punishment (analogous to being in a fire that goes on and on destroying something but never actually completing the process). To adopt either position involves making a choice not to accept biblical teaching that appears to favour the rejected option. Presumably some of those who take a different line from me would want to argue that the eternal torment passages spell out more fully what the eternal death passages say, whereas the latter are a simplification of the former, and any harmonisation will do better justice to all the evidence if the former are taken as normative: eternal death is to be understood as living, never-ending torment. It could be argued on the other side that the real point of the eternal torment passages is to indicate that the judgment on sin is so severe that it is a worse fate than that described in terms of infinite suffering.

Thus, and this is vital, in this particular case we have tried to find a solution to our problem *by means of exegesis*: the exegesis sees two types of imagery that are in tension, and I have tried to find a solution to the tension by regarding one type as primary over the other. The exegesis also recognises the danger of drawing more out of an analogy than is justified (God's intense opposition to and wrath against sin, but not his torturing of sinners).

What is happening here is one specific attempt to discern how to interpret Scripture on the basis of a Christian mind that is nourished by Scripture. If I do not believe that God tortures and torments, it is because of the biblical teaching as a whole that condemns torture and that extols the justice and the mercy of God. This directs me not to take more out of the application of human imagery to God than is permitted, e.g. by understanding his wrath in an anthropomorphic way.

This particular example is more concerned with dealing with texts that may be misunderstood to imply that God practises torture. But at the same time there is a movement towards making clear that the biblical message emphasises in the strongest possible manner the importance of human beings taking morality and religion seriously since the consequences of not doing so are indeed dire. The texts thus call hearers urgently to seek reconciliation with God and to respond to the gospel before it is too late. And this is a message for today that the world needs to hear.

I have used an extremely sensitive and controversial example of this type of interpretation. On the one side, it may be very difficult for believers who seek to be fully sanctified in love, truth and righteousness to accept some apparent biblical teaching. But, on the other hand, to put it bluntly, if the idea that God does something akin to torture does not worry us, is there maybe something lacking from our sanctification?

To be sure, my exegesis still leaves other questions unanswered. We shall still have to see the hand of God in the actions of flawed human beings carrying out judgment with violence and injustice on earth. Somehow God is constrained in his actions within this imperfect world, where violence is endemic.[22] And it is only in Christ that we see perfection.

Space forbids discussion of these matters, but we cannot close our minds to such questions, and we dare not proclaim a God who is immoral, when he is the high and holy one who cannot stand iniquity.

What I hope to have done here is to demonstrate briefly how placing the difficult passages about torment in the wider context of Scripture and its teaching about how God's people must live provides a context within which we may see that the biblical language should not be interpreted to teach things about God which are inconsistent with his nature and his name. There is no simple 'method' for doing this. It is more like an art than a science. But basically the stages are:

1. *Identifying* difficult passages, where the difficulty arises from the passage or doctrine in relation to our basic understanding of God.
2. Interpreting the biblical texts by the *ordinary methods of exegesis* to see whether they point to a trajectory.
3. *Comparing* Scripture with Scripture.
4. Ascertaining whether the difficult material may be otherwise interpreted *without treating it unfairly* (e.g. by exegesis that does not stand up to criticism).
5. Seeking out the *essential point* that the difficult passage is making and expressing it clearly.[23]
6. Finding a *rationale* for why the difficult passage is expressed in a difficult manner rather than in one that is free from objection.

Thus this aspect of our interpretive task has two sides. Positively, there is the desire to set Scripture free to speak significantly and meaningfully to ourselves and our world. We need to unleash the lion to roar meaningfully and bring fresh challenges to us. But also negatively, there are many occasions when people dismiss some teaching of Scripture. Sometimes this may be due to their wilful or ignorant denial of biblical teaching (e.g. denial that adultery is sinful). Sometimes it may be due to a mistaken idea of what Scripture actually does teach (e.g. that divorce is permissible only in cases of adultery[24]). And sometimes it may be Christians with minds nurtured on Scripture who find some point unacceptable or inadequate in the light of what they see as biblical teaching and biblical theology.[25]

I would describe the Christian mind nurtured on the Gospel as one that tries to understand everything in the light of the revelation of God's character as essentially holy love or loving holiness, which expresses itself over against the fallen creation in wrath and grace. Where images appear to conflict, we shall have to ask which makes better sense in the light of the divine character. Ultimately holiness and love may be the same quality, but we seem to need both words together to avoid falling into inadequate ideas of God.

Conclusion

Within the broad area of biblical interpretation this article has focussed on the problems of how we ascertain what Scripture is saying to us and what it is not saying to us. We saw that various methods must be used side by side as appropriate. The grammatico-historical method establishes by exegesis what Scripture was saying when it was originally written, and very often the message to be expounded and applied to us is essentially the same. More recent approaches examine Scripture from different viewpoints (e.g. a concern for the oppressed) and this may reveal new facets of its message, although some writers tend to judge Scripture and find it wanting and subordinate it to a secular authority. Evangelical theologians generally recognise that the precise application of Biblical teaching may need to be adapted to different social and cultural situations. There is a general acceptance of the process of principlizing, whereby the underlying principles in particular biblical passages are laid bare and then form the basis for fresh applications; this applies to narrative material as well as to teaching material. An important stress is being laid on the realisation that interpretation of Scripture must go beyond an intellectual apprehension of its teaching and commands to a transformation of life that embodies and expresses Scripture in practical ways. The recognition that there are trajectories in the redeeming and transforming of various aspects of scriptural teaching within Scripture itself, especially in the movement from the old to the new covenant but also throughout both periods, and that these tendencies continue in the life and teaching of the church alerts us to consider the parameters by which we recognise their presence and also by which we reject false moves beyond what Scripture teaches. What has been pioneered with reference to biblical ethics also needs to be applied to the interpretation of biblical doctrine so as to avoid false understanding of it as well as to recognise where Scripture calls us to fuller understanding of its teaching.

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Notes

1 This is the edited version of a paper given at the conference of FEET, the Fellowship of European Evangelical Theologians, in Berlin, August 2010.

2 P. Gooder, *Searching for Meaning: An introduction to interpreting the New Testament* (London: SPCK, 2008).

3 G.T. Meadors (ed.), *Four Views on Moving Beyond the Bible to Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009). It is a pity that the book deals only with evangelical approaches and scarcely mentions other contemporary approaches and what we can learn from them. Richard Hays briefly appears on stage (171-173) but that is about all! See further my review in *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* 28:2 (2010), 241-44.

4 W.C. Kaiser, Jr., 'A principlizing model' in Meadors (ed.), *Four Views*, 19-50.

5 Kaiser, 'Principlizing model', 47-48.

6 W.J. Webb, 'A redemptive-movement model', in Meadors (ed.), *Four Views*, 215-248.

7 For Packer, 'Biblical passages must be taken to mean *what their human authors were consciously expressing*.' This can then be 'synthesized to yield universal and abiding truths about the will, work and ways of God… [and] universal and abiding principles of loyalty and devotion to the holy, gracious Creator.' The latter need to be detached from their original situations and cultural frames and subjected to 'rational application'. See J.I. Packer, *Honouring the Written Word of God* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1999) 153, 157.

8 My problem is that I don't belong to your average evangelical congregation which doesn't ask questions about these things because that would be to question and perhaps reject Scripture. Instead I am a member of a more mixed one where some people have eyes to see the really awkward bits of the Bible and keep me from being content with turning a blind eye to them or not trying to find an acceptable theodicy. As a preacher I have to help those in the congregation who have these problems and are worried by them. We shall return to these later, but for the moment I shall register the point that Kaiser's method simply does not provide any way of doing so.

9 David M Doriani, 'A redemptive-historical model' in Meadors (ed.), *Four Views*, 75-120, here 89.

10 Doriani, 'Redemptive-historical model', 103.

11 Doriani, 'Redemptive-historical model', 117.

12 I find it hard to see any significant difference here from Kaiser's approach that merits calling this a different approach. Kaiser's criticisms are therefore a mix of puzzled approval of the method and critique of the application of it that produces what he sees as wrong results.

13 Kevin J. Vanhoozer, 'A drama-of-redemption model' in Meadors (ed.), *Four Views*, 151-199, here 155, cf. 169.

14 K.J. Vanhoozer. *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical-Linguistic Approach to Christian Theology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005). I had hoped to find examples of how to do this in this fuller treatment, but was disappointed.

15 See W.J. Webb, *Slaves, Women & Homosexuals* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2001); *Corporal Punishment Texts That Trouble The Soul: A Biblical Journey Beyond The Rod, The Whip and The Meat Cleaver* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2010); *Brutal, Bloody and Barbaric: War Texts That Trouble the Soul* (Downers Grove, IVP, forthcoming). Also 'The Limits of a Redemptive-Movement Hermeneutic: A Focused Response to T. R. Schreiner', *Evangelical Quarterly* 75 (2003) 327-342; 'A Redemptive-Movement Hermeneutic: Encouraging Dialogue among Four Evangelical Views', *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 48:2 (June 2005) 331-349.

16 The Old Testament permits oaths but insists that they must be kept, whereas Jesus argues for a practice of speech that does not need oaths because it always aims at truthfulness. Likewise the OT prescribes a procedure for divorce, but Jesus argues for avoidance of the adultery that was the basis for initiating a divorce. The OT is realistic about curbing the bad effects of sin, whereas Jesus attacks the sin itself, while presumably recognising the need to fall back on the OT when sin continues.

17 I pass over the criticisms made of him by the other contributors to Meadors (ed.), *Four Views*. See also W. Grudem, *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth: An analysis of 118 disputed questions* (Leicester: Apollos, 2005) 600-645, who regards the approach as thoroughly unevangelical, replacing the moral authority of Scripture with that of Webb's own 'better ethic'. Grudem attacks Webb for not realising that many of his examples are related to the shift between the old and new covenants, which is divinely attested in Scripture, whereas Webb thinks that he has the authority to find other trajectories that are not divinely authorised in Scripture. This attack ignores the fact that Grudem has to use his own human authority to decide where biblical applications of principles still apply or must be replaced. He also wrongly assumes that the authority for Webb's new code of behaviour is Webb's set of 18 tests, failing to note that these tests help us to *recognise* biblical principles that contain their own authority and do not *confer* authority on them; cf. how the authority of the biblical books is recognised by their canonisation and not conferred on them by that process.

18 This list is difficult to understand and to summarise in the confines of this article. It is important for what it forbids as well as what it encourages. In particular, it demonstrates that the biblical negative attitude to homosexual practices and adultery is unchanging.

19 I.H. Marshall (with K.J. Vanhoozer and S.E. Porter), *Beyond the Bible: Moving from Scripture to Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic / Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2004) 22-23.

20 There is surely a line between hitting a person's hand with or without a weapon and amputating the hand. Christian teaching would certainly forbid the latter, regardless of whether it is prohibited in Scripture.

21 For a different type of solution that sees the ongoing state of the lost to be that of a remorse that is in agreement with God's judgment on sin, see H. Blocher, 'Everlasting Punishment and the Problem of Evil', in N.M. de S. Cameron (ed.), *Universalism and the Doctrine of Hell* (Carlisle: Paternoster / Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993) 283-312.

22 See H. Boersma, *Violence, Hospitality and the Cross: Reappropriating the Atonement Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004).

23 For example, the teaching about submission of a wife to her husband is not to be rejected, but seen in a context of redemption and accepted as part of the biblical teaching about mutual submission to one another, i.e. of husbands to wives (e.g. over the best way to prepare dinner) as well as of wives to husbands (e.g. over how to understand the mind of a rebellious teenage son).

24 It has been sufficiently demonstrated that marital cruelty would have been taken for granted as a justification for divorce by readers of the Gospels; see the various treatments by D. Instone-Brewer, e.g. *Divorce and Remarriage in the Church: Biblical Solutions for Pastoral Realities* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2003).

25 It is therefore a piece of valuable Christian apologetic if we can show, for example, that what Scripture teaches about divine judgment is not that God will act like a human torturer but rather that God will not accept into his kingdom those who reject his rule in righteousness and love and do not repent of their sinful deeds and dispositions.

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Judaea in the First Century AD

A review of recent scholarly contributions and their implications

Christoph Stenschke

SUMMARY

This article introduces six recent books on Judaea in the first centuries BC and AD, representing a small selection of the many studies which continue to appear. The enormous interest is caused by several factors such as the interest in the historical Jesus and his social world; interest in the "fringes" of the Roman Empire; and the constant flow of new discoveries in Israel since 1948. Many of the scholars involved are Israelis. There is consensus in all these studies that first century BC and AD Judaea / Palaestina was far more diverse and complex than previously assumed.

Of the six volumes presented, two were written by Israelis, two by North Americans and two by German scholars. Three of the books were written by ancient historians, the other three were written or edited by scholars involved in biblical studies. Zangenberg's volume best indicates the international character of current research on ancient Judaea and indicates new approaches. At the same time it provides a fine example of how some highly technical research can be presented attractively to a wider audience.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieser Artikel stellt sechs, kürzlich erschienene Bücher über Judäa in den ersten Jahrhunderten vor und nach Christus vor. Sie repräsentieren eine kleine Auswahl der zahlreichen Werke, die am laufenden Band erscheinen. Das außerordentliche Interesse ist auf verschiedene Faktoren zurückzuführen, wie die Vorliebe für den historischen Jesus und sein soziales Umfeld, Wissensdurst in Bezug auf „Randerscheinungen" des römischen Imperiums sowie der unablässige Strom neuer Entdeckungen in Israel seit 1948. Viele der beteiligten Wissenschaftler sind Israelis. In all diesen Studien besteht ein Konsens darüber, dass das Judäa bzw. Palästina des ersten Jahrhunderts vor und nach Christus weitaus vielschichtiger und unübersichtlicher war als ursprünglich angenommen.

Von den sechs vorliegenden Bänden wurden zwei von israelischen Wissenschaftlern geschrieben, zwei von nordamerikanischen und zwei von deutschen. Drei der Bücher stammen von Althistorikern, die anderen drei wurden von Theologen aus dem Fachbereich biblischer Studien verfasst oder herausgegeben. Zangenbergs Band zeigt am besten den internationalen Charakter der gegenwärtigen Forschung über das antike Judäa auf und weist auf neue Ansätze hin. Gleichzeitig bietet er ein gutes Beispiel dafür, dass eine hoch technische Forschung durchaus auf attraktive Weise einer größeren Leserschaft dargeboten werden kann.

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RÉSUMÉ

Cet article présente six ouvrages récents consacrés à la Judée au I^{er} siècle avant et au I^{er} siècle après Jésus-Christ, et qui ne représentent qu'un échantillonnage des nombreuses études qui ne cessent de paraître sur ce sujet. Divers facteurs expliquent ce regain d'intérêt : ce qui touche au Jésus historique et à son milieu social retient toujours l'attention ; on s'intéresse à ce qui se passait aux confins de l'empire romain ; de nouvelles découvertes en Israël ne cessent de venir au jour depuis 1948. De nombreux spécialistes ayant contribué à ces travaux sont israéliens. Ces études manifestent un consensus sur le point suivant : à l'époque considérée, la Judée présentait bien plus de diversité et de complexité qu'on ne l'avait jusque-là pensé.

Deux des six ouvrages présentés ici ont pour auteurs des Israéliens, deux des Nord Américains et deux des Allemands. Trois ont été rédigés par des historiens de l'antiquité et les trois autres ont été écrits ou édités par des biblistes. L'ouvrage de Zangenberg témoigne du carac-

tère international de la recherche actuelle sur la Judée antique et présente de nouvelles approches. Il constitue en même temps un bon exemple de la mise à portée du grand public, et avec une présentation attrayante, d'une recherche d'une haute technicité.

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Rocca, Samuel, *Herod's Judaea: a Mediterranean State in the Classical World*. TSAJ 122 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008). xi + 445 pp. Cloth. ISBN 978-3-16-149717-9. € 119.

Netzer, Ehud, *The Architecture of Herod, the Great Builder*. TSAJ 117 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006). xiii + 443 pp. Cloth. ISBN 3-16-148570-X. € 129.

Eck, Werner, *Rom und Judaea: Fünf Vorträge zur römischen Herrschaft in Palästina*. Tria Corda (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008). 263 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-3-16-149460-4. € 30.

Zangenberg, Jürgen (ed.), *Das Tote Meer: Kultur und Geschichte am tiefsten Punkt der Erde* (Mainz: Ph. von Zabern, 2010). 172 pp. Cloth. ISBN 978-3-8053-4074-8. € 35.

Hanson, Kenneth C., Douglas E. Oakman, *Palestine in the Time of Jesus: Social Structures and Social Conflicts*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008). 251 pp. paperback. ISBN 978-0-8006-6309-4. $ 32.

Marshall, Jonathan, *Jesus, Patrons and Benefactors: Roman Palestine and the Gospel of Luke*. WUNT II.259 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009). xiv + 383 pp. Paperback. ISBN 978-3-16-149901-2. € 74.

Judaea in the first centuries BC and AD[1] has attracted a significant amount of attention in recent study. One of the reasons for this is the recent upsurge of interest in the historical Jesus in what is commonly called the "Third Quest" for the historical Jesus.[2] Another reason, closely linked to the former, is an ongoing interest in the social aspects of the world and life of Jesus, his followers and nascent Christianity.

Also, and outside of New Testament studies in the strict sense of the term, there has been a growing interest among ancient historians of various kinds in Judaea during the first centuries BC and AD. Some of this attention is and was fuelled by a wider upsurge of interest in the "fringes" of the Roman Empire, whether they were proper Roman provinces or the various territories in which the Romans made their presence felt in different ways; see, for example, the new series on the various Roman provinces.[3] The Eastern edges of the Roman Empire and the regions beyond the border (which was more permeable than absolute) seem to have been more the focus of this quest than other areas, e.g. the Northern fringes of the Empire, which have been studied in some detail in past research, studies often dominated by Europeans inquiring into their own past for various reasons and in pursuit of various agendas.

Some of this new interest in Judaea has been caused by the constant flow of discoveries since 1948 up to the present and their (at times painfully slow and haphazard) publication. Many of these discoveries are due to the large numbers of Israeli archaeologists and historians examining the material remains of the last Jewish state before its demise in 70 AD and the developments in the area during early rabbinic and Byzantine times. Some of these discoveries had, and continue to have, a strong and stimulating impact on New Testament scholarship; for example, excavation of the Jewish city of Sepphoris and Herod's port in Caesarea Maritima.[4]

Some studies of the past decade have focused on all of Judaea, some on specific areas (mainly Galilee, but also Samaria or the Decapolis), others have been locally confined. For each approach several monographs could be cited.[5] Another characteristic of this more recent "Palästinawissenschaft", as it used to be called, is its interdisciplinary nature and international character. Authors from vast fields of scholarly enquiry are involved and apply their particular questions, methodology and discourses of interpretation – which at times makes communication difficult! Many of them are Israelis from the various universities in Israel. Those of them who write in English make their own research – otherwise often published in Hebrew – and that of others scholars available to the international community.[6]

In addition to filling in many details and challenging older interpretations in various ways, there is consensus in all these studies that the worlds of first century BC and AD Judaea/Palaestina were far more diverse and complex than was previously assumed. In different ways, all these older and more recent studies benefit from the fact that there is hardly another area in the ancient world for which there is such a plethora of different sources available for that period of time.

The six volumes to be presented here reflect these developments each in their own way: two of the books were written by highly competent Israelis (one of them a senior and leading figure of Israeli archaeology), two by North Americans and two by German scholars. Three of these books were written by ancient historians, of whom one is at the same time an architect and archaeologist. The other three were written or edited by scholars involved in biblical studies. Zangenberg's volume best indicates the international character of current research on ancient Judaea and indicates new approaches. At the same time it provides a fine example of how some highly technical research can be presented attractively to a wider audience. Although representative of dozens of published books in the area in the past decade, the volumes we have selected cannot, of course, cover the whole of this extremely rich and vibrant field of study. Throughout the article I will refer to other contributions but I am well aware that, even with these titles included, this review article does not offer a systematic or comprehensive survey of this area of research.

Samuel Rocca

For several decades it seemed that A. Schalit's monumental monograph on Herod the Great[7] and the material in the English revision of E. Schürer's *History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C. – A.D. 135)* had "said it all". However, the last few years have seen a renaissance of scholarly interest in Herod, the Herodian house and the various aspects of Herodian society.[8] Impetus for this new quest came from some of the recently discovered archaeological, literary and epigraphic sources, from the strong impetus of a more critical understanding of Josephus as a historian with a distinct agenda[9] and of the nature of his portrayal of Herod,[10] from new methods of inquiry and from an increased focus on the social, economic and religious realities of the rule and age of Herod and his dynasty in view of the ever present influence of Rome. This upsurge of interest and these factors are the backdrop to the first two monographs to be reviewed here.

Samuel Rocca from the Faculty of architecture of the Judea and Samaria College in Ariel describes the focus of *Herod's Judaea: a Mediterranean State in the Classical World* as follows:

> The main theme of this book is an in-depth analysis of Herodian society. The most important facet of this analysis was the relationship between Herod as ruler and the Jewish subjects over whom he ruled, with particular emphasis on the influence of Herodian rule on Jewish society. Yet to understand the relationship between Herod and his subjects… it is necessary, as part of the general background, to undertake a general analysis of Herodian Judea and its relationship with the Classical world, beginning with Augustan Rome, which was the centre of power, and followed by the main centres within the Mediterranean basin and the Hellenistic East. (1)

After methodological considerations (1-17), Rocca begins in *chapter one* with "Herod the King: Royalty and the Ideology of Power" (19-63). His discussion includes a brief survey of research on Herod (Rajak, Landau), Herod and the Jewish ideology of rule (the heritage of the house of David and the Hasmonean heritage), Herod and various aspects of the Hellenistic ideology of rule (Herod as the last typically Hellenistic king whose acts of euergetism are to be understood as expressions of his power as Hellenistic king in foreign policy), Herod as the client king of Rome and an instructive comparison between Herod and king Juba II of Mauretania (25 BC to 25 AD). Rocca concludes that Herod's rule was seen by his subjects in a more positive light than previously assumed:

> Herod clearly enjoyed the admiration of the Jews in the Roman and Babylonian Diasporas. Moreover, had he not had the overwhelming support of his Jewish subjects, the Romans would never have appointed him king of Judaea. Augustus' addition of lands to Herod's kingdom, for example, attests to his successful rule. Herod also flourished as undisputed ruler of the Greek East in the tradition of Alexander the Great, and was recognised as such by both the Greeks and by the Roman overlords. (21)

Herod successfully presented himself as a traditional Jewish ruler and as a Hellenistic king. He took as his model the house of David and cast himself as the new Solomon. This was a credible claim as he rebuilt the temple to its full splendour and brought his subjects a long period of peace.

Herod's and Augustus' ruling ideologies, though stemming from different contexts, are good examples of successfully coping with Hellenistic ideals, which were alien in both Jerusalem and Rome. (63)

Chapter two is devoted to the court of Herod (65-131). Rocca describes the origin and the various aspects of the royal court of Herodian Judaea (its composition, the role of family members such as brothers and sisters, wives and children and the role of Herod's friends and other members). The inner circle of friends consisted of ministers and advisors such as Ptolemy and Nicolaus, followed by orators, ambassadors and others without formal positions. The outer circle of *philoi* was made up by the friends of Herod's sons (one thinks of Manaen mentioned in Acts 13:1 as "a member of the court of Herod the tetrarch", a *suntrophos*). Other people at the court included visitors, Herod's military household, domestic staff, the Herodian cultural circle (Irenaeus, Philostratus and Nicolaus; as Herod wished to establish an impressive court, he created a cultural centre at his court in Jerusalem and needed a library), concubines, prostitutes and catamites. A further section sketches the origins and structures of Herod's various palaces (for a detailed study, see below on Netzer). The chapter closes with an instructive comparison between Herod's court and the household of Augustus, followed by an excursus on Herod's portrait and a discussion of the *gymnasium* of Jerusalem. On the latter Rocca concludes that

> there appears to be a cultural framework in Jerusalem in which Greek education could be learned, outside the court, and that in Hasmonean and Herodian Jerusalem, the ruling class of Judaea could enjoy Greek education, side by side with Jewish education. (130)

Chapter three examines Herod's military power (133-196): the ethnic composition, strength and structure of Herod's army, its various campaigns and numerous and impressive fortifications (cf. Netzer 17-41, 179-217), military colonies and their role in defending the Herodian kingdom as well as Herod's modest navy.[11]

Chapter four focuses on the administration and economy of Herod's kingdom (197-240). This includes its sources and the administrative division, taxation and revenues: a survey of the taxation system, the legendary income of Herod of up to 2000 talents and his social programme, including the role and significance of slavery in Judea; "the much reduced importance of slavery in the local economy" (239). It also includes the division of the land (royal land and estates, privately owned land in villages and the significance and distribution of wealthier landowners' houses) and the various economic resources, such as agricultural products, glass, purple-dye, pottery and stone artefacts as industrial output, markets and internal trade and international business (by maritime trade and via the Spice Route). Rocca concludes that "all of this clearly points to Herodian Judaea as a typically Mediterranean country and economy" (240). This chapter closes with brief treatment of the languages of Herodian Judaea, which contains the words: "Together with Aramaic and Hebrew, Greek was also the dominant language of Judaea from the Hellenistic Period onwards. Greek was spoken and written side by side with Aramaic and Hebrew" (243f).

Chapter five surveys the ruling bodies of Herodian Judaea (249-279): the legal position of the ruler, Herod and his relationship with the Judean ruling class, the ruling bodies of the Herodian state (the political constitution and various bodies, the courts).

Chapter six addresses the cults of Herod's kingdom (281-321), namely the high priest and the temple cult of Jerusalem, the temple bureaucracy and actual cult, Herod's rebuilding of the temple. It includes sources of inspiration and parallels; the temple and the temple mount (cf. Netzer 137-187), the synagogues of Judaea as civic centres and a short summary of Herod's stance towards pagan cults. Outside of Judaea proper, Herod patronised all the cults of the Gentile Greeks. Inside his kingdom, Herod erected for his Gentile subjects only temples dedicated to the Imperial cult – which suggests that it had a political resonance as signifying allegiance to Rome, rather than indicating tolerance towards Herod's Gentile subjects.[12]

Chapter seven, "The Herodian City" (323-347), studies the relationship of the Herodian dynasty to cities, the urban features of the Herodian cities and Jerusalem as a classic city: demography, water supply, the leisure buildings and private buildings; the architectural remains "emphasise overwhelmingly the degree to which Jerusalem belongs to the urban Mediterranean world" (347). During Herod's reign, Judaea started a process of urbanisation, starting with the renovation of Jerusalem, continuing with the rebuilding of Caesarea Maritima and Sebaste by Herod's sons, primarily by Antipas, who also founded Tiberias. The process of urbanisation in Herodian Judaea reflected that of the surrounding classical world of the time. The

Herodian city "was a supremely Mediterranean entity" (347).

A final chapter looks at Herod's death and funeral. The procession was modelled after that of Alexander the Great which remained the model for all Hellenistic kings. Herod was buried in a sarcophagus. Rocca includes a discussion of the burial practices of the period[13] and also examines Herod's tomb and testament (349-370). A concluding chapter (370-378), bibliography and various indices round off the volume which contains several black-and-white photographs and illustrations.

According to this persuasive portrayal, Herod looked to Augustus as an ideal model, worthy of imitation; all the more so as both men had many things in common. On the whole, Herod was a successful ruler, who enjoyed, at least for a certain period, the tacit support of the majority of his subjects. To his Roman overlords, Herod was a guarantor of internal and external peace. He pushed Judaea toward a major Hellenisation, albeit with many elements more akin to Rome than to the surrounding Hellenistic East. This Romanisation, contrary to Hellenisation, remained a feature common only to the ruler and the small ruling class.

Rocca shows to what extent the encounter between Judaism and the Greek and distinctly Roman world had materialised by and during the time of Herod (following E. Bickerman, M. Hengel and A. Momigliano), with all the consequences which this encounter will have had for the last decades of Second Temple Judaism, the Jesus movement and nascent Christianity. However, Rocca also notes that, during the Herodian age, the ties between Judaea and the surrounding Hellenistic world had reached their peak. Some later developments need to be understood as a counter-reaction to these ties. Rocca is to be thanked for establishing more clearly the position of Herodian Judaea in the context of the surrounding Graeco-Roman Mediterranean world of the time.

His study throws interesting light on many aspects of the background of Jesus and the early Church. The world he and they lived in was far less provincial than assumed in some older and, indeed, more recent research. Far from being a mere wisdom-loving peasant who loved to tell stories about the lilies in the field and the like, Jesus and his disciples lived and served not in some isolated area, but in the context of the Eastern Hellenistic world, with a distinctly Jewish, but also Roman, touch to this world.

Ehud Netzer

The second volume under consideration, *The Architecture of Herod, the Great Builder*, offers a detailed presentation and assessment of Herod's enormous building activities in Judaea and beyond. The Israeli architect and archaeologist Ehud Netzer, Professor Emeritus of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, combines both disciplines in his detailed studies of the architecture of King Herod. The present monograph summarises decades of intensive study.

After a summary of "Herod, the Man and King" (3-16), Netzer surveys the various building projects of Herod: Masada (three phases of construction, 17-41); the three palaces and the hippodrome at Jericho (42-80), building projects in Samaria-Sebaste (81-93), the port-city of Caesarea Maritima (94-118), building projects in Jerusalem (119-136; the Antonia, three towers, the main palace, the *opus reticulatum* building and other tentative constructions), the rebuilding of the temple and its precinct in Jerusalem (137-178; the inner enclosure, the temple, the inner enclosure's gates, offices and porticoes, the court of women, the outer court, the walls around the temple mount, the *Stoa Basileia*, the gates into the temple mount and the infrastructure of streets and open areas around it and discussion of where the temple was located on the temple mound). On Herod's buildings in Jerusalem, see also Küchler, *Jerusalem*.

Netzer further describes the Herodium which was to serve and served as palace, burial site and memorial to Herod's name (179-201) and the desert fortresses (203-217) including Machaerus. A further chapter describes other building projects inside and outside of Herod's realm (218-224). Inside his realm were Paneias/Caesarea Philippi, Bathyra, Sepphoris, Gaba of the Cavalrymen, Antipatris, Phasael, Betharamptha, Heshbon, Aggrippeion, the cave of Machpelah in Hebron, the enclosure at Mamre, the fortified villa at Khirbet-al-Murak and the baths at Callirrhoe. Herod's many building projects outside of his realm in different towns of the Eastern Mediterranean stemmed mainly from political considerations.

Throughout Netzer draws on literary sources, mainly on Josephus, who is quoted as a contemporary source on Herod's buildings. Netzer analyses and assesses Josephus' statements critically. For each building and site, maps and other illustrations are included. Herod's building projects, including stadiums and various temples of Augustus and

Rome, a theatre and a hippodrome, indicate to what extent he saw himself as a Hellenised Roman client king who tried hard to please the people he ruled over. Netzer concludes: "The scope and vibrancy of Herod's building enterprise in general lead us to the inevitable conclusion that planning and erecting buildings was an integral part of his varied ongoing operations" (243).

This excellent survey is followed in part two by a general discussion (243-301) about the planning of palaces, temples, sport and other entertainment facilities, and cities. Netzer further examines the architectural influence from the Greco-Roman world on Herod's buildings and the extent of Herod's personal involvement in his various building projects. The epilogue on "Herod's building program" (302-306) suggests that Herod's building programme can roughly be divided into five stages and closes with an astute summary of the motives behind Herod's huge building enterprise. For one of Herod's many projects, Netzer concludes:

> Unlike several scholars who claim that Herod's piety was one of the reasons for rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem, I am of the opinion that his political savviness [shrewdness, ed.] with regard to his Jewish subjects was the main factor behind this decision. (306)

The instructive volume closes with five appendices by Netzer and other authors:

Herodian Building Materials and Methods (Netzer, 309-319)
Herodian Architectural Decoration (O. Peleg, 320-338)
Herodian Stuccowork Ceilings (S. Rozenberg, 339-349)
Herodian Wall Paintings (S. Rozenberg, 350-376)
Herodian Mosaic Pavements (R. Talgam, O. Peleg, 377-383)

There are black and white photographs of the sites (some of them aerial views) and of various architectural features and details (385-414). A bibliography (415-428), an index of sources and a general index close the volume. Colour photographs and further discussion can be found in Netzer's earlier lavishly illustrated monograph *Die Paläste der Hasmonäer und Herodes des Großen*, Zaberns Bildbände zur Archäologie (Mainz: Ph. von Zabern, 1999), 32-127.

According to Netzer, Herod's building programme throws a great deal of light on the king himself:

> If it is possible to learn about Herod from his projects, then he was a practical and thorough man, with a broad world view, outstanding organisational talent and improvisational ability (in the best sense of the term), able to adapt himself to his surroundings and to changing situations – a man who anticipated the future and had his two feet planted firmly on the ground. (306)

Netzer describes several buildings or building complexes that also feature in the life of Jesus and/or the early church; for example, the building projects in Jerusalem or the rebuilding of the Second Temple and its precinct. According to Josephus (*Antiquities* 18, 116-119), John the Baptist was imprisoned and executed at Machaerus (described on 213-217). While the volume contains maps for the various sites, it does not contain maps of Judaea with the places of Herod's building projects.[14]

Netzer's volume is instructive and invaluable for studies of Herod the Great. Rocca's detailed study sets Herod's building programme in the larger context of his rule, of Herodian society at large and of the Hellenised world of the Roman East.[15]

Werner Eck

Werner Eck's small volume on *Rom und Judäa* (11.5 x 18 cm) addresses specific aspects of *Roman* rule in Judaea. Eck is Professor Emeritus of Ancient History at the University of Cologne. The five lectures published here reflect the *Corpus Inscriptionum Judaea/Palaestinae* (*CIIP*) project which intends to gather *all* inscriptions in *all* languages from Judaea/Palaestina under Greek and Roman rule from the conquest of Alexander the Great to the conquest of the area by the Arabs (described in the preface and on 165-170).[16] Eck's lectures illuminate aspects of Judaea from a distinctly *Roman* perspective. Says Eck:

> Dies schien auch deshalb sinnvoll, weil der größere Teil der literarischen Überlieferung, angefangen mit den Makkabäerbüchern über Philo und Josephus bis zu den riesigen Corpora halachischer Literatur rechtlichen und erzählenden Inhalts von *jüdischer* Seite stammt und damit notwendigerweise auch diesen Blickpunkt einnimmt. (ix; italics CS)

New evidence has made it easier to assess how certain phenomena could have been seen, or were seen, by the Roman overlords. This is particularly helpful as most studies of the area during that period are undertaken from a Jewish or Christian perspective. Eck raises a further interesting issue, namely,

> ob und inwieweit Rom Judaea als eine Provinz besonderen Charakters angesehen hat oder ob diese Vorstellung sich nur heute für uns auf Grund der besonderen Überlieferung und aus der Optik der Nachgeborenen und deren Wissen um die spätere jüdische Geschichte so ergeben hat. (x)

Eck argues throughout the volume that Judaea was, from a Roman perspective, a normal province. In addition to new papyrological and archaeological sources, he draws considerably on inscriptions. (His own involvement in the *CIIP* project gives him access to unpublished material.) Together with the Roman perspective, this epigraphical focus adds a sense of freshness to his essays.

Essay one, "Judaea wird römisch: Der Weg zur eigenständigen Provinz" (1-51), outlines the development of Roman rule up to the end of the first Jewish war. The independence from the Roman province of Syria, the deployment of the *legio X Fretensis* under a senatorial legate (*legatus Augusti pro praetore*), no further interferences from the legate of Syria, a financial procurator of equestrial rank for Judaea indicate that, after the war, Judaea had all the elements necessary to be a normal province in the *Imperium*. From then on this state continued for almost 600 years, when it came to an end as a result of the final conquest by the Arabs in AD 640.

Essay two, "Die römische Herrschaft und ihre Zeichen" (53-103), surveys the various signs of Roman rule, in particular the presence and significance of the military *signa*. Other such signs were the various altars and sanctuaries erected by the Romans after AD 70 within and outside their military barracks and inscriptions in other contexts. Eck observes:

> Wenn Rom und seine Vertreter über viele Jahrzehnte zumeist mit einer gewissen Zurückhaltung ihre Herrschaft durch äußere Zeichen bemerkbar machten, dann ändert sich dies grundlegend mit der Eroberung Jerusalems und der bewussten Zerstörung des Tempels. (59)
> Die römische Herrschaft besetzte den öffentlichen Raum mit ihren Zeichen der Dominanz, gerade im ehemaligen Zentrum des Judentums. Und das galt in nicht geringerem Maß auch für die übrige Provinz. (75; by means of Roman roads and mile stones with inscriptions)

One of the inscriptions discussed by Eck mentions a temple erected in Jerusalem for the *genius Africae* (62).

Essay three, „Repression und Entwicklung: Das römische Heer in Judaea" (105-155) surveys several aspects of the Roman military presence in Judaea, in particular the heavy losses which the Romans suffered during the second Jewish war AD 132-135 and the drastic measures taken to recruit new troops.[17]

In essay four, "Latein als Sprache Roms in einer vielsprachigen Welt" (157-200), Eck studies multilingualism and the use of Latin in Roman Judaea by drawing on various inscriptions and papyri. He discusses the trilingual titulus on the cross of Jesus and the inscriptions from the temple courts forbidding non-Jews to venture beyond certain limits. More than some literary texts, these epigraphic monuments point to the daily usage of different languages. These monuments were not limited to inscriptions on stone. Only inscriptions on stone survived, while texts like the *titulus* of the cross of Jesus did not because they were written on other materials. The significance of such *tabulae dealbatae* can be seen, for example, on wall paintings from Pompeji which depict various scenes of the life on the city's *forum*. In these inscriptions Greek, Aramaic/Hebrew and Latin occur in this order of frequency (167). Eck concludes:

> Die einzelnen Idiome hatten in Judaea, jedenfalls während der frühen und hohen Kaiserzeit, in weitem Umfang eine spezifische funktionale Bedeutung. Sie wurden nebeneinander verwendet, in manchen Bereichen exklusiv, in anderen konnte man, je nach persönlicher Entscheidung, die eine oder andere wählen, oder die Kommunikation mit anderen auch in mehreren Sprachen versuchen. Viele Personen, nicht nur die von außen kommenden hohen Amtsträger Roms, konnten sich offenbar auf ganz verschiedene Weise verständigen. Latein war für die Vertreter Roms Ausdruck der Macht – mindestens bis zum Anfang des 4. Jahrhunderts. Wo es um diesen Aspekt ging, wird offensichtlich fast ausschließlich diese Sprache verwendet, dagegen waren die römischen Vertreter in der täglichen Routine flexibel und konnten, wenn es notwendig war, zu einem anderen Idiom wechseln, sogar zu einem einheimischen, wenn es galt sich zu verständigen, wie der *titulus crucis* zeigt. (196)

A final essay looks at the towns and villages of Roman Judaea/Palaestina (201-247). Its focus is on the organisation and self-administration of the province in relation to the provincial elites.[18] Detailed indices of sources, persons, places and subjects complete the volume. Eck's distinctly Roman standpoint and the generous use of inscriptions and papyri offer fresh perspectives particularly on post-70 and post-135 AD Judaea. But there are also helpful insights into the New Testament era and the period between the two Jewish wars.

Jürgen Zangenberg

The collection of essays *Das tote Meer* (edited by Jürgen Zangenberg, now Professor of NT in Leiden) is included here as most of the essays address issues of the first century BC and AD. The volume intends

> … die Geschichte dieser einzigartigen Region als Ganzes in den Blick zu nehmen. Nicht einzelne Orte wie Qumran oder Masada… sollen für sich betrachtet werden, sondern aus der Region heraus als Ganzes verstanden werden. Auch soll nicht allein das… Westufer, sondern das erst in den letzten Jahren für Besucher ebenso gut erreichbare jordanische Ostufer des Toten Meeres bewusst gleichwertig in die Darstellung einbezogen werden. (7)

The essays show to what extent the scholarly assessment of the history of settlement and culture of this region has changed in the past two decades and how this picture becomes ever more detailed, puzzling and fascinating as a result of lively scholarly debate and a constant stream of new archaeological discoveries.

Following Zangenberg's preface, describing the focus of the volume, the following essays are included:

F.H. Neumann, E.J. Kagan and M. Stein, "Region der Extreme: Umwelt und Klimaveränderungen am Toten Meer"

W. Zwickel, "Das Tote Meer: Ein Wechselbad der Kulturgeschichte"

J. Zangenberg, "Die hellenistisch-römische Zeit am Toten Meer: Kultur, Wirtschaft und Geschichte"

K. Galor, "Winterpaläste in Jericho: Steingewordener Machtanspruch der Hasmonäer und Herodianer"

J.-B. Humbert, "Ist das ‚essenische Qumran noch zu retten?"[19]

M. Popovic, "Die Schriftfunde vom Toten Meer: Schätze aus Höhlen zwischen Jericho und Masada"

G. Hadas, J. Zangenberg, "En-Gedi: Palmengarten und königliche Oase" (91-100);

K. Galor, "Masada und die Palastfestungen des Herodes"

C. Clamer, "Paradies am Meeresrand: Die Palastanlage von Ain ez-Zara/Kallirrhoë"

K. D. Politis, "Zoara, Khirbet Qazone und die Nabatäer am Südostende des Toten Meeres"

G. Faßbeck, "Fenster ins Leben: Die Dokumente Shimon Bar-Kochbas, der Salome Komaïse, Babathas und des Eli'ezer Ben-Samuel aus der Wüste Juda"

J. E. Taylor, "Aus dem Westen ans Tote Meer: Frühe Reisende und Entdecker", including a survey of reports by Western travellers from the 4th to the 19th centuries.

A detailed bibliography and notes close this attractive, large-format volume (22,5 x 26 cm) which is lavishly illustrated with charts and colour photographs of the architectural remains, but also of the landscape itself.[20] It offers a readable, up-to-date summary of international research on the Dead Sea from a *regional* perspective. There are many points of contact with the New Testament and its first-century world.[21]

Hanson and Oakman

The second edition of K.C. Hanson and D.E. Oakman's slim introductory volume *Palestine in the Time of Jesus: Social Structures and Social Conflicts* (first edition 1998) also deserves a mention. The aim of this volume is

> to examine the primary social institutions of first-century Palestine through a social-scientific methodology; to present testable models of society that can be employed when studying the Bible and therefore be refined or modified as the reader acquires more information; to relate the systemic analysis directly to New Testament passages in order to demonstrate how this material is applicable. (xvii)

The authors offer a number of models of the world in which Jesus lived. The book itself "may be thought of as a metamodel of the social structures and social conflicts of that first-century period". (xxi) In contrast to what the authors term the approaches of "unreformed historians", they themselves make their models explicit from large-scale down to small-scale, while continually testing the models against the textual, documentary and archaeological data. For them, some of the criticism of the first edition "was rooted in the ideological differences implicit in the approach of modelling the typical versus the historian's focus on the individual detail". (xxii) Some of that slightly polemical discussion seems dated and certainly not applicable to more recent research on first-century Judaea.

In their introductory chapter on the "Social System of Roman Palestine" (1-17), Hanson and Oakman describe the growing awareness of the biblical social world and the need to develop more adequate scenarios. They answer various criticisms that have been levelled against their social-scientific approach and provide questions for application and suggested reading. (The latter two sections appear in every chapter.)

Chapter two surveys kinship in "agrarian Roman Palestine" (19-55). It covers gender, genealogy and descent, marriage, endowment at marriage, divorce, inheritance and the family of Jesus as presented in the gospels. This is followed by a chapter on politics and patronage in "agrarian Roman Palestine" (57-91) which deals with elite and peasants' interests and their clash in rebellion and social banditry, and with crucifixion as an example of the elite force in action. Chapter four addresses the political economy in "agrarian Roman Palestine" (93-121) and the interaction of Jesus with the "Palestinian political" economy:

> While the theological interests of the evangelists and the early church have obscured it to some extent, Jesus and the early Jesus tradition offered a potent critique of political economy and an alternative vision for ordering material human relationships. Jesus' alternative is first and foremost an expression of non-elite interests and aspirations. (117)

A final chapter examines the political religion in "Roman Palestine" (123-147), which includes the temple in Jerusalem and its expansion under Herod the Great, the personnel and various sacrifices, the social impact and implications of the temple and a discussion of Jesus' relationship to the temple. The temple, according to the authors,

> was a hub of a redistributive economy: goods and services, raw materials, crops, animals – all flowed to this central point. There, these goods were redistributed in ways not necessarily benefiting their original producers. Religious ideology legitimated this arrangement. In fact, religious obligation sustained the arrangement. (145)

In the conclusion the authors list the benefits of their social-science approach to the issues at hand:

> … we learn to read the NT and other ancient documents in terms of the complex social systems of which they are products…. it becomes clearer that the interests of the elite were often in conflict with the interests of the peasants…. we have the tools to look more realistically at how Jesus fit into and reacted to the social systems of first-century Palestine…. we see more clearly the complexity of the hermeneutical task for contemporary communities of faith that read the NT. (150f)

This is followed by glossaries of ancient groups, institutions, objects and events, of ancient documents, collections and authors and of social-scientific and cross-cultural terms. There are bibliographies for ancient documents and social-science theory and terminology as well as various indexes. Throughout the volume there are maps, figures, illustrations and sidebars. Each chapter contains the identification of central biblical passages or other texts, a list of questions that the passages raise, a construction of meaningful models or scenarios, application of the models or scenarios to the focal texts, with consideration of the initial questions, highlighting of aspects of the Jesus tradition through the models and scenarios, identification of material for further reflection and suggested applications of the chapter's perspectives and recommended readings. The presentation of the material is lucid and exemplary.[22]

While Hanson and Oakman succeed in inspiring their readers to appreciate the distance of Jesus' social context from their own (the readers are to be freed from "thoughtless absolutisms and to be moved toward a greater appreciation of both the social meaning of Jesus of Nazareth and his enduring significance as a human liberator", xxii), the scenarios which they present remain disputable in many points and need supplementation.[23] Hanson and Oakman write, for example, that they combine systems and conflict approaches to better comprehend

> the *endless conflict within Jesus' environs that never led to any significant social change*. Ancient agrarian or peasant societies were static over a long period of time. Another way to say this is that major families assumed pre-eminence within

> static pyramidal political-economic structures legitimated by powerful rituals of political religion. (xxii)

For the time of Jesus, which is the period being considered here, one should not speak of "Roman Palestine" since this term is misleading or, at least, ambiguous. Despite Roman domination in the East, Roman *Syria Palaestina* did not exist before AD 135. Reference to all of ***Judaea*** (or its parts) would also have underlined the fact that the "human liberator" in "agrarian Roman Palestine" was first and foremost a Second Temple Jew living and acting within that matrix, however much that Judaism had been influenced by Hellenisation and Romanisation. In view of the urbanisation process in Judaea – which was well on its way when Jesus appeared on the scene – the emphasis on the "agrarian" world of Jesus requires serious qualification. All three words in the expression "agrarian Roman Palestine" beg serious questions, although they nicely capture the world of Jesus as seen by certain schools of mainly North American historical Jesus research that loves the peasant Jesus and his involvement in endless conflicts with empires (then and now never far away). And, as some have noticed, these schools can be just as prone to absolutisms as the readers that Hanson and Oakman want to liberate.

Jonathan Marshall

The monograph *Jesus, Patrons and Benefactors: Roman Palestine and the Gospel of Luke* serves as an example of studies that contribute both to our understanding of Judaea in the first century and our understanding of the historical Jesus. Jonathan Marshall investigates the notions of *patrocinium* and benefaction, and describes the actions and teaching of Jesus in relation to these forms of reciprocity with a view to understanding whether these practices were potentially appropriated by Jesus and the early Christians. To answer this question, Marshall chooses three passages from Luke's Gospel in which Jesus instructs his disciples as test cases, given that there has been a tendency to interpret Luke-Acts with reference to ancient reciprocity, benefaction, and patronage.[24]

In the "Introduction" (3-23), Marshall describes the recent discussion and usage of such terminology and concludes:

> Socio-historical patron-client categories can describe a multitude of relationships, among which might be *patronus, cliens*, or *euergetism*. But it is imperative to properly define and distinguish between socio-historical and Roman forms of patronage. The confusion created by these overlapping definitions motivates the present study to properly define terms and differentiate definitions. To the extent that patron-client relations are in view, this study focuses on Roman *patrocinium*. (7)

In the Roman world, *patrocinium* described a relationship between a patronus and a client. Patrons provided legal and financial aid to their clients and received public honour and loyalty in return. "Patrons and clients entered a relationship through the initiative, usually, of the clients who sought from the patron protection and help. Clients could be Roman or non-Roman, but the title *patronus* was reserved for Romans in positions of authority who entered this specific relationship". (5)

Marshall describes the recent advances in scholarly understanding of patrons, clients and benefactors in the early Roman Empire, advances that improve our understanding of the relationships and duties of the people involved and how they might have operated in first-century Israel. He shows how New Testament scholars have sometimes neglected the best works from the previous generation and continue to ignore more recent works by scholars of ancient history have appeared in the last decade.[25] He positions his own research in the "Third Quest" for the historical Jesus. One of the hallmarks of this Third Quest is the construction of plausible historical backdrops for the historical Jesus. This "historical plausibility" – approach uses archaeological and literary sources to construct a legitimate picture of first-century Galilee or Judaea which is then compared to the sayings and actions of Jesus as they are depicted in the Gospels. This approach allows scholars to find answers to the question whether

> the portrait of Jesus in the Gospel corresponds with what a first-century Galilean villager could have said or done if one accepts the version of the historical Galilee (or Palestine) determined from the archaeological and literary sources. Into what kind of political and social climate did Jesus enter and what kind of response to this climate, if any, did he make? (16)

In this quest, archaeological evidence is not used as a "proof" of the biblical text as if the material remains and its interpretation are somehow objective attestation of the "biased" text. Instead, it is used as another voice describing life in Judaea during the early Roman Empire (18). After discussion of various socio-historical models, Marshall describes his aim as discerning the historical picture of early Roman Judaea and specifically the adoption, rejection, or modification of the specific *patrocinium* institute by Jesus and his earliest followers.

Chapter two (24-124) offers a detailed survey of benefaction and *patrocinium* in first-century Judaea. Marshall describes what the ancient sources say about reciprocity in ancient Greece, and benefaction and patronage in Hellenistic and Roman times, defining *patrocinium* and benefaction, and the criteria used to detect them. Next he surveys recent developments in the study of Hellenisation and Romanisation in Judaea and in archaeology and various methodological developments. This is followed by an investigation from a *regional perspective* of the traces of benefaction and *patrocinium* in Galilee (Cana, Nazareth, Capernaum, Tiberias and Sepphoris), Jerusalem, Caesarea Maritima, Samaria, smaller cities in Philip's tetrarchy, Gamla, Bethsaida and Tyre. This investigation of archaeological and literary sources shows significant *regional differences*. In *Galilee*, which according to the archaeological evidence was characterised by Jewish allegiance, no euergetistic inscriptions have been found. This lack of evidence reduces the amount of benefaction that is to be expected there, and there is no clear evidence of *patrocinium* either. In contrast:

> in *Jerusalem* monumental structures, benefaction inscriptions, and the honorary naming of structures and games all contribute to the suggestion that benefaction, to a lesser extent than *patrocinium*, operated in the early first-century. This parallels the finding of more Hellenism in the city in general. Fewer Roman and minimal signs of overt Romanisation in the archaeological remains suggest a lesser likelihood of *patrocinium*. (121; summary for the other areas on pp. 121f.)

Chapter three approaches the subject from a *personality perspective* in order to understand the specific practice of *patrocinium* or benefaction by Herod the Great, Herod Antipas, Herod Philip and Agrippa I (125-173). For each ruler, Marshall discusses education, relationship to the Emperor and Rome, public perception, construction projects, coins and benefactions. Three of the four Herods had reputations as benefactors – this is found explicitly in the sources, yet only Agrippa I is explicitly identified as a *patron* (328).

Marshall concludes that Roman *patrocinium* was not ubiquitous, because it was reserved solely for describing certain Romans and Roman relationships. It did not exist in first-century Judaea as far as it can be deduced from the sources. Investigation of the historical *realia* of first-century Judaea thus challenges the use of sociological patron-client terminology and gives a more accurate perspective of the different modes of social interaction in the various regions.

> Since *patrocinium* was relatively absent throughout the land, patron-client terminology potentially confuses the study of Palestine. One may be led to believe that Roman ways had taken control when, in reality, they had only created a veneer in many, but not all areas. (172)

A better category of description, therefore, would be the more general Greco-Roman idea of *reciprocity*. This idea does not necessarily entail all the intricacies of *patrocinium*, but admits other forms of interchange, including friendship (*amicitia*) and benefaction while not excluding *patrocinium*. The notion of friendship is especially pertinent to Lukan study because of Luke's frequent use of the concept. The personality perspective demonstrates the different levels of Hellenisation and Romanisation among the Herodian rulers and shows how all four of them more or less attempted to meet the ideals of Hellenistic kings.[26]

Against his background, Marshall examines in detail three Lukan passages that have been adduced as examples of patron-client activity: in *Chapter four* Luke 6:17-38; in *chapter five* Luke 14:1-24 and in *chapter six* the Last Supper (Luke 22:14-34). He concludes that Jesus did not use the language of *patrocinium* in any of the instructions given in Luke's gospel. Luke appropriately prioritises Jewish matters and, venturing outside of Judaism, prefers benefaction ideology and terminology. "A first-century Jew from Galilee would have held Jewish matters in a position of first importance but travels and communication would have made him aware of benefaction ideology". (322) Marshall argues that it is inappropriate to interpret these passages in terms of *patrocinium*. Therefore Luke cannot be blamed for applying *patrocinium* where it did not exist. However,

> Jesus does speak of asymmetrical, long-term, reciprocal relationships (sociological patron-client). Luke has not erroneously attributed a

> discussion of sociological patron-client relationships to Jesus because they were present in Jesus' Palestine. (323)

In the conclusion, Marshall summarises the portrait of *patrocinium* and benefaction in first-century Judaea and its reflection in the Lukan passages. There were various venues through which a first-century Galilean Jew may have learned of these modes of interaction. Several details in these Lukan accounts suggest that Jesus was exposed to benefactors and benefactions, and perhaps also the ideology of *patrocinium*. Thus there is historical plausibility for this backdrop to various episodes: "Luke presents Jesus in categories appropriate for a first-century Jewish Galilean." (329) Such a person could attain this sort of knowledge and engage in this sort of critique. While Jesus approaches these forms of reciprocity in a manner which is reminiscent of contemporary Jewish practices, at the same time he departs from others in striking ways:

> God reciprocates those who decide to follow his example of generosity to those who cannot repay. He advocated a form of generosity that was truly generous rather than simply being a sale disguised as a gift…. Unlike other critics, however, Jesus did advocate memorializing his own benefaction. His self-giving should be remembered by his disciples and those who show disloyalty will receive just punishment. Loyalty must be directed toward God and Jesus, otherwise it is miscredited. (333)

Marshall's persuasive study contributes to our understanding of the social conventions and interactions in the different regions of first-century Judaea and of the different practices of some of its rulers. It clearly indicates the necessity and the benefits of regional and personal distinctions. It uses reflected methodological approaches for studying the historical Jesus against this background (historical plausibility).[27] A better appreciation of these conventions sheds fresh light on some teachings of Jesus by showing the similarities, dissimilarities and new emphases against the background of Judean religion, culture and society. Studies like this suggest that this kind of quest for the Jesus of history against a historically plausible backdrop will continue to offer more insights into his teaching, ministry and significance.

At the same time, Marshall rightly cautions against mingling categories by emphasising that the narrowly and clearly defined category of Roman *patrocinium* and *socio-historically defined* patron-client relationships should be distinguished from each other to prevent implying the presence of cultural norms which had not pervaded Judaea by the time of Jesus.[28]

Conclusion

The volumes reviewed here indicate some of the issues currently discussed in ancient history and in early Jewish and New Testament studies. Despite different approaches and methodologies and, at times, widely diverging results, these and other contributions of the past decade indicate strongly that Judaea and, later on, Roman Palaestina were far more complex entities than hitherto recognised. There is clear consensus that the area was, to a larger extent, part of the Hellenistic world at an earlier stage than often realised and that there was an intricate interplay between Jewish identities and cultures of different kinds, Hellenism in different forms and intensity, and Romanisation in varying intensity from the first century BC onward. All of this led to what might be described – in modern terms – as a multicultural, multiethnic and multi-religious setting. Recent research has in some ways modified, but also by and large confirmed the earlier studies of the late Martin Hengel and others who rightly reminded the guild of New Testament students that the distinctions between "Hellenistic" and "Palestinian", once so common and once such an important clue for understanding the history of early Christianity, are more than questionable and should be abandoned for good in favour of more nuanced reconstructions.

The new, more detailed and complex, yet also richer portrait of Judaea in the first century has significant implications for the study of the historical Jesus and nascent Christianity.[29] It is clear that the older distinctions between Judaea/Palaestina and "the rest" of the Graeco-Roman world have rightly been jettisoned. While the early Jewish nature of Jesus and early Christianity needs to be emphasised, this Jewishness needs to be set in a larger context and needs to be understood as deeply influenced over a longer period of time by its Hellenised and Romanised surroundings. If these and other insights of the volumes here presented (and many more) are applied to the New Testament, fresh questions, approaches and insights will emerge to stimulate a more adequate and, at times, more exciting, understanding of the New Testament in the scholarly discussion, the church and society at large.

I want to close this survey on a theological note. The *Apostolic Creed* mentions that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary and died under Pontius Pilate. The mention of Pilate dates the death of Jesus to a particular time, consigns it to a particular place, namely Roman Judaea (which is not mentioned) and relates it to the dominant powers of the time. It is remarkable that while John the Baptist or the disciples of Jesus are omitted, Pilate is included as the only man mentioned by name in the Creed. (Jesus features as the Son, not as Jesus of Nazareth.)

Obviously, any attempt to change or alter this Creed would be as presumptuous as it would be foolish. However, in view of the volumes we surveyed, of those we mentioned and of many more, but also in view of almost 2000 years of at times disastrous Jewish-Christian relations, we may wonder how this summary of Christian faith were to change in character if it included a statement such as "born of the Virgin Mary *in Judaea*" or "crucified under Pontius Pilate *in Judaea*". What might be the gain of such an addition? Might it underline that this salvation – which was and remains from the Jews (John 4:22) – took shape and place in this Jewish and at the same time – to use modern terms – multicultural, multiethnic and multi-religious setting? Would such an addition emphasise that, although this salvation in God's Christ was primarily addressed and directed to Israel, all other people, their cultures and aspirations were – throughout the life and ministry of Jesus and the early Judean community – not beyond the scope of this salvation but already somehow involved and present it – for better or worse – to an extent that has hitherto not been acknowledged?

After all, in the midst of the account of Jesus' rejection and death, a man from Africa, Simon of Cyrene (in modern-day Libya) is mentioned in three gospels (Matthew 27:32; Mark 15:21; Luke 23:26; cf. also Acts 6:9; 11:20; 13:1). Under Roman coercion he bore the cross of Jesus when none of the long-term followers of Jesus were there to do so. With Simon of *Cyrene* (Africa), Pontius Pilate from *Italy* (Europe) and the Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem as well as the ten thousands of pilgrims from all over the Jewish diaspora in the city (including Jesus the Jew and his entourage from Galilee) from Asia, the passion accounts mention people from all parts of the *oikumene* as it was known then. Do these references signal to all their readers up to this day: *mea res agitur?*

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Notes

1 Many publications now use BCE and CE (Before the Common Era and Common Era) but the editor prefers Before Christ and Anno Domini.

2 For a summary see D.C. Allison, "The Problem of the Historical Jesus", in D.E. Aune (ed.), *The Blackwell Companion to the New Testament*, Blackwell Companions to Religion (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010) 220-235.

3 E.g. D.J. Breeze et al., *Grenzen des Römischen Imperiums* (Zaberns Bildbände zur Archäologie; Mainz: Ph. von Zabern, 2006); see my reviews of this and other volumes of the series in *Neotestamentica* 42 (2008) 167-173.

4 E.g., the substantial collection of essays in J.H. Charlesworth (ed.), *Jesus and Archaeology* (Grand Rapids, Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2006) and by S. Alkier and J. Zangenberg (eds.), *Zeichen aus Text und Stein: Studien auf dem Weg zu einer Archäologie des Neuen Testaments* (TANZ 42; Tübingen, Basel: Francke, 2003) and *Neotestamentica* 40 (2006) 402-406.

5 E.g., M. Küchler et al., *Jerusalem: Ein Handbuch und Studienreiseführer zur Heiligen* Stadt, Orte und Landschaften der Bibel IV.2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007); J. Zangenberg, *Magdala am See Gennesaret: Überlegungen zur sogenannten "mini-sinagoga" und einige andere Beobachtungen zum kulturellen Profil des Ortes in neutestamentlicher Zeit*, KAANT 1 (Waltrop: H. Spenner, 2001) and J. Zangenberg, H.W. Attridge and D.B. Martin (eds.), *Religion, Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Galilee: A Region in Transition*, WUNT 210 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007); see my review on www.bookreviews.org.

6 For convenient surveys, see D.E. Aune, "The World of Roman Hellenism" (15-37), J.A. Newman, "The World of Early Judaism" (38-48) and C.T. Mc Collough, "Archaeological Setting" (49-60), in Aune's *Blackwell Companion to the NT*.

7 A.Schalit, *König Herodes: Der Mann und sein Werk*, Studia Judaica 4 (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1969, 2nd ed. 2001).

8 Examples are L.-M. Günther, *Herodes der Große*, Gestalten der Antike (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2005); cf. my review in *EThL* 84 (2008) 235-38; M.H. Jensen, *Herod Antipas in Galilee: the Literary and Archaeological Sources on the Reign of Herod Antipas and Its Socio-Economic Impact on Galilee*, WUNT II.215 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006); see his website www.herodantipas.com; cf. my review in *Religion & Theology* 16 (2009) 113-115; and M. Bernett, *Der Kaiserkult in Judäa unter den Herodiern und Römern: Untersuchungen*

zur politischen und religiösen Geschichte Judäas von 30 v. bis 66 n. Chr., WUNT 203 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007).

9 E.g. Z. Rodgers (ed.), *Making History: Josephus and Historical Method*, JSJSup; Leiden: Brill, 2007).

10 E.g. T. Landau, *Out-Heroding Herod: Josephus, Rhetoric, and the Herod Narrative, AJEC* (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

11 Rocca offers a welcome update to I. Shatzman, *The Armies of the Hasmoneans and Herod*, TSAJ 25 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991).

12 For details, see Bernett, *Kaiserkult*; see my review in *Neotestamentica* (in print).

13 See also R. Hachlili, *Jewish Funerary Customs, Practices and Rites in the Second Temple Period*, JSJSup 94 (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

14 Helpful, recent maps can be found in S. Mittmann and G. Schmidt (eds.), *Tübinger Bibelaltlas: Tübingen Bible Atlas* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft; Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 2001), see my review in *Religion and Theology* 10 (2003) 237-241, and in A.-M. Wittke, E. Olshausen and R. Szydlak, *Historischer Atlas der antiken Welt*, Der Neue Pauly – Supplemente 3 (Stuttgart, Weimar: J. B. Metzler, 2007), see my review in *Acta Patristica et Byzantina* 19 (2008) 411-415.

15 Other recent studies on Herod's building programme are L.-M. Günther (ed.), *Herodes und Jerusalem* (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 2009), S. Japp, *Die Baupolitik Herodes des Großen: Die Bedeutung der Architektur für die Herrschaftslegitimation eines römischen Klientelkönigs*, Internationale Archäologie 64 (Rahden: VML, 2000) and A. Lichtenberger, *Die Baupolitik Herodes des Großen*, Abhandlungen des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins 26 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999).

16 *The Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae: A Multi-lingual Corpus of the Inscriptions from Alexander to Muhammad* is edited by H. M. Cotton, L. di Segni, W. Eck, B. Isaac, A. Kushnir-Stein, H. Misgav, J. Price, I. Roll and A. Yardeni. *Volume I: Jerusalem* is scheduled for October 2010 (hardcover; ISBN 978-3-11-022219-7. € 200, $ 310). The publication plan for the *CIIP* is a follows (according to www.degruyter.de/files/down/epigraphik.pdf, pp. 27f):
Volume II: Galilee and Northern Coastal Strip
Volume III: Golan
Volume IV: Caesarea and the Middle Coastal Strip
Volume V: Samaria
Volume VI: Judaea-Idumaea
Volume VII: Southern Coastal Strip
Volume VIII: Negev
Volume IX: Milestones

17 On the brick/tile production of Roman legions in Judaea and their distribution throughout the province, see W. Zwickel, "Römische Dachziegel", in J. Schefzyk, W. Zwickel et al. (eds.), *Judäa und Jerusalem: Leben in römischer Zeit* (Stuttgart: KBW, 2010), 106-107 (with illustrations).

18 For aspects of the economy of Roman Palaestina, see B.-Z. Rosenfeld and J. Menirav, *Markets and Marketing in Roman Palestine*, JSJSup 99 (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

19 See also K. Galor, J.-B. Humbert and J. Zangenberg (eds.), *Qumran – The Site of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Archaeological Interpretations and Debates*, STDJ 57 (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

20 "Die Fotografien richten so den Blick auf die oft übersehenen Grundlagen, die das Leben in dieser Region wie kaum in einer anderen geprägt haben." (10)

21 For this regional approach, see also the earlier volumes by G. Faßbeck et al. (eds.); *Leben am See Gennesaret: Kulturgeschichtliche Entdeckungen in einer biblischen Region*, Zaberns Bildbände zur Archäologie (Mainz: Ph. von Zabern, 2003); see my review in *Novum Testamentum* 47 (2005) 397-399; and M. Nun, *Der See Genezareth und die Evangelien*, Biblische Archäologie und Zeitgeschichte 10 (Giessen, Basel: Brunnen, 2001), cf. my review in *FilNT* 14 (2001) 152-157.

22 See also the information on www.fortresspress.com/hansonoakman, where the table of contents and chapter one are available as pdf-files.

23 See e.g. M. Hengel and A. M. Schwemer, *Jesus und das Judentum*, Geschichte des frühen Christentums I (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007) 39-168.

24 For example the contributions of J. B. Green, F. W. Danker and H. Moxnes.

25 Eilers, Verboven, Nicols, Bowditch, Lomas and Cornell, De Rossi and Nauta.

26 A summary of their benefaction policies is on 172-173.

27 Cf. his discussion of Freyne and Jensen, 11-15, 18-19.

28 Other recent contributions on historical issues in Judaea are M. Sasse, *Geschichte Israels in der Zeit des Zweiten Tempels: Historische Ereignisse, Archäologie, Sozialgeschichte, Religions- und Geistesgeschichte* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2004) and J. Wilker, *Für Rom und Jerusalem: Die herodianische Dynastie im 1. Jahrhundert n. Chr.*, Studien zur Alten Geschichte 5 (Frankfurt: Verlag Antike, 2007).

29 For an example of such fresh perspectives see W. Horbury, *Herodian Judaism and New Testament Study*, WUNT 193 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006); see my review in *Neotestamentica* 41 (2007) 235-238.

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The sin of Shinar (Genesis 11:4)

W. Creighton Marlowe

SUMMARY

Research related to the so-called Tower of Babel story in Genesis 11:1-9 continues to debate the exact nature of the sin described in verse 4, which caused the LORD to punish the people with confusion and dispersion. This article offers an atypical answer to this question. The attempt to "make a name" is reasonably defined by the narrative in its immediate and OT context, not as attacking God or avoiding migration, but pride that led to an abuse of power. The building of a ziggurat or tower indicated a desire to have communion with God or the gods. The arrival in Shinar shows the people were already migrating and multiplying. Their fear of being scattered was the fear of defeat and deportation. The story in Genesis 11 builds on 10:8-10 and the history of Nimrod. These Shinarites were guilty of using violence as had been the case with people God judged since Genesis 4. The sin was that of building a fierce reputation ("a name") to keep from being scattered by others with similar plans for cruel conquest.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Für die Forschung über die so genannte Turm-von-Babel-Geschichte in Genesis 11, 1-9 geht die Debatte über die eigentliche Natur der Sünde weiter, die in Kapitel 11, 4 beschrieben wird. Diese hat Yahweh veranlasst, die Menschen durch Verwirrung und Zerstreuung zu bestrafen.

Der vorliegende Artikel bietet einen ungewöhnlichen Beitrag zu dieser Diskussion. Der Versuch der Menschen, sich selbst einen Namen zu machen (11, 4) wird durch die Erzählung in ihrem unmittelbaren Kontext und auch den weiteren alttestamentlichen Zusammenhang logisch erläutert. Dabei ging es nicht um einen Angriff auf Gott oder um Zentralisierung, sondern um Stolz, der zu Machtmissbrauch führte. Der Bau einer *„Ziggurat"* oder eines Turmes weist auf den Wunsch hin, mit Gott oder den Göttern Gemeinschaft zu haben. Die Ankunft der Leute in Schinear zeigt, dass sie bereits migrierten und sich vermehrten. Ihre Furcht vor Zerstreuung war eigentlich auf ihre Angst vor Niederlage und Deportation zurückzuführen.

Die Geschichte in Genesis 11 baut sich auf die Erzählung in Kapitel 10,8-10 und der Nimrod-Geschichte auf. Die Leute von Schinear wurden der Gewaltanwendung schuldig, wie bereits die Menschen, die seit den Ereignissen in Genesis 4 unter Gottes Gericht gefallen waren. Ihre Sünde bestand darin, daß sie sich den Ruf der Gewalttätigkeit zugelegt hatten („einen Namen"), um nicht von jenen zerstreut zu werden, die ähnliche Pläne einer grausamen Übernahme hegten

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RÉSUMÉ

Dans le cadre de la recherche sur le récit de la tour de Babel (Gn 11.1-9), on continue à débattre de la nature exacte du péché mentionné au verset 4 et qui a conduit Yahvé à châtier les gens en semant la confusion et en les dispersant sur la terre. L'auteur propose ici une réponse originale à cette question. La tentative de se faire un nom peut se comprendre en fonction du récit, de son contexte immédiat et de l'ensemble de l'Ancien Testament : il ne s'agit pas d'une opposition à Dieu ni d'un refus de la migration, mais de l'orgueil qui a conduit à un abus de pouvoir. La construction d'une ziggourat manifestait un désir d'obtenir la communion avec Dieu ou avec les dieux. L'arrivée à Shinéar montre que les gens étaient déjà en train de migrer et de se multiplier. La crainte de la dispersion s'explique comme une crainte de défaite et de déportation. L'histoire de Genèse 11 prolonge celle de Nimrod (10.8-10). Les habitants de Shinéar se rendaient coupables de violence, tout comme les gens qui ont subi le jugement de Dieu depuis le chapitre 4. Leur péché consistait à se bâtir une réputation féroce (« un nom ») pour éviter d'être dispersés par d'autres ayant de semblables projets de conquête.

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Introduction

This article was sparked by P. J. Harland's observation that, "The account of the building of the tower of Babel in Gen. xi presents an enigma. In contrast to the other stories of the primeval history the sin which the people commit is not made explicit."[1] Harland discusses the two different traditional views: 1) the Christian interpretation that the sin was that of human pride trying to take power from God and 2) the Jewish explanation that the sin was failure to comply with God's mandate after the Flood (Genesis 9:1) to disperse and fill the earth. What follows will challenge the popular understanding of the sin committed by the builders of the Tower of Babel as religious rebellion, i.e. disregard for the command given in Genesis 9:1 to populate the earth and/or pride and self-sufficiency that led the Shinarites to "storm the heavens" and to rival God by erecting a tower so tall as to threaten God.

According to Chrysostom the people who migrated from the East to found Babylon were motivated by ambition and pride. He saw this text as a warning to those who seek fame through building mansions for themselves. Augustine interpreted this pride in terms of defiance of God's power; Dionysius said they were giants, whose power worried God, who were seeking salvation by human means.[2] None of these suggestions seems to find a connection between the sin of Shinar and God's command to fill the earth, as is now so popular. Augustine seems to be the fountainhead of the idea that the transgression was essentially religious in terms of direct aggression against God's rule. The assumption that these people defied God may be logical but it is neither the only possible one nor the most probable. The text shows them behaving ungodly but not necessarily anti-godly.

We agree with Skinner, "the idea of storming heaven and making war on the gods, which is suggested by some late forms of the legend (cf. Homer, Odyssee 11.313ff) is no doubt foreign to the passage"[3] and with von Rad, "That men wanted to storm heaven, God's dwelling place (cf. however, Isa. 14.13), is not said."[4] Man's self-exaltation is checked by God, as Skinner notes (229) but the issue is what kind of prideful purpose was involved. Isaiah 14:13 is about an Assyrian king's ambition to be deified and sit among the divine council on the sacred mountain top (which is another setting than the ziggurat). We suggest that pride in Genesis 11 was exhibited through power: violence and oppression against humanity. The problem was first and foremost horizontal (which is inevitably vertical). Of course warfare and enslavement of others had become the focus of the people who had already abandoned any religious instructions they may have had about the sinfulness of such behaviour.

The idea that Genesis 11:1 places the story at a time when one and only one language was in existence globally will also be questioned.[5] The purpose of this article is primarily to show that the current and common view still leaves important questions unanswered or not answered satisfactorily. A secondary goal is to make a modest proposal for an alternative understanding: the sin of Genesis 11:4 that led to God's dispersion of these people was not religious but ruthless: a preoccupation with military might and violence. The view that the sin was something other than or more than religious is not original, but I hope to add more fuel to the fire of the debate and to reawaken it and demonstrate some weaknesses of the traditional view as well as strengths of this proposal.[6] The argument of this article is that a prideful desire for world conquest is the evil that God judges, not pride that tried to reject or resist God per se; so the tower was for military not religious purposes (although ironically if it was a temple to rival or replace God, or engage in idolatry as some claim [cf. Genesis Rabbah], then that is a sense would be an irreligious purpose by definition, i.e. men making themselves divine, a religious yet a false religious activity).[7] Whoever these people were, they could be held accountable for violent behaviour.[8]

One language and travel from the East (11:1-2)

Chapter 11 begins with the statement, not that the entire global world had one language only, but that an entire specific region ("the land") somehow came to have "one tongue and a common vocabulary".[9] Even the mention of tribes moving out across כָל־הָאָרֶץ should be viewed as only the expansion of various people groups as delimited by chapter 10 to a large region of the earth, yet not the entire earth. This would suggest that already a number of languages were in use. The author could only speak of his known world and not the global earth of many societies with very ancient roots we know today. Hamilton's argument, based on Gordon, that the unique wording of 11:1 means a *lingua franca* is the best explanation.[10]

What is most important here is the mention of people travelling "from" the East. Some translations say "to" the East but the preposition used, min, is normally "from". If this is correct, the story is placed at a point in time far enough past the early movements of Noah's sons such that people have travelled eastward and then back again. This is highly significant because it suggests or establishes a lapse of time that would most likely be long enough for various dialects if not languages to have developed. Since Shinar is by scholarly consensus an area in Mesopotamia, moving there from the East would mean that people groups were already at least as far East as what in ancient times became Persia. But even if מִקֶּדֶם means "eastward", we still have the problem that multiple languages are already mentioned in chapter 10. If 11:1-4 is about a time when only one language was in use (at least in this region or the world) then chronologically the story has to be placed between 9:28 and 10:1. Some would say it coincides with 10:25, which speaks of the time when the land/earth was divided. The problem is that various languages are already in existence in 10:5-24. So any division into multiple tongues could not be what is mentioned in verse 25.

A plan to build a Great City with a greedy purpose (11:3-4)

This event took place at some point after brick-making technology was perfected. This would seem to suggest a time when more than one language was in use on the earth, although not necessarily in a particular province. Regardless, we now get to the heart of the matter. Verses 3-4 conclude the opening pericope regarding the Shinarites and act as a fulcrum for moving to the second and final pericope about God and his response. Here the focus is on the motives of these people. The tower is a minor element in the story. They plan to build a city with a tower, which was normal for that period of history. If we focus on the tower per se, we miss that fact that the intention was to build a city and even more a reputation so intimidating that they would be safe from attack (which could lead to defeat and dispersion).[11]

The expression "a tower and its head in the heavens" does not necessarily mean they planned to make the tower so high it would reach the clouds (although clouds might form this low), much less the stars or God. It may only be a way of saying "tall". The term "heavens" (שָׁמַיִם) is used in the OT for "H/heaven" or "heavens/sky" depending on context. Pre-scientific theologians thought in terms of something like nine miles high.[12] First of all the ancients had no such technical ability and neither does anyone today. (The ancients equated Heaven with heights like mountain tops, not a place beyond distant galaxies as we do today.) Second, scholarly consensus is that this tower was what we know as a ziggurat,[13] and these pyramids were not erected to dizzying heights. Furthermore, the purpose of a ziggurat was not only to reach the gods but to provide a gateway for a god to come down to the people.[14] So the ziggurat interpretation precludes any idea that building this tower was a superhuman construction of a super skyscraper and some kind of attempt to "storm Heaven" and rival or resist God.

Yet if this tower was not a ziggurat, what was it? The only other ancient tower we would associate with the building of a city would be a watch or siege tower, and the latter has been suggested by early Jewish exegetes[15] who did not conclude that this passage indicates some kind of treachery against God via a tremendously tall tower, which modern readers somehow think is obvious. I suggest that we have been conditioned to think this way, so we see in the passage what we expect, which is much more than it actually says. Although the KJV and even the NIV both use phrases that speak of this tower reaching heaven (KJV) or the heavens (NIV), this verb in fact is not part of the Hebrew text.[16] This interpretation is erroneous in that it goes against both the purpose and the nature of a ziggurat. A house for the gods was placed on top of these pyramids to promote contact with them or one of them, and such contact was intended for communion with the deity, not for confrontation. A tower with a heavenward top is therefore to be understood as describing the purpose of the tower as religious.

If the tower was not a ziggurat then it had a military purpose (offensive or defensive) and had nothing to do with God or the gods. So either way (for worship or war) the traditional interpretation of a ridiculously high tower opposing God fails. The explanation of this tower as a watch or siege tower is hard to prove; but we can note firstly that the term (מִגְדָּל) is often used of a watch tower in the OT (although its use in Genesis 11 seems to favour the ziggurat) and secondly that the concern with a city and a tower to defend against deportation is consistent with a military motive for the tower.

The major issue here is the people's desire to "make a name for themselves", that is to build a fierce reputation. This second aspect of the building programme is what is directly connected to their purpose: "so that we will not be captured and carried away to other lands".[17] The plan was firstly to build a city with a central pyramid for the gods (to ensure divine help) and secondly to build a reputation strong enough to deter would-be attackers, so that the Shinarites could hopefully avoid being conquered and enslaved. Perhaps this involved legislation or the imposition of a *lingua franca*. Perhaps they had forced the people in the area they had subdued (Shinar) to adopt their language in place of their native tongue. Such measures were and are typical when a new kingdom is established. The reader must wonder who the Shinarites feared might invade and enslave them. This reality suggests a time in history when a number of "nations" existed as enemies, which implies the existence of at least several dialects if not languages.[18] The traditional view is not concerned with this observation because it usually understands the fear of dispersion as a fear that God would scatter the Shinarites in light of his plan and command to Noah and his sons as stated in Genesis 9:1: have children and fill the earth (הארץ)! (Although again it could be argued that "earth" is not necessarily the globe as we understand it but as Noah would have understood it, i.e. the land area of which he was aware.) Nothing in the text from 9:1 – 11:4 clarifies that these settlers were worried about God making them perpetual travellers and/or parents. In fact the text taken at face value says that they have travelled from the East to get to Shinar. And this logically implies that their ancestors first had to travel eastward before they could travel back westward. They have to be a sizable community in order to build a city so they had no compulsions about bearing children. Nothing suggests they were opposing God's ideal of filling the earth except the assumption that they were aware of Genesis 9:1 and were resolved to disobey. Even if they were not from the east but had travelled eastward and were cognisant of the command to fill the lands with people, the very fact they have just arrived in Shinar at journey's end is evidence of following that order. Certainly people had to settle somewhere at some time, and the fact that these people finally get to a desirable place is no reason to say that they settled down out of an evil motive to disobey God.

Furthermore these apparently Mesopotamian (or pre-Persian?) people would not necessarily know about God's words in Genesis 9:1. That is only the case if we assume they are so close in time to Noah's sons that the command was still fresh and being taught. But if they are living at a time when enemy nations could plunder them, they likely have no knowledge of the Lord or his commands. And if they do, there still is nothing that makes a solid connection between their actions in 11:4 and the divine command in Genesis 9:1. The only possible connection textually is that while 9:1 promotes "global" migration, 11:4 indicates a desire to avoid being scattered.[19] The question then becomes, of what were they afraid? The tone of 11:4 is not that of a resolution to defy God. The Shinarites are not talking to God or responding to anything about him in verses 1-3. They are having a discussion about why they need to build a city. City building had not been divinely forbidden so building a city is no proof of a plan to bypass 9:1. All the text of Genesis 11 says so far is that some people were moving about the Middle East and increasing their population to the point that when they discovered a suitable place they settled down and set about building a city with a tower, most likely a ziggurat for contact, not conflict, with gods or God.

Another issue that is often overlooked is that many slaves would have been needed to build this city, especially the kind of tower the traditional view envisions. This indicates that the people who moved to Shinar from the east must have enslaved people along the way or conquered an already existing civilization in Shinar upon arrival, possibly – as was common – by destroying an existing city and rebuilding it. The pride and power of 11:4, then, is not a matter of rejecting the LORD but of ruthless military aggression. Religion or dependence on their gods or chief war deity would have been part of this, as the building of a ziggurat shows. Spiritual sin comes into play here only in that they worshipped false gods; but the text in verses 4-6 highlights that the problem that entreated the LORD's wrath was the Shinarites' attitudes and actions of building a reputation ("name"), of which the building of a city was just one example -not the building per se but why and how they built it. Their main purpose was to guard against being scattered (4b) and God's verbal response (6a) involved a concern about them being "one people with the same language". The LORD was angered by how the Shinarites had been and were planning to use their unified power. All this points to a problem related to gratuitous and aggressive military might. This view fits with what had been the principle sin of mankind throughout the early chapters of Genesis. Sibling rivalry led to murder in the first family (4:1-8). The Flood was sent to judge a world or region "filled with violence" (6:13). Ham's descendants were destined to become slaves of the descendants of his brothers (9:25-27). Nimrod, the founder of the earliest settlements that became Babylon and Akkad (among other cities) in Shinar (10:10), was a "mighty warrior in the land [בָּאָרֶץ]" (10:8), and "a mighty hunter before the LORD" (10:9). Even some traditional interpreters of Genesis 11 have taken this phrase in verse 9 to mean "hunter of men",[20] presumably in light of 10:8 which describes Nimrod as a warrior. Regardless, he was a warrior and is credited with activities leading to the establishment of cities known for their conquests and cruelty as well as architectural accomplishments.

Interestingly only the narrator mentions or names God as the LORD (YHWH). It is not clear if these people worshipped the LORD as God or a god. If so, it does not fit with what we know about the earliest Sumerians or Babylonians. (Most scholars connect these civilizations to this story, except literalists who place the story very soon after the initial migration of Noah's sons, before a new language could develop and even before ziggurats first appeared, making the relationship to 9:1 reasonable, and making the tower an unbelievably high structure in order to defy God and demonstrate their self sufficiency.) Nimrod is associated with the LORD in 9:9, but the meaning is unclear. The author recognizes the LORD's knowledge of Nimrod but whether or not Nimrod knew of the LORD is uncertain.[21] He was a descendant of Ham (10:6-8)[22] whose descendants were cursed to be slaves (9:25), so he is not part of the line of people leading to those chosen and blessed by God (Shem), which would indicate he was likely at odds with the LORD. What is clear is that he is associated with settlements in Shinar and with warfare.

Those who hold to the ziggurat view of the tower and still say the sin was religious in nature have the burden of proof to show how a structure intended to appease the gods is evidence of sinful pride. The problem seems clearly not to be the tower but the motive of building a city so that the inhabitants could be secure from external threat. They are not trying to avoid migration but subjugation. Whether or not only one or several languages existed at this time, whether or not "a region of the earth" or "the entire earth" is in view in verse 1, and whether or not the tower is a religious or military one, unity and the power and prospects it brings was both the goal of these people (verse 4) and what concerned the LORD (6). And whatever the sin of Shinar was must and will be established on grounds independent of these decisions. How we understand Genesis 11:1-4 is crucial, because it explains why God is so angered in verses 5-8. Also what is emphasized in verse 6 may be the clue to understanding verse 4.

The mentioning of "one lip" (שָׂפָה אֶחָת) in 11:1 in contrast to multiple tongues (לִלְשֹׁנֹתָם) in 10:31, and the mentioning of Babel in 11:9 and Shinar in 11:2 in contrast to Babylon and Shinar in 10:10, have raised controversy over the chronological relationship between these chapters and over the possible literary placement of the "one language" and "one people" in chapter 11 after the territories, nations, clans and tongues in chapter 10. There is no chronological problem or question if the proposal made in this article is correct. Chapter 11 focuses on one example in which a particular people (perhaps led by Nimrod in the earliest settlement of Babylon) subjugated a region and enforced linguistic and political unity with wicked and wanton desire for power, prestige and prosperity. This explains how "it came to be" (וַיְהִי) in 11:1 that this land had one language at some point in the multiplying and migrations of chapter 10. Otherwise, the traditional view that 11:1 speaks of a time before new languages developed is hard pressed to explain why the Tower Story follows the spread of nations and languages and to position it between chapters 9 and 10. If only one language existed in the world in 11:1, the story cannot fit with Nimrod and the founding of Babylon in 10:8-10 or with Peleg (פלג) and the dividing of the earth in 10:25, since multiple tongues are in use. That chapter 10 speaks of "tongues" and 11 of "one lip" and "shared words" (dialects?) is best taken as synonymous ways to speak of language; but perhaps it indicates that the author of the Tower Story had something unusual in mind. Again, the word for "divided" (פלג) in 10:25 is not the same as that for the dispersion (פוץ) in 11:4, 9. To what 10:25 is referring is a mystery, but if we did equate it with the builders of the city in Shinar (as some holding the tradition view of 11:1 do), the understanding of 11:1 as limited to the time of the original human language is (ironically) weakened. That violence was at the heart of the Shinarites' quest for a name and defensive posture better explains the LORD's anger and anxiety as expressed in the next half of the story (verses 5-9).

The LORD's opinion of these plans (11:5-7)

The most significant feature of verse 5 is the reference to God coming down. This is consistent with what we know about the function of the ziggurat as a means of contact between people and their principle deity. It was not for them to go up to meet Him but for Him to have a place to dwell in yet above their city and possibly to descend the steps to meet with them or for priests to ascend to Him. Yet the entire atmosphere and attitude was one of communion. From the narrator's point of view the LORD is the one and only true God, so only He could respond to what people do, whether they know His name or not. This verse indicates His concern with the city and tower but nothing negative is yet revealed. That comes in the next verse.

In verse 6 the concern shifts from the city and tower to the real problem: these people's unity, both political and philological, along with their methods and motives. God's response and solution in verse 7 is also aimed at their linguistic unity. So this is the key. Something about their power and potential in concert with their psychology alarmed the LORD enough that he needed to stop them (6-7). Interestingly this return to a statement about the "one language" found in 11:1 makes use only of the first element (11:1a, "one lip") and not of the second (11:1b, "unified words").

What is ambiguous yet vital for understanding this text is the statement "and this to begin to do". The versions translate this as "and this they have begun to do" (NIV, KJV, LXX) or "this is only the beginning of what they will do" (e.g. NRSV). But the question the translations do not answer (seeking to be more literal than interpretive in such cases, even the dynamic equivalent ones like NIV) is what "this" is. What is it exactly that these people have begun to do that upsets the LORD? The city and tower are almost finished. This is based on 11:5, which says God came down to see the city and tower these people "had built" (בָּנוּ), likewise LXX (ᾠκοδόμησαν), although some versions have "were building" (e.g. NIV). Yet there is an apparent contradiction in verse 8, which says that the LORD's intervention led to a halt in the construction of the city (which is why some translations seek to harmonize the text with "were building" although the verb used does not say that). A solution is to translate the verb in verse 5 as "had built [so far]". They may have built the tower first as a priority. Verse 8 says that they stopped building the city but it does not mention the tower – although the tower could have been included as the central feature of the city, as understood by ancient readers. It may be also that verse 8 indicates continued building beyond the first phase of a city with a tower. This could be an indication that the people were excessively consumed with greedily and mercilessly advancing their kingdom at all costs (although not the megalomaniacs some suggest), which would explain God's great grief over their actions and his swift punishment.

Still what they had begun to do that bothered the LORD as sinful was not the construction project per se. The problem must be related to the nature of the unity created, which was driven by evil motives and enabled by having a city, especially but not necessarily if the tower was a military one. The city was a tool, morally neutral like an axe, but capable of being used with evil intent. If these people are not stopped they will apparently continue to abuse their privilege of having a unified population. But the odd thing here is that unity is normally something positive in the Bible and the eyes of the LORD. Linguistic unity is something we would typically see as a blessing, because we experience our linguistic barriers as troublesome for the communication of the Bible's Good News. Here, however, linguistic and societal unity is sinful. So the LORD confuses their communication (verse 7). Jacques Ellul wrote regarding this phenomenon of miscommunication, even when people speak the same language,

> A humanity capable of communicating has in its possession the most terrible weapon of its own death: it is capable of creating a unique truth, believed by all, independent of God. By the confusion of tongues, by noncommunication, God keeps man from forming a truth valid for all men. Henceforth, man's truth will only be partial and contested.[23]

The expression "let's go down" (7a) is a pun meant to ridicule the people who had said "Let's go build" (4a). God mimics their words: If you try to go up, I will just come down. This use of "let us" when God is speaking brings to mind statements like we see in Genesis 1:26, "Let us make man in our image." The "us" has been interpreted as God and the angels or as the Trinity. But the similar use in Genesis 11 indicates that such an expression is just a figure of speech like the editorial we. In 11:7 the Lord says "Let us" not due to a plan to work with the angels but merely as a play on words to make fun of the people's frail plans – however majestic it was in their own eyes.[24] Regardless, the point of verse 7 is that the Lord's solution to the problem or sin of Shinar is to create misunderstanding and to confuse their communication. It must be observed that nothing is said specifically about the creation of new languages. That is one possible logical deduction to make, but not the only one. The rest of the passage only says that something happened to bring urban sprawl to a halt and that the people were scattered (8, 9b). As a result the place was ridiculed as "Babel" (a pun between Babylon, babel, and Hebrew balal "to mix up") because of their inability to communicate (9a). The author or editor is writing after the rise of Babylon or maybe even Neo-Babylon in order to poke fun at this idolatrous empire. The LXX translates babel as Babylon. Verse 9 speaks of confusion and scattering throughout the כָּל־הָאָרֶץ, which again may be taken in context to mean "all the land" (a particular region of the earth, not the entire globe).

The Lord's punishment of these people (11:8-9)

The punishment fits the crime. Gratuitous conquest was solved by confusion and the incapacity to unify in order to occupy and oppress. It cannot be missed that the confusion of language is related to כָּל־הָאָרֶץ. Since the story is about what happened in a limited location, Shinar, the linguistic confusion cannot be extended to "the whole earth" but only to the "whole region". The verb used does not indicate that at that time God divided these people into different languages, only that they were rendered unable to understand each other enough to continue cooperating and constructing.[25] Only by a presupposition and a jump in logic can these words be extended to mean that numerous languages were supernaturally created. Something happened that led to miscommunication and chaos and eventually to these people being deported or dispersed. The narrator presents the Lord as directly punishing them but the Old Testament mindset was such that even if they were conquered and taken captive, the Lord would be seen as orchestrating the events of history. So the wording would be the same even if an enemy nation was the direct cause of their scattering. The word "scattered" does not intrinsically mean "to the four winds"; that is merely a default meaning in modern English due to the traditional teaching. Being scattered in a number of Old Testament texts speaks of how Israel will be conquered and captured by other nations (Deuteronomy 4:27; 28:64; Jeremiah 9:15; Ezekiel 11:16 et al.). "Over the face of the earth/land" may alternatively picture being dragged away over the ground by a foreign power rather than splitting up and travelling in many directions.

Conclusion and application

"Babel" does not mean "confused", it just sounds like the word that has that meaning. The Israelites could not miss this opportunity to take a pot shot at the pompous Babylonians. Parts of the story are intended as humorous and heuristic and overall to promote holiness by encouraging the readers not to follow the bad example of these Shinarites. Genesis 11:1-9 picks up on 10:8-10 and the tales of Nimrod.[26] However, it could be surmised that 11:9 was added by a redactor so that the original story was not intentionally related to the origins of Babylon. The same word (בָּבֶל) is employed for Babylon in 10:10 and Babel in 11:9. Either way the story as we now have it contains a final commentary on why the city was named Babylon or Babel, i.e. because it was confused (בָּלַל). Yet the etymology of Babel (Akkadian Bab-ilu) is from the Sumerian, meaning "gate of the god", presumably due to a sacred gate at the end of the procession street in Babylon.[27] (Yet the house at the top of a ziggurat was also considered a gate for the gods' entrance into the human realm.) The Babylonian and later the Assyrian empires were known for their cruel treatment of those conquered and captured. The mention of one language in the land likely hearkens back to a period when a particular *lingua franca* like Sumerian or Babylonian was in force (11:1). The region of Shinar was discovered, perhaps invaded, and inhabited (11:2) and eventually a brick city (Babel, typical of Mesopotamia) was built with a ziggurat as a central feature, meaning the gods were called upon for assistance (11:3-4a). But the people's motives were not pure. They built a fortress and sought the chief deity's help in order to establish a fierce reputation so that no other nation would defeat and disperse them (11:4b). So the Lord was concerned about what they were doing (11:5); he was worried about the potential problems if their unified power (militaristic and linguistic) went unchecked (11:6). He so orchestrated events that they became confused; through miscommunication and chaos their unity was weakened (11:7). As a result they were defeated and their empire building ceased; they were deported and dragged away to another region as captives (11:8). Epilogue: This is why the city was named Babyl[on]: because the area under its control became confused, mired down in miscommunication, and the Lord used another nation as his instrument to bring judgment and to scatter this once proud and powerful but too proud and powerful people who violently misused their privileged position.

What then is the value of this text for the modern reader? It is an example of one of the dominant themes of the Old Testament: God's repeated judgment of those who act violently and abuse power. The issue is not the tower but the power of Babel. The narrative in Genesis 11:1-9 gives every indication that the problem was not votive (religious) or volitional (refusal to migrate) but violence (a reputation built on power, real and perceived).

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Notes

1 P.J. Harland, "Vertical or Horizontal: The Sin of Babel", *Vetus Testamentumi* 48 (1998) 515. Luther also thought that "This chapter [11] does not indicate clearly wherein the sins of the builders of the Tower of Babel consisted." Jaroslav Pelikan (ed.), *Luther's Works, vol. 2: Lectures on Genesis Chapters 6-14* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1960) 2:210.

2 See Andrew Louth (ed.), *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: Genesis 1-11* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2001) 166-170, citing *Fathers of the Church: A New Translation* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1947) 14:495-499; 48:170; 67:66-67; 78:138-139; 82:222-229; 91:147-148; *Pseudo Dionysius, The Complete Works*, transl. C. Luibheid et al. (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1987) 282; and *Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1953-) 128:79.

3 John Skinner, *Genesis*, 2nd ed. (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1930) 226.

4 Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis*, rev. edition (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961) 149.

5 For related literature see Jubilees 10:18 and Sibylline Oracles 3:100, in J.H. Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha II* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1985) and *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha I* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1983); *Josephus Antiquities 1:118*, transl. H.St.J. Thackeray (London: SPCK, 1930) 57. For rabbinic views, *Commentaries on the Pentateuch*, ed. C. Pearl (New York: Harper and Row, 1970) 39; C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1974) 734; G.J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15* (Word Biblical Commentary; Waco: Word Books, 1987) 245; V.P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis Chapters 1-17* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990) 356; and others, in addition to the famous painting by Pieter Brueghel (which has probably influenced popular belief more than the Bible or any book, except Bible books for children, or lecture and is likely equalled by fundamentalist sermons). See Theodore Hiebert, "The Tower of Babel and the Origin of the World's Cultures", *Journal of Biblical Literature* 126:1 (2007) 29, citing James Kugel, "The Tower of Babel" in *Traditions of the Bible: A guide to the Bible as it was at the start of the Common Era* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998) 228-242 (for a review of early interpreters); Theodore Hiebert, "The Tower of Babel: Babble or Blueprint? Calvin, Cultural Diversity, and the Interpretation of Genesis 11:1-9", in Wallace M. Alston, Jr. and Michael Welker (eds.), *Reformed Theology: Identity and Ecumenicity, vol. 2* (forthcoming), for a review of interpretations until the present. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 719-721, warns against an interpretation that focuses on a particular place or tower; yet also traditionally says their sin was forcing their way into God's presence.

6 Besides Harland's approach (see note 1), Hiebert has proposed that this story is about the tension between cultural solidarity and diversity (cultural injustice). See Hiebert, " Tower of Babel and Origin of Cultures", 29-58. He argues that Genesis 11:1-9 has no focus on pride and punishment but exclusively explains why the world has a diversity of cultures.

It has even been suggested that Jesus had the Tower of Babel in mind when he taught his disciples about counting the cost of discipleship. He told his disciples the parables of the tower builder and the king going to war (Luke 14:25-33), which interestingly combines a story of building of a tower with one about warfare. See Peter G. Jarvis, "Expounding the Parables: V. The Tower-builders and the King Going to War (Luke 14:25-33)", *Expository Times* 77 (Jan 1966) 196-198.

Jacques Ellul gave a brilliant treatment of the meaning of such a city in the ancient world. He spoke of the inevitability of the city, due to the motives for its creation, needing to conquer the "country" and of its necessary spiritual power for good or evil. Nimrod accomplished his "hunting" of men through city building. In the same context of the building of Babylon in Shinar in Genesis 10 is also the reference to Nineveh in Assyria (also "built" by "Nimrod"). According to Nahum 3:1, Nineveh was a city of falsehood, violence and plunder. This is the legacy of city building in human history. Jacques Ellul, *The Meaning of the City* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1997, repr. ed.) 8-22.

7 Some non-traditional views on the nature of the sin regard the tower not as a ziggurat but a siege or watch tower. See e.g. C. Uehlinger, *Weltreich und "eine Rede": Eine neue Deutung der sogenannten Turmbauerzahlung (Gen 11, 1-9)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990) 231-236, 503-513, 534-536, who argues against the temple idea and sin of religious pride, indicating the sin was an attempt at world domination. Uehlinger compares the language of world domination found in Assyrian rhetoric, specifically inscriptions dealing with the failure of Sargon II in conquering the known world. Pride is said not to be the issue for Genesis 11, but pride can be or most certainly is involved whether people are trying to rival God or run over fellow humans. See Harland, "Vertical or Horizontal," 518 citing Uehlinger. Empire building as an interpretation was also promoted in J. Severino Croatto, "A Reading of the Story of the Tower of Babel from a Perspective of Non-Identity" in Fernando F. Segovia and Mary Ann Tolbert (eds.), *Teaching the Bible: The Discourses and Politics of Biblical Pedagogy* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998) 203-223. Others explain the sin as social injustice, e.g. Steve Reimer, "The Tower of Babel: An Archaeologically Informed Reinterpretation", *Direction 25:2* (1996) 64-72. Ernest B. Cohen, "The Tower of Babel Revisited", *Reconstructionist* (21 Jan 1972) 25-29, compares the Tower Story to loss of jobs for NASA scientists in spite of their grand schemes and abilities to reach the skies and asks for social solutions for those unemployed.

8 Ephrem the Syrian (born ca. AD 306) suggested that after confusion set in, a war erupted in which Nimrod was victorious. He then scattered the population of the city and set himself up as king of Babylon. See Louth, *Ancient Christian Commentary*, 166, 187.

9 Orally, T. Muraoka (Hebrew and Semitics professor emeritus of Leiden University) suggested the meaning "one dialect" for the phrase וּדְבָרִים אֲחָדִים. The entire statement וּדְבָרִים אֲחָדִים שָׂפָה אֶחָת is enigmatic as illustrated by the various ways it is translated and interpreted. Perhaps the connective waw is not conjunctive syntactically ("and also") but explicative ("especially") or pleonastic (stylistic). Possibly the two clauses are appositional ("that is"). This could be a hendiadys. It sounds redundant to say "one language and one speech" as if two different things are meant, unless Muraoka is right about the latter being a dialect. If the point in history was when only one language was being used, it would suffice to just say "everyone spoke one (or 'the same') language". Why add the comment about "words"? To say "one language and a shared vocabulary" is redundant, unless meant appositionally or explicit as a restatement ("that is, a shared vocabulary"). But then Hebrew does possess some redundant features. Regardless of what exactly is meant, the added phrase and the context (see comments on 11:2 above) seem to place the event historically at a point when linguistic and dialectical changes had already occurred.

10 Hamilton, *Genesis*, 350-351, notes 7-8, citing numerous articles and chapters by C.H. Gordon, especially "Ebla as Background for the Old Testament", *Congress Volume: Jerusalem, 1986*, *VTSup* 40 (Leiden: Brill, 1988) 295. He also cites an argument that this language was Sumerian and the scattering is linked to the Ur III period in D.S. DeWitt, "The Historical Background of Genesis 11:1-9: Babel or Ur?" *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 22 (1979) 15-26.

11 Gordon Wenham suggests a hendiadys here ("city tower"?), which takes the city out of the picture (unless it is "towered city"). But a city tower presupposes a city so even if the focus is on the tower per se, we still have to ask its purpose. If the reader does not know about ziggurats, it is reasonable to conclude this is a watch or siege tower. As a religious structure, however, it could still fit a warfare situation as far as the story goes. A ziggurat would have been used for inviting the gods' blessings on their battles. The purpose of a ziggurat could in no way have enraged the gods. *The Lord* would have been upset by idolatry but these are not Hebrews and the text does not describe the problem in this way. The sin would have to be something that was universally viewed as sinful, like gratuitous violence. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 239.

12 Luther spoke of medieval folklore that placed the Tower at nine miles high. Pelikan, *Luther's Works*, 2:211.

13 Therefore Dale DeWitt could confidently assert: "It is common knowledge now that the tower is the ziggurat of the lower Tigris-Euphrates basin." See DeWitt, "The Historical Background", 15. In the *Archaeological Study Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 20 it says regarding Genesis 11:4: "Ancient cities were dominated by a temple complex, including a tower.... Ziggurats were dedicated to particular deities. Their design made it convenient for a god to 'come down' to his temple, receive worship from his people and bless them." On sacred space in the ancient world, see V. Hurowitz, *I Have Built You an Exalted House, JSOT* Sup 115 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992). DeWitt plausibly argues that the date of the Tower event is best related to the fall of the Third Dynasty of Ur, the end of the Sumerian civilization, ca. 1960

BC. He connects the division of languages in Genesis 11:7 with the time of Peleg when the earth was divided (10:25; cf. 11:18; DeWitt 10:18 [sic?]). His defence of the tower of Genesis 11 as a temple uniting Heaven and earth is based mainly on the wording of 11:4 (mentioning the heavens) for which he finds parallels in ancient Mesopotamian texts which speak of ziggurats or temples as links between Heaven and earth (DeWitt, "The Historical Background", 21). However, these texts use the term "house" not "tower", although structurally these temples were often seven-stepped pyramids of ca. 30 feet [10 metres] high. Extant towers range from 60 to 200 feet per side. See John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament* (Nottingham: Apollos, 2007) 119.

14 As André Parrot concluded, a ziggurat was "a bond of union, whose purpose was to assure communication between earth and heaven"; therefore, a "giant step-ladder by means of which a man may ascend as near as possible to the sky". Such a definition on the surface seems to align well with the words of Genesis 11:4a. See André Parrot, *The Tower of Babel, Studies in Biblical Archaeology 2* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1955) 64.

15 See *inter alia* John H. Walton, "The Mesopotamian Background of the Tower of Babel and its Implications", *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 5 (1995) 155-175; Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought*, 121.

16 Luther was influenced by such wording, as many still are. He concluded it was a place of worship. See Pelikan, *Luther's Works*, 2:213. He may have been influenced by the Vulgate, as were the KJV translators. The Vulgate in verse 4 reads *et dixerunt venite faciamus nobis civitatem et turrem cuius culmen pertingat ad caelum et celebremus nomen nostrum antequam dividamur in universas terras*. ("And they said: Come, let us make a city and a tower, the top whereof may reach to heaven: and let us make our name famous before we be scattered abroad into all lands"; *The Holy Bible Translated from the Latin Vulgate, Douay-Rheims* [New York: Edward Dunigan,1844]; emphasis added).

17 Cf. KJV punctuation: "Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth"; and NRSV: "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves; otherwise we shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."

18 An alternative approach is not to worry about such inconsistencies (e.g. only one language and one set vocabulary but various nations) and to admit that the story is a fable meant to teach a valid lesson, not validate historical details. But the presupposition of this study is to understand that a historical event is behind the story, and its intention is to interact with a traditional interpretation that is held by those who accept this text as historical and divinely authoritative.

19 The verb used for "scatter" in 11:4b (פוץ) is similar to but not the same as that found in 9:19, where Noah's sons are mentioned as those whose descendants were scattered (נפץ) over the "earth".

20 People's pride and pursuit of power inevitably lead to battles between cities for more prestige. This usually ends in the defeated population being dispersed or deported (scattered and enslaved). God allows this to continue as the natural consequence of and punishment for gratuitous violence against neighbours. Interestingly a Puritan commentator speaking of Nimrod said: "By hunter here is not meant an hunter of beasts, but an hunter of men." See William Whately, *Prototypes or, the Primarie Precedent Presidents of the Booke of Genesis* (London: Edvvard Langham, MDCXL) 87. Luther said about verse 4 that: "The descendants of Ham had invaded the region of Shem… Because they were inclined towards despotism, they had a desire not only to drive out the descendants of Shem but also to establish [as Satan does] a new government and a new church." See Pelikan, *Luther's Works*, 2: 219. Cf. Ellul, *The Meaning of the City*, 10-13, who makes a case for "hunter before the LORD" meaning "plunderer" or "conqueror". I would add that the parallel with "mighty warrior" supports this as a military statement, not one about hunting game. Ellul speaks of this reflecting the establishment of the first military empires by one whom God knows about but who does not know God as did Moses (Ellul, *City*, 11-12). Being "before the LORD" is a negative assessment in this case. The city is a centre from which war is waged (Ellul, *City*, 13). Josephus wrote: "They were incited to this insolent contempt of God by Nebrodes [LXX name for Nimrod], grandson of Ham the son of Noah, an audacious man of doughty vigour. He persuaded them to attribute their prosperity not to God but to their own valour, and little by little transformed the state of affairs into a tyranny, holding that the only way to detach men from the fear of God was by making them continuously dependent upon his own power." Josephus, *Antiquities IV*, transl. Thackeray, 55.

21 The Sumerians worshiped Anu (meaning "sky" or "heaven/s") as the chief deity. Ellul refers to the distance between the LORD and Nimrod, who was "before the LORD" (Genesis 10:9; see Ellul, *Meaning of the City*, 11-12). The LORD was not sanctioning Nimrod's prowess; rather Nimrod was separated from the LORD while a part of his omniscience.

22 In Gen 10:8 he is called a son of Cush (a son of Ham in verse 6) but in Micah 5:6 he is Assyrian.

23 Ellul, *Meaning of the City*, 19.

24 Likewise such a statement in Genesis 1:26 is probably just a literary convention and nothing theologi-

cal should be taken from it.

25 A widely accepted chiasm of Genesis 11:1-9 makes a parallel between "had one language" (b; 11:1b) and "the LORD confused the language" (b'; 11:9b). This would suggest that the one language was confused not divided. See e.g. J.P. Fokkelman, *Narrative Art in Genesis* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1975) 13-22. In this chiasm the centre point or climax, for which there is no corresponding line, is "The LORD came down" (g; 11:5a).

26 Wenham's view is that that 11:1-9 explains the diversity and dispersion of chapter 10, but he does not tie it specifically to Nimrod. See Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, 242-244. My proposal is also that 11 explains 10 but not in terms of how the diversity of tribes and tongues arose. However, the view that violence is the sin of verse 4 does not depend on how the language of verse 1 is understood. Whether of not 11:1-9 fits chronologically before chapter 10 or early in it, the attempt to make a name is reasonably defined by the narrative in its immediate and Old Testament context, not as attacking God or avoiding migration, but pride that led to an abuse of power. The story shows they had no problem with migration and reproduction. And nothing indicates that God was angry about the tower per se but rather about the motives behind the city. The tower was evidence that they sought God but the Ten Commandments had established God's resolution that a right relationship with him was related to a right relationship with humanity. Jesus summed up the Old Testament and its two greatest commands as love God and your neighbour as yourself (Luke 10:27). Cf. 1 John 4:20, "If anyone says, 'I love God', yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen."

27 S.v. בָּבֶל in Koehler and Baumgartner (eds.), *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Accordance Bible Version). David C. Mitchell, "'God Will Redeem My Soul from Sheol': The Psalms of the Sons of Korah", *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 30 (2006) 373 n. 30, notes the derisory nature of the translation of Babel ("Gate of God" in Aramaic).

The Faith of Jesus Christ

Exegetical, Biblical and Theological Studies

Edited by Michael F. Bird and Preston M. Sprinkle

The Faith of Jesus Christ represents an attempt to grapple with one of the most perplexing problems in Pauline studies, namely that of the phrase *pistis christou*. Issues of considerable theological import hinge on how we interpret it (does it mean 'faith in Christ' or 'the faithfulness of Christ'?). The topic is now well rehearsed in contemporary scholarship and this volume sheds new light on the question by presenting rigorous exegetical studies from both sides of the debate. It also brings creative new proposals to bear on the problem, and orients the discussion in the wider spectrum of historical, biblical and systematic theology.

The Faith of Jesus Christ represents the most penetrating and comprehensive attempt to date to grapple with the significance of Jesus' faithfulness and obedience for Christian salvation and the extent to which it is represented in key biblical texts. Contributors include Francis Watson, Douglas Campbell, Stanley Porter, David DeSilva, Paul Foster, Richard Bell, Joel Willitts, Mark Seifrid, Barry Matlock, Michael Bird, Andrew Pitts, Mark Elliott, Ardel Caneday, Peter Bolt, Bruce Lowe, Bill Salier, Debbie Hunn, Ben Myers, and Preston Sprinkle. Foreword by James D.G. Dunn.

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The quest for the political Paul: assessing the apostle's approach to Empire

Ed Mackenzie

SUMMARY

In recent years a number of interpreters have argued that Paul's theology was politically subversive. The routes to such a conclusion, however, have been diverse. Some interpreters argue that Paul was explicitly hostile to the Roman Empire, pointing to parallels between the vocabulary of Paul's theology and that of Roman imperial ideology. Others contend that the shape of Paul's gospel implicitly conflicted with the honours bestowed on the emperor. Still others focus on the social implications of Pauline theology. This article focuses on three different approaches to the political Paul, explores criticisms of such approaches, and offers an assessment of recent research in this area. The first approach is rejected but the other two are not therefore accepted uncritically. It is argued that Paul sought to minimise potential conflict with the Roman Empire, focusing instead on God's work in Christ.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In den letzten Jahren haben nicht wenige Ausleger das Argument vertreten, die Theologie des Paulus sei subversiv gewesen. Die Wege zu einer derartigen Schlussfolgerung aber sind vielfältig. Einige Interpreten behaupten, dass Paulus ausgesprochen feindlich dem Römischen Reich gegenüber eingestellt war und wiesen dabei auf Parallelen zwischen dem Vokabular der paulinischen Theologie und jenem der Ideologie des Römischen Reiches hin. Andere halten dagegen, dass der Charakter des paulinischen Evangeliums natürlicherweise in Konflikt stand zu den Ehrenbezeigungen, die dem Kaiser zu zollen waren. Wiederum andere Ausleger lenken das Augenmerk auf die sozialen Implikationen der Theologie von Paulus. Der vorliegende Artikel konzentriert sich auf drei unterschiedliche Ansätze zum politischen Paulus, erforscht ihre Kritik und bietet eine Bewertung der jüngeren Forschung auf diesem Gebiet an. Der erste Ansatz wird verworfen, doch dies heißt nicht, dass die beiden übrigen unkritische Zustimmung finden. Das Argument geht dahin, dass Paulus danach trachtete, das Konfliktpotential mit dem Römischen Reich so gering wie möglich zu halten und sich stattdessen auf Gottes Werk in Christus zu konzentrieren.

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RÉSUMÉ

Ces dernières années, un certain nombre d'exégètes ont soutenu que la théologie paulinienne était politiquement subversive. Diverses routes sont empruntées pour parvenir à cette conclusion. Certains considèrent que Paul était explicitement hostile à l'empire romain : ils s'appuient sur des parallèles entre le vocabulaire de Paul et celui de l'idéologie impériale romaine. D'autres soulignent que l'Évangile prêché par l'apôtre entrait implicitement en conflit avec les honneurs rendus à l'empereur. D'autres encore mettent en avant les implications sociales de la théologie paulinienne. Cet article expose trois approches différentes de la politique de Paul, examine les critiques qui leur ont été adressées et offre une évaluation des recherches récentes dans ce domaine. La première des trois approches est écartée mais les deux autres ne sont pas pour autant acceptées sans réserve. L'auteur tente de montrer que Paul cherchait à prévenir un conflit potentiel avec l'empire romain et qu'il s'est plutôt attaché à présenter l'œuvre de Dieu en Christ.

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Introduction

The quest for the 'political Paul' – a Paul who critiqued, criticised or undermined the Roman Empire – has become an increasingly significant movement in New Testament studies.[1] Its development can be linked to a wider recognition that the political context of the New Testament should be taken more seriously[2] as well as to recent studies exploring the relationship between the early Christians and the imperial cult.[3] Hermeneutical concerns have also shaped research in this area. Just as the *Shoah* or *Holocaust* has led New Testament scholars to re-evaluate older constructions of Second Temple Judaism,[4] so too the misappropriation of Romans 13:1-7 in the history of the church has fed the desire to advocate a Paul critical of empire. If Romans 13:1-7, in which Paul calls for believers to 'subordinate' themselves to the governing authorities, is Paul's only teaching on the State, then this can justify (and has justified) quiescent and submissive attitudes to political power within the modern world. Classic examples are found among German Christians in the Third Reich, as well as the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa.[5] On the other hand, if Paul critiqued ancient empire, he might also offer a source for undermining the abuse of political power today. Paul can be appropriated as a critic of 'Pax Americana', globalisation and free-market profiteering, and so speak powerfully to today's context.[6]

Advocates of the political Paul seek to argue their case on solidly historical-critical grounds. At a broad level, all agree that close links existed between theology and politics in the ancient world, and all stress the importance of Roman imperial ideology. Beyond these agreements, however, scholars adopt a wide range of approaches in their pursuit of the political Paul. This article explores three approaches that advocate a politically subversive Paul, outlines recent criticisms of such approaches and ends with an assessment of the apostle's approach to empire.

Approaches to the political Paul

Three distinctive approaches support a political reading of Paul, focusing respectively on Paul's *critique* of empire, Paul's *subversion* of imperial ideology and Paul's *ecclesial alternative* to imperial society. The first two approaches prioritise the conflict between Paul and imperial ideology, differing on the extent of such conflict and the degree to which Paul's critique is explicit. The third approach prioritises the social consequences of Paul's theology, exploring its implications for the relationship of believers to the imperial world. Although scholars straddle such categories, they illustrate different approaches to the political Paul, and the distinctions are – it is hoped – heuristically useful.[7]

Scholars adopting the first approach identify Pauline texts and themes that confront Roman imperial ideology, and argue that these point to an overt critique of empire. In particular, linguistic and conceptual parallels between Pauline texts and imperial ideology are seen as indicative of Paul's deliberate attempt to undermine the Roman Empire or emperor.

Neil Elliott's *Liberating Paul* provides a good example of this approach.[8] Elliott argues that the church and academy have 'depoliticised' and 'domesticated' the apostle Paul.[9] Paul's letters have been subject to a 'canonical betrayal', placed alongside pseudonymous deutero-Paulines and accruing interpolations that endorsed the imperial order.[10] As well as its canonical distortion, the 'deJudaization' and 'mystification' of Paul's teaching have rendered mute Paul's politically explosive message.[11]

Following his critique of past scholarship, Elliott seeks to uncover the political character of Paul's theology, arguing that several themes and texts reveal the apostle's hostility to empire. The symbol of the cross, for example, is less about atonement and more about God's justice. The crucifixion of Jesus unveils the violence of Roman power, revealing God's 'partiality to the oppressed'.[12] The apocalyptic content of Paul's gospel also reveals its political nature, implying that the coming age of God's kingdom would soon bring the power of Rome to an end. Drawing on Paula Fredriksen, Elliott also argues that the pre-conversion Paul persecuted Jewish believers because he feared that the announcement of a Jewish Lord would lead Rome to persecute the Jewish community. For Elliott, Paul's belief that the gospel had such a political content remained even after his conversion.[13]

Elliott also draws attention to terms in Paul that conflicted with the same or similar terms in Roman imperial propaganda.[14] In Paul's letter to the Romans, for example, 'righteousness' (Greek *dikaiosunē*) and 'faith' (*pistis*), 'correspond to the Latin *ius* and *fides*, the lifeblood of Augustan propaganda'.[15] These parallels point to the conflict between Paul's gospel and Roman imperial ideology.

In treating the obvious counter to his case – Romans 13:1-7 – Elliott argues that the rhetorical purpose of the text was to encourage Roman gentile believers to pay their taxes and so protect the vulnerable Jewish community in Rome. If riots took place in Rome due to revolts over taxes, the Jewish community would be the likely targets of imperial wrath, a consequence Paul wishes to prevent. Romans 13, then, is no theology of the state, but a rhetorically focused admonition that sought to protect a minority at risk.[16]

Elliott's more recent work, *The Arrogance of Nations*, offers a more cautious reconstruction of the political Paul that moves towards the second approach outlined below. Elliott concedes that certain 'ideological constraints' inhibited Paul from fully critiquing empire[17] but argues that imperial critique is evident throughout his letter to the Romans.[18] Adopting Hays' 'methodology' for detecting echoes of the Jewish Scriptures in the letters of Paul, Elliott suggests that an implicit critique of empire would be overheard by readers of Romans.[19] The chapter headings in the work reflect the key themes that Elliott addresses: Imperium (Empire); Iustitia (Justice); Clementia (mercy); Pietas (Piety) and Virtus (Virtue).

Other books could be chosen to illustrate this approach[20] but Elliott's *Liberating Paul* best illustrates the attempt to show that Paul was hostile to the pretensions and the power of empire. In this view, Paul's use of terms echoing the empire is not accidental or incidental, but reflects his intent to critique Roman imperial ideology.

A second approach in the quest for the political Paul focuses on the *implicit subversion* of Roman imperial ideology found in the Pauline corpus. Paul did not target the imperial cult or the Empire for specific criticism (as the first approach implies) nor did he advise believers to oppose the state (Romans 13:1-7), but Paul's gospel nonetheless undermined aspects of Roman imperial ideology. Advocates of this approach follow some of the same procedures as the former view, but tend to offer a more nuanced account of the conflict between Paul's gospel and empire.

N. T. Wright is the best known representative of this view.[21] He argues that Paul's theology *derived* from Judaism but *confronted* paganism.[22] As such, Paul's critique of the emperor was part of his broader conflict with pagan idolatry:

> Paul… was not opposed to Caesar's empire primarily because it was an empire, with all the unpleasant things we have learned to associate with that word, but because it was Caesar's, and because Caesar was claiming divine status and honours which belonged only to the one God.[23]

Like Elliott, Wright focuses on terminological parallels between Pauline theology and imperial ideology. Rather than focusing on an explicit critique of the Roman Empire, however, Wright argues that the logic of Paul's gospel undermined the imperial 'gospel' associated with Rome. An example is found in Wright's treatment of the 'righteousness of God' (*dikaiosunē theou*), which Wright interprets as God's faithfulness to the promises to the patriarchs.[24] Although rooted in the Jewish Scriptures, the righteousness of God undermines the 'justice' associated with the Roman Empire. For Paul, true peace and reconciliation are found in Christ (Romans 5:1ff.)[25] and such an assertion bluntly contradicts the imperial claim to bring 'peace' (Augustus, *Res gestae* 12-13; Horatius, *Odes* 4.5). Even Romans 13:1-7, apparently offering uncritical support to governing authorities, undercuts imperial ideology by reminding readers that the emperor is ultimately under God.[26]

At times, Wright makes fairly grandiose claims for Paul's political theology. The churches are described as 'colonial outposts of the empire that is to be'[27] and Philippians 3 is a 'coded challenge to Empire'.[28] Overall, however, Wright seeks to show that the logic of Paul's deeply Jewish gospel subverted pagan Rome's imperial ideology.[29]

Other scholars endorse this broad approach by drawing attention to the implicit tensions between Paul's gospel and imperial ideology.[30] The gospel and imperial ideology are treated as competing world-views and, as such, Paul's letters reveal an implicit critique of the Roman Empire.

A third approach to the political Paul focuses on the apostle's vision of an *ecclesial alternative to imperial society* and so draws attention on the social and political corollaries of Paul's view of church life. In this view, the politics of Paul consisted in his attempt to establish a network of relations that jeopardised the social structures of empire.

Robert Jewett's reading of Romans illustrates the approach.[31] Although Jewett maintains that Paul implicitly critiqued imperial ideology,[32] his primary focus is on the ways that Paul's vision of the church challenged the 'honour-shame' culture of ancient society:

> In the shameful cross, Christ overturned the honor system that dominated the Graeco-Roman and Jewish worlds, resulting in discrimination and exploitation of barbarians as well

as in poisoning the relations between the congregations in Rome. The gospel offered grace to every group in equal measure, shattering the imperial premise of exceptionalism in virtue and honour.[33]

The social implications of the gospel are weaved throughout Romans but become particularly explicit in Romans 14:1 – 15:13.[34] In this passage Paul encourages believers – Jews and gentiles – to 'welcome' one another, and grounds his appeal on God's acceptance of believers in Christ (15:7). Mutual acceptance rules out 'discrimination' and 'judgement' (14:1-13) and so undermines the quest for honour found among ethnically diverse groups in Rome.[35] Since the Roman Empire and the imperial household were included within the honour-shame system of the ancient world, they too were challenged by the alternative community found among believers in Christ. For Jewett, Paul's attempt to create 'transformed relations' among Christians in Rome is a necessary precursor for taking the gospel to Spain.[36]

In addressing Romans 13:1-7, Jewett concedes that, possibly for missional reasons, Paul 'abandons the revolutionary approach to honor visible in the preceding chapters'.[37] And yet, Jewett can also characterise this text as a 'massive act of political co-optation'[38]: the God who grants the rulers the authority is the God embodied in the crucified Christ!

For Jewett, Paul's call for mutual welcome in the *ekklēsia* – and the challenges it posed to imperial society – are correlate with his criticism of human honour and pride, the 'boasting' of earlier chapters (Romans 2:17-24; 3:27-31; 4:1-2). Other approaches to the political Paul similarly stress the social ramifications of Paul's gospel.[39]

Questioning the political Paul

The three approaches surveyed above agree that Paul criticised or subverted the Roman Empire or emperor. The quest for the political Paul, however, has not been wholly accepted in recent scholarship and three key criticisms undermine its central claims.[40]

Firstly, advocates of the political Paul – and particularly those focusing on ideological conflict – make *questionable appeals to parallels* between the language applied to Jesus and that applied to the emperor.[41] Ironically, the identification of such parallels can be traced to a scholar who disavowed their political significance. In his celebrated *Light from the Ancient East*, Adolf Deissmann identified what he called a 'polemical parallelism' between the terms used by the early Christian movement and the imperial cult, drawing attention to words such as Lord (*kurios*), Christ (*christos*) and Gospel (*euangelion*).[42] Although such parallels led to *later* conflict between Christianity and the imperial cult, Deissmann argued that the 'lower class' constituency of early Christianity at the time of Paul made it unlikely that the early Christians were interested in changing the political structures of their world.[43]

Although Deissmann's conclusion on the social status of early believers has been widely criticised,[44] several scholars have noted the risk of finding parallels where none exist, as Seyoon Kim's recent critique of the political Paul contends.[45] The identification of parallels is notoriously subjective[46] and when the early Christian language most naturally has its roots within Jewish texts, the existence of true parallels to imperial ideology needs to be clearly demonstrated. As mentioned earlier, both Elliott and Wright adapt Hays' criteria for demonstrating Paul 'echoes' of the Jewish Scriptures to the imperial cult,[47] but there is a significant difference between identifying echoes in a set of texts recognised as authoritative by a community and finding echoes of an imperial ideology that was embedded within visual, textual and ritual media.

An example of the appeal to parallels is found in treatments of Paul's use of the term *euangelion* ('gospel'/'good news', cf. Romans 1:1, 16; 1 Corinthians 9:23; Galatians 2:7; 1 Thessalonians 2:4). Although connected to the verbal form *euangelizō* in the LXX version of Isaiah (Isaiah 52:7; 61:1-2, cf. *Psalms of Solomon* 11:1),[48] the term is also used within Roman imperial ideology, most famously in the Priene inscription that announced the 'good news' (*euangelia*) associated with the emperor Augustus.[49] Advocates of the political Paul claim that Paul's use deliberately undermined the imperial use, depicting the 'gospel' of the Roman Empire as a parody of the true gospel of Christ.[50]

Whether or not the early Christians drew the term *euangelion* from the imperial cult, there is no clear evidence that Paul opposed imperial ideology by his use of the term.[51] The only 'false gospels' that Paul names are those found within the *ekklēsia* (2 Corinthians 11:14; Galatians 1:6-7) and there is no explicit contrast in Paul between the 'gospel' of Jesus and the 'gospel' of the emperor. More fundamentally, the *euangelion* in Paul centred on the proclamation of the crucified and risen Christ

(1 Corinthians 15:3ff.)[52] and so differed markedly from that within imperial ideology. As Acts indicates, the early followers of Jesus were keen to show that the gospel entailed no revolt against Rome (Acts 25:8-11; 26:24-32; 28:30-31), a strategy followed by later Christians (1 *Clement* 60:4 – 61:1; *Martyrium of Polycarp* 10:2). In short, Paul's use of 'political terminology' (*euangelion*, *kurios*, *dikaiosunē*) falls far short of imperial subversion. As Christopher Bryan points out, 'Christians were using some of the same words about Jesus as pagans used about Caesar, but they were hardly using them in the same context, or meaning anything like the same thing by them.'[53]

The second criticism of constructs of the political Paul is that they *overplay the significance of political echoes in Pauline texts*. Often a subsidiary implication of a text is proclaimed as its key point, even though the argument of the text indicates that Paul's purpose lies elsewhere.[54] One fairly uncontroversial echo of imperial ideology in Paul's letters is found in 1 Thessalonians 5, where 'peace and security' (*eirēnē kai asphaleia*, verse 3) draws on a slogan extolling the benefits of living within the Roman Empire.[55] Alongside other elements in the text, Harrison argues that Paul's treatment of this slogan represents 'a radical subversion of Roman eschatological imagery and terminology'.[56] The use of this phrase, however, does not mean that Paul is critiquing the entire structure of empire, but simply indicates that the coming of Christ would undermine the assumption that peace and security could ultimately be granted by a human authority.[57] Such a contention would apply to any governing authority, not simply the Roman one. More significantly, the claim does not lead to a withdrawal from society or a critique of the state, but grounds Paul's appeal to avoid idleness (5:15) and to hold fast to what is good (5:21b).

A further example of possible over-interpretation is found in treatments of the 'hymn' in Philippians 2:6-11, a prime candidate for a 'political' critique of empire.[58] Oakes has made the strongest case yet for a critique of imperial ideology in this text, linking it to a contrast between Christ and the emperor in Philippians 3:20-21.[59] Despite the impressive parallels Oakes adduces, a range of other possible backgrounds has been suggested[60] and the most likely context remains the Hebrew Scriptures (including Isaiah 45:23). It is also significant that Paul refrains from making explicit any political critique from the hymn but rather focuses on encouraging believers to imitate the humility of Christ (2:5).[61]

Acknowledging that Paul's political critique is far from explicit, some suggest that Paul wrote a 'coded' critique to safeguard the congregations from Roman hostility.[62] Only when the critique is unveiled or 'decoded' does its political agenda becomes clear. Kim has highlighted the difficulty of this view, claiming it reveals a desperate attempt to explain the apparent absence of explicit anti-imperial texts.[63] A more sophisticated version of this approach appeals to 'hidden transcripts',[64] a notion developed by the sociologist J. C. Scott.[65] Whereas rulers can proclaim their politics in 'public transcripts' – public interactions between the rulers and the ruled – Scott argued that oppressed people act politically in much more subtle ways, such as through grumbling, folktales and popular carnivals.[66] These 'hidden transcripts' offer a criticism of oppressors and can be seen as forms of political resistance that act as a condition of material resistance.[67] Although his own research focused on political resistance in Malaysia, Scott suggests that 'traditional utopian beliefs', including forms of millennialism, can also be viewed as forms of popular resistance.[68]

Despite its helpful heuristic value, the application of Scott's model in the analysis of Paul's letters is questionable. Scott's research was based on a Malaysian context and applying it to the first century is problematic. We simply do not have the information available to know if Paul's letters contain the 'hidden transcripts' hypothesised by some interpreters.[69] Applying the work of Scott to Paul's letters begins with the assumption that Paul was hostile to empire, but that is exactly the question that needs to be addressed.

Thirdly, readings of the political Paul *re-interpret*, *downplay* or *ignore the counterevidence to their position*.[70] The clearest 'counterevidence' for a political Paul is, of course, Romans 13:1-7.[71] While all modern commentators would agree that this passage is no *carte blanche* legitimisation of state power, and draw attention to the need to balance it with other biblical perspectives, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that this passage at the very least problematises some reconstructions of a political Paul.[72]

Advocates of the political Paul decentre the significance of this passage in a number of ways: detecting an implicit critique of governmental power in the text of Romans 13,[73] proposing a rhetorical ploy by Paul[74] or by noting that the broader context relativises Paul's teaching in Romans 13.[75]

While it is true that Romans 13:1-7 should not be considered the sum total of 'Paul's political theology', it does negate readings of Paul that depict him as anti-empire.[76] The passage clearly calls for believers to 'subordinate' themselves to governing authorities and grounds this appeal in God's providential establishment of authorities (13:2-3). Such a view is also consistent with a broadly Jewish approach to authority (Jeremiah 29:4-7; Daniel 5:18-19; Proverbs 8:15-16; Wisdom 6:1-11).[77]

A rather bolder attempt to decentre the significance of Romans 13:1-7 is found in T. L. Carter's argument that Paul's teaching here is deliberately 'ironic'.[78] Carter's case mainly rests on the tension between Paul's call to subordinate to the authorities and the reality of believers suffering under the same authorities, but – contra Carter – such a tension exists elsewhere (Luke 12:11-12; 1 Peter 2:13-14, 3:16-17) and is not sufficient to warrant an ironic reading of the passage.

Romans 13:1-7, however, is by no means the only counterevidence to constructions of a political Paul. Although arguments from silence are precarious, the lack of an explicit critique of empire within Paul is surprising if Paul did indeed intend to criticise the empire.[79] While he explicitly criticises pagan idolatry (Romans 1:18-25; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6; 10:14-22), he never draws explicit attention to the imperial cult. No doubt, the imperial cult is included – after all, it too was a form of pagan worship – but Paul prefers to issue generalised condemnations of the pagan world.[80] Even when a clear opportunity presented itself for critiquing empire, he did not take it.

Paul also advised the early believers to live in a way that would avoid hostility with the surrounding society, consistent with his avoidance of explicit critique of the governing authorities. Indeed, Romans 13:1-7 is couched within a broader paraenetical section that stresses harmony with neighbours (Romans 12:8; 13:8-10) and peace with persecutors (12:14, 17-21). Elsewhere, Paul encourages believers to 'live quietly' (1 Thessalonians 4:11) and to serve God in every walk of life (1 Corinthians 7:17). The broad tenor of Paul's social ethic makes it likely that he would have avoided confrontation with the imperial world.

Assessing the Political Paul

Several arguments associated with the quest for the political Paul have been undermined in recent scholarship and the bolder claims associated with the first approach described above are especially found wanting. There are, however, useful insights associated with research in this area. The final section of this article offers an assessment of the quest for the political Paul, highlighting both positive and negative features.

Firstly, *research on the political Paul offers an important reminder that religion and politics were closely connected in the ancient world*. In the Roman Empire, as in the ancient world generally, religion was deeply embedded within the political sphere. Cities in the Empire pursued the protection and blessing of the gods, with governing magistrates acting as religious functionaries.[81] Sacrifices and prayers were an important part of civic life, and regular festivals honoured the gods who protected the Empire and the cities.[82] Even those sceptical of the gods recognised the importance of piety in maintaining the cohesion of the Empire (Polybius 6.56.6). Religion and politics were related in ways difficult to imagine in today's post-Enlightenment world.

The significance of the Roman imperial cult – and Roman imperial ideology – has been a particular focus among advocates of the political Paul. Although its greatest influence was in the East, a close association was forged between the emperor and the gods throughout the Empire, including in Rome itself. Augustus played a key role in his process, with the famous *Res gestae* highlighting his religious as well as military achievements.[83] Key studies, such as Zanker and Fishwick,[84] have shaped research in this area, with a range of further works exploring the specific field of New Testament studies.[85] The quest for the political Paul has drawn attention to this area of study and the (re)turn to classical sources and archaeology is a welcome one. The quest for the political Paul is a potent reminder that early Christians had no choice but to reflect on how best to relate to the governing authorities that claimed the honours of God.

Secondly, *Paul minimised – rather than maximised – the tensions between gospel and empire*. The absence of overt criticism of the Roman Empire – even in contexts where we might expect it – argues against the view that Paul sought to undermine it. In fact, Paul encouraged believers to subordinate themselves to the governing authorities, asserting that God appointed the authorities to 'reward the good and punish the evil' (Romans 13:1-7). This is consistent with Paul's teaching elsewhere. Believers are to live quiet lives (1 Thessalonians

4:11) and love their neighbours (Romans 12:18). Paul focuses not on the enmity of empire but that of sin, Satan and death. His interest is in peace and order, not in revolt and conflict. For these reasons, Paul minimises potential conflict with the Roman Empire. In fact, recent research suggests that Paul and other early believers went even further, cultivating churches that sought the welfare of the cities where they dwelt.[86]

Although Elliott's recent work, *The Arrogance of Nations*, advocates a political reading of Romans, he explains that aspects of Paul's theology illustrate a 'voice under domination'. In particular, Romans 13:1-7 shows that Paul's radical vision for the gospel was subject to 'ideological constraints'.[87] This is a significant concession, as even for Elliott Paul's theology was not wholly critical of the empire. Romans 13:1-7 might even be seen as Paul's attempt to qualify the potentially subversive elements of his thought[88] and so negates the view that Paul was hostile to Roman power.

Thirdly, *the quest for the political Paul has identified significant points of tension between Paul's gospel and the Roman imperial world*. In particular, the identification of parallel patterns of theology and/or social practices within Paul's letters and the ideology of Roman rule reveals the *potential* conflict between the gospel and empire. To the extent that such tensions exist, Paul's theology can be seen as political. As Bryan also notes:

> Paul's proclamation is therefore 'political', in the same way in which… the entire biblical tradition is 'political', which is to say it asserts that there is One who is above all earthly powers, even within their own spheres, and who will hold them accountable.[89]

Such observations, however, do not mean that Paul *deliberately* critiqued Roman rule, but simply highlights the implicit tensions between the claims of the gospel and the claims of empire. Such tensions could – and, indeed, did – become 'conflicts' at a later stage, but Paul did not draw attention to these in writing his letters.[90]

One area where an implicit tension existed between Paul's gospel and the Roman Empire was, of course, in the claims advanced for Jesus and the emperor. Although attempts to show that Paul deliberately critiqued the emperor are subject to the criticisms identified above, there is no doubt that a commitment to Jesus *did* reshape the worldview of believers in such a way as to dethrone the significance of the emperor. As Oakes has argued, Paul places Christ at the centre of the believers' world and so inevitably *decentred* the emperor and his associated cult.[91] At a later stage, this led to cases where the confession of Jesus as Lord entailed political persecution. Even at later times, however, Christians sought to minimise their conflict with the Roman Empire.

Finally, *the future of the 'political Paul' is likely to be found in hermeneutical readings that explore the implicit conflict between Paul's gospel and empire*. Although Paul himself does not exploit this conflict, advocates of the political Paul have helpfully drawn attention to its implicit presence in his theology. Given the historical misuse of Romans 13:1-7, redressing the balance to show that Paul's theology is implicitly critical of aspects of empire, then and now, is a welcome development.

There are, of course, a number of hermeneutical strategies for retrieving the relevance of the political Paul. One approach prioritises the 'liberationist' aspects of Paul's theology and dismisses those themes that are unpalatable for such an agenda.[92] Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, for example, highlights the theme of 'equality' within Paul's letters and dismisses the patriarchal elements in Paul's theology.[93] Paul is treated as simply one voice in the *ekklēsia* and has no more or less authority than others. Similarly, Elliott's 'ideological critical' reading of Romans focuses on those aspects of Paul that are against empire while questioning the 'kyriarchal' theology that constrains his views.[94] Such approaches are increasingly common, but limit the canonical – and so theological – significance of Paul's witness.

A second approach is to explore the implications of Paul's theology for the political sphere, recognising that aspects of Paul's worldview can powerfully address new situations. Denny Burk rightly criticises advocates of the political Paul who fail to attend to the distinction between 'meaning' and 'implication' in their exegesis;[95] yet drawing attention to the implications of a text is a legitimate part of the broader hermeneutical enterprise.[96] Although the apostle Paul was scarcely 'anti-empire', the implicit logic of his gospel 'dethrones' the hidden logic of *some forms* of empire. When kept in balance with the witness of Scripture as a whole, exploring these tensions can allow Paul's voice to be heard today. Walsh and Keesmaat, for example, offer a 'midrashic' reading of Colossians in the light of globalisation and the postmodern world.[97] Although their exegetical claims are not always convincing, their fresh engagement with the apostle Paul offers some helpful hermeneutical insights.

Conclusion

Research on the politics of Paul will no doubt continue to thrive, and appropriations of the exegetical findings advanced by its advocates are already impacting the broader theological world. There is, however, need for caution. Among the three 'streams' of research identified in this article, the position that Paul deliberately sought to undermine the empire – practically or ideologically – is negated by the absence of any explicit critique in Paul's theology and the presence of texts indicating a positive regard for empire, especially Romans 13:1-7. The other avenues of approach – that Paul's theology implicitly subverted imperial ideology or that Paul's view of the church challenged imperial society – have more to commend them, but err insofar as they depict this as a central focus of Paul's theology. Paul sought to minimise potential conflict with the Roman Empire, focusing instead on God's work in Christ, its implications for the communities of Christ-followers, and the coming consummation of God's kingdom.

Although the historical case for a 'political Paul' is weak, a hermeneutical retrieval of politically significant aspects of Paul's theology is appropriate. The position of the church, and the fundamental changes in the nature of government in a globalised context cry out for a sensitive and nuanced theology. Within Europe, such a theology also needs to take account of increasingly secular and 'post-Christian' societies.[98] Today as ever, the apostle Paul is a key resource in seeking scriptural wisdom for living with the powers that be.

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Notes

1 An important collection of essays in this area, associated with the Society of Biblical Literature 'Paul and Politics' group, is R.A. Horsley (ed.), *Paul and Politics: Ekklesia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation. Essays in Honor of Krister Stendahl* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2000).

2 Tim Gorringe, 'Political Readings of Scripture' in J. Barton (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) 67-80; R.A. Horsley (ed.), *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society* (Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1997). For an earlier work exploring the Bible and politics, see R. Bauckham, *The Bible in Politics: How to Read the Bible Politically* (Third Way Books; London: SPCK, 1989; second ed. London: SPCK, 2010).

3 Justin Meggitt, 'Taking the Emperor's Clothes Seriously: The New Testament and the Roman Empire' in C.E. Joynes (ed.), *The Quest for Wisdom: Essays in Honour of Philip Budd* (Cambridge: Orchard Academic, 2002) 143-169; W. Carter, *The Roman Empire and the New Testament: An Essential Guide* (Abingdon Essential Guides; Nashville: Abingdon, 2006); R.A. Horsley (ed.), *In the Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008). For a series of articles exploring the New Testament and the imperial cult, see *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 27.3 (2005).

4 See L. Linafelt (ed.), *A Shadow of Glory: Reading the New Testament After the Holocaust* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

5 Winsome Munro, 'Romans 13:1-7: Apartheid's Last Biblical Refuge' in *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 20 (1990) 161-168, esp. 161-164.

6 For an explicit attempt to appropriate Paul as a critic of American power, see N. Elliott, *The Arrogance of Nations: Reading Romans in the Shadow of Empire* (Paul in Critical Contexts; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008); for a critical review of the same, see my review in *Reviews in Religion and Theology* 16.3 (2009) 340-342.

7 For a similar survey offering a critique of the movement, see Denny Burk, 'Is Paul's Gospel Counterimperial? Evaluating the Prospects of the "Fresh Perspective" for Evangelical Theology', *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 51 (2008) 309-327. Unlike the following survey, Burk groups 'political readings' of Paul together.

8 N. Elliott, *Liberating Paul: The Justice of God and the Politics of the Apostle* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995).

9 Elliott, *Liberating Paul*, 25-54.

10 For a criticism of Elliott's dismissal of 'deutero-Paulines' by a scholar supportive of the 'political Paul' quest, see N.T. Wright, *Paul in Fresh Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005) 18-19.

11 Elliott, *Liberating Paul*, 25-81.

12 Elliott, *Liberating Paul*, 93-139.

13 Elliott, *Liberating Paul*, 143-149.

14 Elliott, *Liberating Paul*, 181-214.

15 Elliott, *Liberating Paul*, 191.

16 Elliott, *Liberating Paul*, 214-226.

17 Elliott, *Arrogance*, 50-57.

18 'the argument of Romans as a whole collides *inescapably* with the claims of empire, even if that collision is never expressed in explicit terms', *Arrogance*, 14.

19 Hays' criteria for intertextual echoes include the fol-

lowing: availability, historical plausibility, volume, history of interpretation, recurrence, thematic coherence and satisfaction. Elliott, *Arrogance*, 43; cf. Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989) 29-32.

20 K. Wengst, *Pax Romana and the Peace of Jesus Christ* (London: SCM, 1987); J.R. Harrison, 'Paul, Eschatology and the Augustan Era of Grace', *Tyndale Bulletin* 50.1 (1999) 71-91; idem, 'Paul and the Imperial Gospel at Thessaloniki', *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 25 (2002) 71-96; D. Georgi, *Theocracy in Paul's Praxis and Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991); J.D. Crossan and J. L. Reed, *In Search of Paul: How Jesus' Apostle Opposed Rome's Empire with God's Kingdom* (London: SPCK, 2004).

21 For N. T. Wright's understanding of the theology of Paul, see his *Fresh Perspective* and the collection of essays in *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991). See also T. Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said: Was Paul of Tarsus the Real Founder of Christianity* (London: Lion, 1997). For Wright's political reading of Paul, see especially 'Paul's Gospel and Caesar's Empire' in *Paul and Politics*,160-183.

22 Wright, *Saint Paul*, 79-80, 88; 'Paul and Caesar: A New Reading of Romans' in C. Bartholomew et al. (eds.), *A Royal Priesthood: The Use of the Bible Ethically and Politically. A Dialogue with Oliver O'Donovan* (Scripture and Hermeneutics Series; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002) 177-180.

23 Wright 'Paul's Gospel', 164.

24 N.T. Wright, 'The Letter to the Romans', in L. E. Keck (ed.), *The New Interpreter's Bible, Vol. 10* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002) 395-770, here 398.

25 Wright's exposition of Romans is found in his extended commentary 'Letter to the Romans'; his specific treatment of gospel peace versus imperial peace is on 515-516. For a brief overview of Wright's political reading of the letter, see Wright, 'Paul's Gospel', 170-174.

26 'Romans 13 constitutes a severe demotion of arrogant and self-divinizing rulers. It is an undermining of totalitarianism, not a reinforcement of it', Wright, 'Letter to the Romans', 719.

27 Wright, 'Paul's Gospel', 182.

28 Wright, 'Paul's Gospel', 173-181.

29 Wright, *Saint Paul*, 59-79.

30 P. Oakes, *Philippians: From People to Letter* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 129-174; Harry O. Maier, 'A Sly Civility: Colossians and Empire', *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 27 (2005) 323-349.

31 Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007). See also his concise overview, 'Romans' in J. D. G. Dunn (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to St Paul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 91-104, and his summary of the occasion of Romans in 'Ecumenical Theology for the Sake of Mission: Romans 1:1-7 + 15:14-16:24' in D. M. Hay & E. E. Johnson (eds.), *Pauline Theology, Vol. III: Romans* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995) 89-108.

32 Jewett, *Romans*, 48-49. See also Robert Jewett, 'Response: Exegetical Support from Roman and Other Letters' in *Paul and Politics*, 58-71.

33 Jewett, *Romans*, 1.

34 Jewett, *Romans*, 829-899.

35 Jewett, *Romans*, 889-890.

36 Jewett, 'Romans', 104.

37 Jewett, *Romans*, 803.

38 Jewett, *Romans*, 790.

39 R.A. Horsley, 'Rhetoric and Empire – and 1 Corinthians', in *Paul and Politics*, 72-109; Sze-Kar Wan, 'Collections for the Saints as Anticolonial Act: Implications of Paul's Ethnic Reconstruction' in *Paul and Politics*, 40-57.

40 For three important critiques of the political Paul, and the key sources for several of the following criticisms, see C. Bryan, *Render to Caesar: Jesus, the Early Church, and the Roman Superpower* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) 77-93; S. Kim, *Christ and Caesar: The Gospel and the Roman Empire in the Writings of Paul and Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008) 1-71; Burk, 'Counterimperial', 309-327.

41 Bryan, *Render to Caesar*, 90-91; Kim, *Christ and Caesar*, 28-30; Burk, 'Counterimperial', 315-319.

42 A. Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East: The New Testament Illustrated by Recently Discovered Texts of the Graeco-Roman World* (rev. ed., London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1927) 338-377.

43 Deissmann, *Light*, 339.

44 For a widely influential description of the social level of early Christians, see W.A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983) 51-73, and the summary in B. Holmberg, *Sociology and the New Testament: An Appraisal* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990) 90-103. For a critique of recent views, see J.J. Meggitt, *Paul, Poverty and Survival* (Studies of the NT and its World; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998) 75-154.

45 Kim, *Christ and Caesar*, 28-30.

46 The classic article on the misuse of parallels remains S. Sandmel, 'Parallelomania', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 81 (1962) 1-13. Sandmel explores the misuse or rabbinic parallels to NT texts, but his criticism of the 'extravagant use' of parallels among New Testament scholars is pertinent here.

47 See note 18 above; Wright, *Fresh Perspective*, 61-62; Elliot, *Arrogance of Nations*, 43.

48 J.A. Fitzmyer, 'The Gospel in the Theology of Paul' in *To Advance the Gospel: New Testament Studies* (New York: Crossroad, 1981) 150-159, esp. 158-160; J. D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*

(Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 166-169. Note especially Paul's citation of Isaiah 52:7 (LXX) in Romans 10:16.

49 Deissmann, *Light*, 366. Graham Stanton claims that the use in the imperial cult probably forms the background for the term in Paul, see G.N. Stanton, 'Paul's gospel' in *Cambridge Companion*, 173-184, esp. 173-174. See, however, Dunn's objections to this view, *Theology*, 166-168.

50 See especially N.T. Wright, 'Gospel and Theology in Galatians' in L. A. Jervis and P. Richardson (eds.), *Gospel in Paul: Studies in Corinthians, Galatians and Romans for Richard N. Longenecker* (JSNT Supp; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994) 222-239. See also Horsley, 'Rhetoric and Empire', 91-92; Wright, 'Gospel and Empire', 164-165; 'Letter to the Romans', 415-416.

51 Fitzmyer, 'Gospel', 158-160.

52 E. P. Sanders notes that 'the main theme of Paul's gospel was the saving action of God in Jesus Christ and how his hearers could participate in that action', *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (London: SCM, 1977) 447. See also Hays' summary of the 'grammar' of Paul's gospel narrative in 'Is Paul's Gospel Narratable?', *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 27 (2004) 217-239.

53 Bryan, *Render to Caesar*, 91.

54 Burk, 'Counterimperial', 319-322.

55 For Roman inscriptions illustrating the theme see B. Witherington III, *1 and 2 Thessalonians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006) 146-147.

56 Harrison, 'Paul and the Imperial gospel', 92.

57 Kim, *Christ and Caesar*, 30.

58 Oakes, *Philippians*, 147-174; Wright, 'Paul's Gospel', 174. See also the argument of R. J. Cassidy, who detects a shift in Paul's approach to Empire from 'accommodation' in Romans to 'resistance' in Philippians: *Paul in Chains: Roman Imprisonment and the Letters of St. Paul* (New York: Crossroad, 2001), esp. 163-210.

59 For Oakes' argument, see *Philippians*, 147-174. Note, however, his slightly different approach to this passage in his 'Re-mapping the Universe: Paul and the Emperor in 1 Thessalonians and Philippians,' *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 27 (2005) 301-322, esp. 318-321.

60 For an overview of possible backgrounds, see P.T. O'Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991) 193-198.

61 Bryan, *Render to Caesar*, 85-87.

62 Wright, 'Paul's Gospel,' 173-181.

63 Kim, *Christ and Caesar*, 32-33.

64 N. Elliott, 'Strategies of Resistance and Hidden Transcripts in the Pauline Communities' in R. A. Horsley (ed.), *Hidden Transcripts and Arts of Resistance: Applying the Work of James C. Scott to Jesus and Paul* (SBL Semeia Series; Atlanta: SBL, 2004) 97-122.

65 J.C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990).

66 Scott, *Domination*, 136-182.

67 Scott, *Domination*, 191.

68 Scott, *Domination*, 81.

69 On this point, see Bryan, *Christ and Caesar*, 32-33; C.K. Briggs, 'Reconstructing "Resistance" or Reading to Resist: James C. Scott and the Politics of Interpretation,' in *Hidden Transcripts*, 146-148.

70 Kim identifies a total of nine distinct factors that make an anti-imperial reading of Paul difficult, *Christ and Caesar*, 34-64.

71 Bryan, *Render to Caesar*, 78-82; Kim, *Christ and Caesar*, 36-43; Burk, 'Counterimperial', 330-335.

72 Kim, *Christ and Caesar*, 36-43.

73 Jewett, *Romans*, 790; Wright, 'Letter to the Romans', 715-723. See also the older attempt – ultimately going back to Origen – to detect a reference to 'spiritual' powers as part of the 'authorities' (*exousiai*) of Rom 13:1 in O. Cullmann, *The State in the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1957) 62-70.

74 Elliott, *Liberating*, 214-226.

75 Others have attempted to treat Romans 13:1-7 as an interpolation, such as J.C. O'Neill, *Paul's Letter to the Romans* (London: Penguin, 1975) 207-209. This strategy, however, has been widely and rightly rejected.

76 Elliott concedes the point, noting that in Romans 13:1-7 'we are in touch here with the constraining force of ideology, with "voice under domination"', *Arrogance of Nations*, 156.

77 For an account of Israel's view of Empire, see Bryan, *Render to Caesar*, 11-24.

78 T.L. Carter, 'The Irony of Romans 13', *Novum Testamentum* 46 (2004) 209-228.

79 Kim, Christ and Caesar, 34-36.

80 Burk, 'Counterimperial', 326-327.

81 M. Beard, J. North and S. Price, *Religions of Rome, Vol. 1: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) 43-48. For an overview of the broader context, see R. MacMullen, *Paganism in the Roman Empire* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1981).

82 See Beard, *Religions*, 48-54; P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988) 114-118.

83 For the text of the *Res gestae*, see K. Chilsholm and J. Ferguson (eds.), *Rome: The Augustan Age. A Source Book* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1981) 3-10.

84 Zanker, *Power of Images*; D. Fishwick, *The Imperial Cult in the Latin West: Studies of the Ruler Cult of the Western Provinces of the Roman Empire*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1987-1992).

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Empire as a Context for the New Testament', in S. E. Porter (ed.), *A Handbook to the Exegesis of the New Testament* (Boston: Brill, 2002) 389-406. For further references, see footnote 3 above.

86 B.W. Winter, *Seek the Welfare of the City: Christians as Benefactors and Citizens* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996).

87 Elliott, *Arrogance of Nations*, 50-57.

88 In support of this view of Romans 13, see my (unpublished) Doctoral thesis awarded by the University of Edinburgh, *The State and the Community of God: Political Themes in Romans and the Occasion of Romans 13:1-7* (2003).

89 Bryan, *Render to Caesar*, 92.

90 It is significant that later Christian writers also sought to minimise their conflict with the Roman Empire. For a helpful source book of later responses and an exploration of reasons for the Roman persecutions, see R.M. Novak, *Christianity and the Roman Empire: Background Texts* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 2001). See also the helpful discussion on 'the boundaries of Roman Religion' in Beard, *Religions*, 211-244, esp. 225-227.

91 Oakes, 'Re-mapping', 301-322.

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93 Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, 'Paul and the Politics of Interpretation' in *Paul and Politics*, 40-57.

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96 For an introductory discussion, see J.K Brown, *Scripture as Communication: Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007) 100-119.

97 B.J. Walsh and S.C. Keesmaat, *Colossians Remixed: Subverting the Empire* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2004).

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Theology, piety and prayer: on the study of theology

John E. Colwell

SUMMARY

Over recent years there has been a sustained reaction to the Enlightenment notion that things can be known in detachment (though one can question the impact that this recognition yet has had on academic study in general). This reaction and the notion it is challenging are, of course, of particular relevance to the study of theology: if God, in particular, cannot be known in detachment, what might this imply for the shape and nature of a theological course and for its participants? This is an uncomfortable question both for theological faculties within universities and for seminaries, training men and women for Christian ministry. For the former there remains pressure to conform to the (now challenged) assumptions of detachment that characterise academia. Since most seminaries and Bible schools in the UK are either part of universities or receive validation from universities there is similar pressure, despite the expectation for faith commitment, to conform to this assumption of academic detachment. In seminaries this conformity demonstrates itself in the continuing disjunction between academic study and prayer. This disjunction would have been unthinkable throughout the major part of Christian history. But how now can this be remedied; how might a theological course be shaped by the Church's pattern of prayer and worship?

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Über die letzten Jahre hinweg hat es eine nachhaltige Reaktion auf die Idee der Aufklärung gegeben, dass sich alles aus der Distanz heraus erforschen läßt (obgleich man die Wirkung infrage stellen kann, die diese Anerkennung bereits auf die akademische Welt im allgemeinen gehabt hat). Diese Reaktion und die Idee, die sie kritisiert, betreffen natürlich besonders den Bereich der Theologie: Wenn insbesondere Gott sich nicht aus der Distanz heraus erkennen läßt, welche Auswirkung hat dies auf Form und Art einer theologischen Ausbildung und auf ihre Hörer? Dies ist eine unbequeme Frage sowohl für die theologischen Fakultäten an den Universitäten als auch für die theologischen Seminare, die Frauen und Männer für den christlichen Dienst ausbilden. Was die ersteren angeht, so bleibt der Druck, mit der (nun kritisierten) Theorie der Distanz konform zu gehen, welche die akademische Welt charakterisiert. Da die meisten Seminare [im englischsprachigen Raum, Anm. d. Übers.] entweder Teil der Universitäten sind oder von diesen anerkannt sind, besteht trotz der erwarteten Glaubenshingabe ein ähnlicher Druck, sich der Hypothese der akademischen Distanz zu beugen. An den Seminaren zeigt sich diese Anpassung in der fortwährenden Diskrepanz zwischen akademischem Studium und Gebet. Diese Unstimmigkeit wäre für den größten Teil christlicher Geschichte undenkbar gewesen, doch wie kann man da nun Abhilfe schaffen? Wie kann eine theologische Vorlesung anhand der kirchlichen Vorbilder von Gebet und Anbetung gestaltet werden?

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RÉSUMÉ

Une réaction s'est fait jour, ces dernières décennies, à l'idée héritée du siècle des lumières selon laquelle on peut accéder à la connaissance d'une manière réellement indépendante (on peut cependant se demander légitimement si cette réaction a eu un réel impact sur les travaux académiques en général). La mise en cause de cette idée a des incidences en particulier pour les études théologiques : si Dieu ne peut pas être connu de manière réellement indépendante, quelles implications devrait-on en tirer pour la forme et la nature d'un enseignement théologique et pour sa réception par les étudiants ? C'est là une question dérangeante pour les facultés de théologie rattachées à une université et pour celles qui forment des hommes et des femmes en vue

du ministère. Comme bien des facultés de théologie font partie ou reçoivent leur accréditation d'universités séculières, et en dépit du fait qu'on attend d'elles une adhésion à la foi chrétienne, ces facultés subissent des pressions pour qu'elles se conforment à l'idéal (désormais contesté) de la neutralité qui est censé régir les études académiques. Cette conformité se manifeste par le divorce entre études académiques et vie de prière. Cette dissociation aurait été impensable au cours de la plus grande partie de l'histoire de l'Église. Comment peut-on maintenant y remédier ? Comment faire pour que l'enseignement théologique soit de nouveau au service de l'Église et façonné par le culte et la vie de prière qu'elle rend à son Seigneur ?

* * * * * * *

In April of 2005 I was in Dublin attending a conference of the Society for the Study of Theology: the theme of the conference was 'Thinking through faith: the places of reason in theology'. Following the usual pattern of these occasions, the Wednesday evening was given over to a plenary session, involving the key speakers and some of the conference organisers, addressing the question of the current state of theology. Contributions were invited from the body of the conference – and there were many – but despite my best efforts to be noticed by the person chairing the meeting, I failed to make my point. I have rarely been so frustrated – there have been many occasions, of course, when I have failed to make a contribution (and in many such cases maybe it was just as well) but my frustration on this occasion went far deeper than the self-obsessed desire to make a point. The assumption of every speaker in that debate was that the question concerning the state of theology related exclusively to the university and that theology's health or otherwise was synonymous with its place and prominence in this academic context; there was no reference to seminaries or even to the Church; theology was presumed to be the prerogative of professional academics.

I have been raging about this ever since. In the first place, and merely personally, I teach in a Protestant seminary, having spent almost half of my life since ordination in pastoral charge within the local church. Despite a couple of offers, I have never taught academic theology in a university. But personal hubris aside, the simple historical fact remains that for just about the greater part of its history Christian theology was not taught at all in universities for the simple reason that there were none. Despite papal endorsement,[1] the founding of cathedral 'schools' distinct from the monasteries, together with the subsequent founding of the universities was resisted by some as indicative of an inappropriate and regrettable separation of theological study from the disciplines of devotional life. Such objections were, of course, mitigated by the unquestioned dominance of the Church within both the schools and the universities: theology truly was perceived as the 'Queen of the Sciences' and all learning was conducted within a dogmatic, and often oppressive, context.[2] Even within these early years of their development some would argue that the rise of scholasticism quite quickly strained the bond between study and liturgy, issuing in devotional aridity if not doctrinal error,[3] but the persisting dominance of clerical authority remained largely unquestioned.

For the previous millennium, for the West as much as the East, theological study had almost exclusively been the prerogative of the monasteries. The standard pattern of *lectio*, *quaestio*, *expositio*, *disputatio* militated against any separation of academic study, liturgical devotion and spiritual discipline – indeed, any distinction between these elements of the spiritual life would have proved incomprehensible to the fathers of both Western and Eastern traditions; to grow in understanding was to progress in the virtues, was to devote oneself to prayer; the study of theology was academic in the sense of being rigorous but could not conceivably be academic in any detached sense of the word.

This integrated, devotional and liturgical pattern of the study of theology continued through the Reformation and in some senses was reinforced since, though the Magisterial authority of the Church was at least qualified, the perceived sterility of later scholasticism was largely repudiated. (While subsequent Calvinism would quickly introduce its own version of scholasticism, within British Puritanism, at least, theology remained pastorally related.)

However, it is here that the seeds of secularism and detachment begin to spring to life. The Reformation in Europe was a political and secular movement as much as a doctrinal and religious movement – or, at least, it offered pretext for the exploitation of the latter by the former – throwing off the shackles of ecclesial dogma and political dominance. Moreover (as I have argued at some length elsewhere), 'there is nothing like having the Bible at one's disposal to promote the assumption that the Bible is at one's disposal; to foster the assumption that the Bible is accessible to unmediated scrutiny'.[4] The Reformers' manifesto of *sola Scriptura* (rendered all the more potent by the recent invention of the printing press), their emphasis upon the perspicuity and accessibility of Scripture, and their profound word-centeredness promoted a context in which individualism and detached rationalism could flourish. And as Reformation gave way to Enlightenment, with the latter's more radical rejection of any form of dogmatic authority, so assumptions of pure objectivity and individual detachment came to dominate. Indeed, one can argue that objectivity and detachment became the new dogmas. To question them, while no longer issuing in public burning, may well lead to academic marginalisation.

Objectivity?

While the place of theology within the university was not immediately under threat, it was inevitably dethroned by the new sciences. More subtly (and here we arrive at the point of this paper and the admittedly cavalier preceding overview) its nature and manner were inevitably shaped by this context of objective detachment. That which the Early and Medieval Church would have viewed as vice was now embraced as virtue. Both the reading of Scripture and the study of the lives of the saints were filtered through the historical sciences and critical theory; the study of God gave way to the study of the phenomenon of religion; the mere notion of a doctrinally rooted ethic was forgotten; the academic study of theology was severed from worship, prayer and practical holiness. No longer was belief the prerequisite for understanding; belief came to be perceived as an obstacle to understanding, an obstacle of prior prejudice to be marginalised for the sake of critical rigour. Inevitably too this came to be reflected in theology's place within the curriculum: where theology has not given way entirely to religious studies it has been linked within the Humanities (rather, of course, than within the Sciences) with Philosophy, with Literature, with Antiquities, with Psychology and even (God help us) with European History and Culture.[5]

One outcome of this detached approach to theology in a university context has been a widening of the gap between the academy and the Church. The manner in which theology is studied renders it of little if any pastoral, spiritual or practical pertinence to most ordinary Christians. As the language of theology becomes ever more esoteric and its manner ever more detached, so it loses the attention of the Church which, ironically, remains its proper context and which it is called to serve. More than once I have sat listening (or perhaps even speaking) in a seminar, gazing out of the window and wondering, not unlike the young Karl Barth,[6] why any 'ordinary' person should want to listen to this pretentious nonsense, let alone benefit from it.

Seminaries – or, at least, Protestant seminaries – and Bible Colleges have not been immune from the outcomes of this context and culture of detachment. This is not least because, in most cases, seminaries generally function with some form of affiliation to a university that enables the awarding of a validated degree. I doubt that any seminary fails to organise its life around some structured form of worship or liturgy but too often a chasm is discernable between the Chapel and the lecture room. The teaching of ethics in most Protestant seminaries is largely distinct from the teaching of doctrine and the mere fact that theological courses include distinct modules on ethics, on liturgy, on spirituality, is indicative of a loss of integration that again would be incomprehensible to our more distant spiritual forebears.

But a post-modern context changes all this does it not? The humble and long overdue recognition that all knowledge implies a knowing subject over against (or even displacing) an object known exposes detached objectivity as delusory. Moreover, the recognition that no individual knower can possibly exist in isolation but that we are all shaped by context, community and tradition delivers us from radical solipsism. All knowledge is shaped by community traditions of knowing and, accordingly, the Church, as such a community tradition, yet has a valid place in the life of the university as one tradition of knowing amongst others. Forgive me for seeming less than enthusiastic in response to such optimism about post-modernism.

In the first place, I don't notice any thawing of the hostility to theology's place in the modern university – nor should this be surprising in a manifestly secular or post-Christian society driven by utilitarian expediencies: as long as there remains some remnant of State funding for Higher Education why should we expect (or even desire) a secular State financially to underwrite a minority interest with apparently marginal practical outcomes?

In the second place, the much trumpeted death of modernism seems rather over-stated: post-modernism may be more accurately defined as late modernism; as the prefix suggests, it only exists in relation to the suppositions it seeks to supersede. Consequently, it is dependent on the continuance of those suppositions for its own reactionary coherence; it is parasitical rather than truly innovative. And the suppositions of modernism remain very much alive, most obviously in the anti-religious rhetoric of such as Richard Dawkins, but similarly – and not a little ironically – in many university theological departments and Church seminaries, whether liberal or conservative: the assumption of detached access to objective truth persists in surprising places.[7]

Theology and prayer

This brings me to my chief point: if theology is to claim a valid place within the contemporary university it can do so only by becoming again true to itself, to its proper context, manner, commitment and assumptions. The study of theology, whether in the university or the seminary, has been intimidated, dominated and shaped by an academic culture of detachment. That culture can be (and has been) challenged more generally, but for theology to conform to this delusory supposition is for theology to deny its own identity as the study of God – and God, by definition, cannot be known in detachment; as Nicholas Healy has recently commented:

> [Systematic theology] is not a liberal arts discipline, and cannot be performed in the university if that means it must conform to the university's humanistic agenda and methodologies.[8]

I want to engage briefly with two recent works on the place of theology within the university and more generally in public life. The first, by Gavin D' Costa, begins with a far fuller account of the development of the university, establishing the similar conclusion that '[t]heology, properly understood, cannot be taught and practiced within the modern university',[9] that, in the course of the development of the modem university, '… the discipline of theology became separated from the practices that are required for its proper undertaking: prayer, sacraments, and virtue'.[10] D'Costa is far more optimistic than I could be concerning the possibilities for a truly catholic university, even within nations such as Great Britain and the United States that are committed to toleration and religious pluralism.[11] But he insists that, if theology is to be taught and studied even in this committed and catholic context, theologians must first 'learn to pray'.[12] This may seem a quite minimalistic requirement for the renewal of theology, but D'Costa understands prayer as a cultivated habit of love: '… theology, if it is to be done with full intellectual rigor, cannot be done outside the context of a love affair with God and God's community, the Church'.[13] Moreover, he sees prayer to be a means through which the student of theology can come to indwell the living traditions and practices of the Church:

> … prayer facilitates a complex cohabitation and participation with a 'living tradition' of saints, sinners, fasts and feast days, dogmas and doctrines, the repressed and the explicit emblems of what communing with God might mean. Praying the *Office* illustrates the praying theologian's necessary (critical) dependence on this complex living tradition and its detailed descriptive character.[14]

An indwelling of a tradition, a participation in practices, overtly offends the culture of detachment promoted by modernity and assumed to be properly scientific, but D'Costa repudiates the pretence of detachment:

> I argue that such criticisms are misplaced and even self-deluding. Since all enquiry and methods of enquiry are tradition-specific, all forms of education are sectarian in certain ways. There is no high ground in this debate, only differing forms of sectarianism, be they liberal, religious, feminist, psychoanalyst, and so on. But there is an advantage to Catholic sectarianism: its conviction… that reason has a rightful autonomy.[15]

Hauerwas

This refutation of the delusion of detachment in favour of a properly participatory form of enquiry is echoed in Stanley Hauerwas' more recent work.[16] As one expects with Hauerwas, the book is a collection of essays on the theme but the common thread is that the university – not to mention human society more broadly – needs the presence of theological study within this academic context if the university (and society in general) is to be challenged and possibly rescued with respect to an arid and hopeless utilitarianism that is incapable of relating or responding to those deeper questions of the significance of human life that should be the university's proper concern. The university needs the discipline of theology to remind it that education, whether acknowledged or not, properly is moral formation:[17]

> Christians should know what their universities are for. They are to shape people in the love of God.[18]

But the argument here, as previously, requires that theology be true to itself, that it is other than this self-destructive culture of utility and detachment, if it is to expose the futility and delusory nature of this currently common academic context. In this respect, and reminiscent of an earlier and more personal essay on laying bricks,[19] Hauerwas includes a chapter entitled 'Carving Stone or Learning to Speak Christian':[20] the study of theology, as integral to Christian discipleship, is an apprenticeship and, as such, cannot possibly be attempted in detachment. It demands an induction, not just into appropriate disciplines and practices, but also into a distinctive language, a distinctive way of speaking. You cannot possibly learn to carve stone or lay bricks without submitting to the process of induction.

A recent edition of the *International Journal of Systematic Theology* carries four articles on the nature and practice of systematic theology:[21] each of the articles is helpful and, given the differing contexts and commitments of their authors, they are surprisingly complementary. Yet not even Nicholas Healy's excellent piece that roots the practice of theology in the Church has much to say concerning prayer, the disciplines of discipleship or the shaping of the virtues.[22] A culture of detachment presently seems to overshadow and qualify even our best theological endeavours; whatever we say concerning what ought to be, of how the study of theology ought to be pursued, it remains idealistic, removed from the reality, and that often within the Protestant seminary as much as in the secular university.

Not from a tree

Luke's Gospel tells the story of a tax-collector named Zacchaeus who 'wanted to see who Jesus was'[23] and who, being vertically challenged (not to say immensely unpopular), ran ahead and climbed a tree in order to observe Jesus – presumably, from a safe distance. Jesus simply will not permit such detached encounter. Karl Barth, particularly in the Prolegomena to his *Church Dogmatics*, identifies scientific method as a proper response to a subject.[24] Theology is the study of God – it is not the study of the phenomenon of human religion (which, though a valid study in its own right, also surely cannot be truly studied in detachment) – and theology, as the study of God, most certainly cannot be undertaken in detachment. Yet one might never suspect this from a cursory review of most theological courses, from the separation of worship and prayer from academic study, from the division between doctrine and ethics, from historical and literary readings of Scripture that make no allusion to its sacramental nature as a means of grace, or even (and perhaps most fundamentally) from an analysis of admissions and appointments criteria.

Reference to admissions and appointments criteria inevitably raises the question of discriminatory and exclusive practices. Am I really suggesting, as Augustine's aphorism would indicate,[25] that only those who believe can participate in the process of understanding? I think I am so suggesting but must raise the corresponding question of how readily a Geography department would admit a student or tutor who maintained that the earth was flat or was supported on the backs of an infinity of turtles,[26] or how readily a History department would admit someone who held recent romantic novels to be valid source documents for previous centuries, or of how readily a Chemistry or Bio-chemistry department would admit (or continue the candidacy) of someone who consistently refused to comply with strict laboratory practices of sterilisation and protective clothing.

It is perhaps this last example that raises the most pertinent parallel: belief can often be tenuous and divine encounter can neither be manipulated nor guaranteed; the best that we ourselves can achieve by way of the nurturing of belief or the expectation of divine encounter is to participate in those rites and practices that are coherent with that belief, that nurture and encourage that belief, and that offer prospect and sacramental promise of divine encounter. One simply cannot study Chemistry without participating in the rites and disciplines of the laboratory. One simply cannot study Christian theology (or Islam, Buddhism or Hinduism for that matter) without participating in the liturgical rites and spiritual disciplines of religious piety. We come to know by participating – we cannot truly know in detachment.

And since we cannot know in detachment, since all knowledge is participatory, since all education implies a submission to the rites and disciplines of a particular subject (of a particular 'discipline') and since this is most overtly true of the study of theology (or at least this has been the case for the majority of the Church's history), is it not extraordinary that theology can now be studied with virtually no integration of doctrine and ethics, outside a context of liturgical worship and prayer, and with no requirement whatsoever with respect to spiritual discipline? And if this generally is the case in university departments, I have regretfully to admit that the matter is not that more encouraging in theological seminaries and Bible Schools.

Liturgy

A more authentic, integrated and historically coherent approach to the study of theology would have to begin by establishing an all pervading context of liturgical worship and prayer. All study, all 'sub-disciplines' must cohere with this doxological context and be shaped by it. Being a Baptist, my continual reference to the liturgical may seem surprising – Baptists aren't noted for their commitment to structured patterns of worship and prayer; Charles Spurgeon thoroughly scorned them. I can only personally confess that I have come to believe that the life of most Baptist and 'free' churches is inestimably impoverished by the lack of the rhythm that a structured pattern of prayer and worship facilitates. Such a pattern connects the worship and prayer of any local church with the worship and prayer of the Church catholic in its connectedness and continuity. And theological education is necessarily communal. A daily, weekly, monthly, termly and annual worshipful and prayerful context is simply unsustainable without some formal (albeit flexible) pattern and rhythm of reflection. And this rhythm of readings, prayers, canticles and reflection, progressing through the seasons of the Christian year and thereby enabling an indwelling of the narratives of the gospel, surely could provide a framework for the study of Scripture, for the study of the development and coherence of doctrine, for a study of the Christian virtues identified in the true humanity of Jesus Christ, and (with respect to seminary formation) for an exploration of the patterns, responsibilities and manner of Christian ministry. The overarching and underlying doxological and liturgical framework would give an integrated coherence and character to the whole.[27]

I am not for a moment suggesting any diminishing of proper academic rigour, I am rather insisting on the *context* in which this academic rigour should occur. Indeed, in some respects I am arguing for a greater rigour, a rigour of personal devotion, a rigour of liturgical worship discipline, a rigour of a hermeneutic of obedience,[28] a rigour of Christian character and formation, a rigour of spiritual discipline. And I am arguing, perhaps offensively, that without these doxological, spiritual and personal rigours, theology is not truly theology, Scripture is not truly read and heard, doctrine is not truly comprehended – or, as St Athanasius put it:

> One cannot possibly understand the teaching of the saints unless one has a pure mind and is trying to imitate their life.[29]

When I was a student in the early 1970s the historical-critical method reigned supreme and preparation for Christian ministry was almost entirely academic in the 'bookish' sense of the word. I remain immensely grateful for the example of academic rigour and godly commitment set by my tutors, but there was little by way of practical training and less still by way of overt spiritual formation beyond morning and evening prayers (usually without any obvious pattern or structure). Spiritual direction was unheard of in my context then and would probably have been repudiated. The rise of courses in applied or practical theology has significantly affected patterns of ministerial formation; historical criticism, though far from dead, no longer passes unchallenged; most ordinands follow some form of placement based course; and a denominational list of required competencies necessitates and shapes patterns of practical training that were almost wholly absent forty years ago. But beyond more contemplative (though voluntary) annual retreats, the availability of spiritual direction and a somewhat more structured approach to Chapel worship and prayer, I am less than convinced that much is really attempted or achieved by way of spiritual formation. We use the right language and (as noted previously) we have a module on spirituality, we speak with students about their personal and spiritual development, but such features, I suspect, remain additions to the course rather than the context and all pervading focus for the course in the minds of most participants.

University again

But at least within a seminary or Bible School context there is a discernable desire for change and a recognition that such change is appropriate and necessary. I am not competent to comment on either the desire or the recognition of appropriateness and necessity in universities, but it is this that is more central to my concerns in this paper. Though I remain passionate concerning Christian ministry and the appropriate manner in which men and women may be prepared for Christian ministry, the focus of this paper falls on the more fundamental question of the appropriate nature and definition of theology itself, on the incongruity of the study of theology ever being attempted in detachment, and therefore on the possibility or otherwise of theology being authentically studied within a university context that continues to favour detachment. As I have already admitted, I am not competent to answer this question – I am only competent to pose it; I am not competent to assess, for instance, whether a university course in theology could be structured around the liturgy of the Christian year; whether explorations in prayer or in any of the spiritual disciplines could comprise the core element in such a course; whether a focus on the virtues and on personal spiritual formation could similarly be integral; or whether (most fundamentally) the entire course could be conducted in a context of worship and prayer – whether, that is to say, theology in a university setting can truly be *fides quaerens intellectum*.

If theology cannot again truly be *fides quaerens intellectum*, it deserves to lose its place within the university and within the public square, not because it fails to conform to a liberal and utilitarian agenda but because it conforms all too thoroughly; because it has ceased to be truly Christian theology. With Stanley Hauerwas and Gavin D'Costa, of course, this is not the outcome I seek: I pray for and long for the renewal of theology within the university. And, with Hauerwas and D'Costa, I pray for and long for this renewal of theology precisely for the sake of the university and of society – not just as a refutation of a culture of detachment (which increasingly is under more general threat already) but also (and relatedly) as a refutation of the dominance of a utilitarianism that is destructive of education itself and of the flourishing of human society.

Gavin D'Costa argues for a self-consciously sectarian Catholic university in the context of a tolerant and religiously plural society. I am not at all qualified to comment on the proposal (being neither Catholic nor a university lecturer). My scepticism relates rather to the genuinely liberality of liberalism, the genuinely tolerant plurality of professed pluralism and the dominance of a lingering culture of detachment. Certainly, with D'Costa and Hauerwas, I recognise that

> … if Christians learn to take intellectually seriously the practices that should and do constitute the church, they may well find that how we think about economics, biology, or physics is different than how those subjects are now structured in the university.[30]

And in this respect, notwithstanding my admitted lack of qualification, I affirm the ideal which, I suspect, would amount to an effective renewal for the Church of a monastic context for all learning.[31] I am not suggesting that learning should be restricted to those who have made vows of chastity, poverty and obedience but I am suggesting that all learning, for those who are disciples of Christ, should occur in a disciplined context of worship, prayer and the formation of virtue. The pretence by Christians to learn other than in such a context, to learn in supposed detachment, is apostasy, is an active denial of the foundational essence of Christian faith.

Famously, John Calvin begins the final version of his *Institutes* with a discussion of the two parts of knowledge, the knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves, which, in actuality, form a single and indivisible knowledge since '… man never achieves a clear knowledge of himself unless he has first looked upon God's face…'.[32] But Calvin immediately clarifies that a true knowledge of God, upon which any authentic knowledge of ourselves rests, cannot possible be a knowledge in detachment, a mere philosophical speculation, but must be personal and responsive:

> … the knowledge of God, as I understand it, is that by which we not only conceive that there is a God but also grasp what befits us and is proper to his glory… Indeed, we shall not say that, properly speaking, God is known where there is no religion or piety.[33]

The reference is significant not just with respect to the nature of theology but also, by implication, to its place within the university and, consequently, to the nature of the university itself. As Hauerwas argues so passionately, the university must not be allowed to descend to mere training for a profession, to the merely utilitarian. Its proper nature and function is to encourage and to facilitate an understanding of ourselves and of the universe that we inhabit; its proper concerns must be ontological and teleological rather than merely functional and commercial. Within such a university, the place of theology ought to be assured since, as Calvin states earlier, 'the knowledge of ourselves not only arouses us to seek God, but also, as it were, leads us by the hand to find him'.[34] Calvin's doctrine of creation and of God's self-revelation within and through creation is robust (in deference to Barth I avoid referring to such as a 'general' revelation). Any diligent pondering of creation and of ourselves will lead us to a pondering of God – or rather, through any diligent pondering of creation and of ourselves we will be led by the Spirit to a pondering of God. But, as is clarified by the unfolding argument of the *Institutes*, any knowledge of God inherent in ourselves and in creation is distorted by our frailty and sin. We need God's revelation through history and through Scripture if we are ever rightly to comprehend that knowledge of God inherent in ourselves and in creation.[35] Without this true knowledge of God we will never truly know ourselves or begin to comprehend the universe we inhabit. To put the matter more directly, without the contribution of theology, the university will never fulfil its proper goals and nature, inevitably it will default to the utilitarian. But for theology to fulfil this task of calling the university to be truly itself, theology must be truly itself; must be contemplative rather than detached; must issue in piety rather than in shallow and pointless speculation. Only when theology is truly theology can the university be true to itself. Wherever and whenever a university seeks to be true to itself the place of theology within it is assured.

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Notes

1 'By the thirteenth century, the University of Paris was ecclesiastically established, with what is often called the Magna Carta of the university, Gregory XI's bull *Parens Scientiarum* (1231).' Gavin D'Costa, *Theology in the Public Square: Church, Academy and Nation* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005) 10.

2 For a general account of the Medieval Church and its theology see G. R. Evans (ed.), *The Medieval Theologians: An Introduction to Theology in the Medieval Period* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001).

3 See for instance Catherine Pickstock, *After Writing: On the Liturgical Consummation of Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998).

4 John E. Colwell, *Promise and Presence* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2005) 95. See also J.E. Colwell, *Living the Christian Story* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2001).

5 For an account of the more recent development of the university see David Bebbington, 'The Secularization of British Universities since the Mid-Nineteenth Century' in G. Marsden and B.J. Longfield (eds.), *The Secularisation of the Academy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992) 259-277.

6 R.W. Jenson, *God after God: the God of the Past and the God of the Future seen in the work of Karl Barth* (Indianapolis and New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969) 64; cf. Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth: His life from letters and autobiographical texts* (London: SCM, 1976) 63-64.

7 '... I think it is quite telling that departments of history and religious studies often are the last representatives of modernist presumptions about objectivity and rationality'. Stanley Hauerwas, *The State of the University: Academic Knowledges and the Knowledge of God* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007) 21; cf. John Milbank, 'The Conflict of the Faculties: Theology and the Economy of the Sciences' in Mark Thiessen Nation & Samuel Wells (eds.), *Faithfulness and Fortitude: In Conversation with the Theological Ethics of Stanley Hauerwas* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000) 39-57.

8 Nicholas M Healy, 'What is Systematic Theology?' *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 11 (2009) 24-39, 35.

9 D'Costa, *Theology in the Public Square*, 1.

10 D'Costa, *Theology in the Public Square*, 19.

11 D'Costa, *Theology in the Public Square*, 92. For sustained proposals for such a Christian University see Michael L. Budde & John Wright (eds.), *Conflicting Allegiances: The Church-Based University in a Liberal Democratic Society* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2004).

12 D'Costa, *Theology in the Public Square*, 112.

13 D'Costa, *Theology in the Public Square*, 114.

14 D'Costa, *Theology in the Public Square*, 119.

15 D'Costa, *Theology in the Public Square*, 217.

16 Hauerwas, *State of the University*.

17 Hauerwas, *State of the University*, 46.

18 Hauerwas, *State of the University*, 91.

19 Stanley Hauerwas, *After Christendom? How the Church Is to Behave If Freedom, Justice, and a Christian Nation Are Bad Ideas* (Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1991) 101-111.

20 Hauerwas, *State of the University*, 108-121.

21 *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 11/1 (2009): Paul S. Fiddes, 'Concept, Image and Story in Systematic Theology (3-23), Nicholas M. Healy, 'What is Systematic Theology?' (24-39), A.N. Williams, 'What is Systematic Theology?' (40-55), and

John Webster, ‘Principles of Systematic Theology’ (56-71).

22 ‘The condition of the possibility of truthful systematic inquiry into the significance of the gospel of Jesus Christ is the faith of the church, its election and its indefectibility through grace. Without that ecclesial basis, theological inquiry becomes something other than Christian systematic theology. If systematic theology cannot be performed except on such grounds, it is difficult to see how it can function properly within the parameters of inquiry acceptable to the modern university.’ Healy, ‘What is Systematic Theology?’ 37-38.

23 *ezētei idein ton Iēsoun tis estin…* (Luke 19:3).

24 Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* I/1 second edition, ed. G. W. Bromiley & T. F. Torrance (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1975) 3ff.; cf. Thomas F. Torrance, *Theological Science* (Oxford: OUP, 1969).

25 *crede, ut intelligas* (‘believe, in order to understand’) repeated by Anselm as *credo ut intelligam* (‘I believe in order to understand).

26 The story behind this saying is related in Robert Anton Wilson, *Prometheus Rising* (Phoenix: New Falcon,1997) 25; Stephen Hawking also relates a similar story in his *A Brief History of Time* (London: Bantam, 1988).

27 For a sketch of how a course in doctrine and ethics could be structured according to the liturgy of the Christian year see my *The Rhythm of Doctrine: a Liturgical Sketch of Christian Faith and Faithfulness* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007)

28 For an account of this dynamic of reading and interpreting Scripture, common to many early Continental Anabaptists, see Stuart W. Murray, *Biblical Interpretation in the Anabaptist Tradition* (Waterloo, Ont: Pandora Press, 2000).

29 Athanasius, *On the Incarnation* (London: Mowbray, 1953) § 57.

30 Hauerwas, *State of the University*, 31.

31 For a commendation of a monastic context for learning see Seejean Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture*, trans. Catherine Misrahi (Fordham: Fordham University Press, New York, 1960).

32 John Calvin, *Institutes*, I i 2.

33 John Calvin, *Institutes*, I ii 1.

34 John Calvin, *Institutes*, I i 1.

35 John Calvin, *Institutes*, I iv-vi.

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Dietrich Bonhoeffer: a third way of Christian social engagement

Patrick Nullens

SUMMARY

This article provides a brief introduction to three basic theological paradigms or heuristic devices of social engagement employed by evangelical Christians in secular society. First, two popular models are discussed: the Neo-Calvinist (Abraham Kuyper) and the Neo-Anabaptist (Stanley Hauerwas). The first is characterised by its extravert movement and the second by its introvert movement. The third paradigm, that of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, will be proposed as a kind of *via media*. It is commonly described as an illuminating interpretation of Martin Luther's 'Two Kingdoms Theory' that is highly relevant for our secular and postmodern setting. Bonhoeffer's christocentric ethic of responsibility keeps the delicate balance between the unique role of the church and the role of the Christian disciple in a secular world. Bonhoeffer's approach gives sound theological grounding for an evangelical social ethic as it combines Christology and spirituality with social activism.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der vorliegende Artikel stellt kurz drei wichtige theologische Paradigmen bzw. heuristische Instrumente vor, die evangelikale Christen in ihrem sozialen Engagement in einer säkularen Gesellschaft anwenden. Zunächst werden zwei bekannte Modelle diskutiert: Das neocalvinistische (Abraham Kuyper) sowie das neo-anabaptistische (Stanley Hauerwas) Modell. Während das erstere eine extrovertierte Bewegungsrichtung hat, ist letzteres introvertiert. Das dritte Paradigma stammt von Dietrich Bonhoeffer und wird hier als *via media* vorgeschlagen. Es wird von Vielen als eine aufschlussreiche und für unsere säkulare und postmoderne Gesellschaft äußerst relevante Interpretation von Martin Luthers „Zwei-Reiche-Lehre» angesehen. Bonhoeffers christuszentrische Ethik der Verantwortung hält die Rolle der Kirche und die Rolle des einzelnen Christen in einer säkularen Gesellschaft im Gleichgewicht. Bonhoeffers Ansatz ist eine vielversprechende Grundlage für eine evangelikale Ethik, da er Christologie und Spiritualität mit sozialem Engagement verbindet.

* * * * * * * *

RÉSUMÉ

L'auteur présente une introduction aux trois paradigmes théologiques d'engagement social dans le monde séculier, autrement dit les outils heuristiques utilisés par des chrétiens évangéliques. A commencer par les plus populaires : le modèle néo-calviniste (Abraham Kuyper) et le modèle néo-anabaptiste (Stanley Hauerwas). Si le premier se caractérise par un mouvement extroverti, le deuxième est marqué par un mouvement introverti. En guise d'une sorte de voie médiane, un troisième paradigme est présenté, celui de Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Généralement présenté comme une interprétation éclairante de la théorie des deux royaumes de Martin Luther, ce modèle est d'une pertinence certaine pour nous dans un contexte sécularisé et postmoderne. Son éthique de responsabilité est christocentrique, elle maintient l'équilibre délicat entre le rôle unique de l'Eglise d'une part, et d'autre part le rôle du disciple chrétien dans le monde séculier. L'approche de Bonhoeffer constitue une solide base théologique pour une éthique sociale évangélique, puisqu'elle met en rapport la christologie, la spiritualité et l'action sociale.

* * * * * * * *

Introduction[1]

The Lausanne covenant expresses our common evangelical concern for the wellbeing of society:

> We affirm that God is both the Creator and the Judge of all people. We therefore should share his concern for justice and reconciliation throughout human society and for the liberation of men and women from every kind of oppression.[2]

But how do we share God's concern for all people? Most European countries cherish a clear division between Church and state. Secularization is highly valued and religion is perceived mainly as a private matter. So, as we might expect, our Christian concerns are not always warmly welcomed in the public sphere. Nevertheless, many evangelical Christians are deeply involved in social issues and policy making. Living in the Brussels area I regularly meet fellow believers who are deeply involved in policy-making issues. As evangelicals, they are often in search of a sound biblical and theological foundation to support their public activities.

This article briefly introduces three basic theological paradigms or heuristic devices for a call to Christian social engagement in secular society.[3] It starts with contrasting two well known models: the Neo-Calvinist and the Neo-Anabaptist. Two representatives have been selected, respectively, Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920) and Stanley Hauerwas (*1940). Evangelical Christians are often stuck in the debate between these two opposing alternatives, the Reformed and the Anabaptist.[4] Therefore, a third approach will be proposed as a kind of *via media*. After dealing with the views of Kuyper and Hauerwas, the social ethics of Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) will be proposed as an illuminating interpretation of Luther's 'Two Kingdoms Theory' that is highly relevant for our secular and postmodern setting. Finally, this essay will show that Bonhoeffer's approach is inspiring for evangelicals as it combines Christology and spirituality with social activism.

1. The Neo-Calvinistic paradigm

Calvinism as a world view

Neo-Calvinism means Calvinism *after* modernity or *in response to* modernity.[5] It encompasses a worldview in which Calvinism serves as a cultural force in a pluralistic democratic society. Neo-Calvinism provides a full theocentric worldview that starts with a strong view on God's sovereignty. Every sphere of humanity's endeavour must have the Triune God as its sovereign Lord. Abraham Kuyper developed the idea of 'Sphere Sovereignty' to apply the claims of the sovereign Christ to every sphere of life, be it family, Church, state, education, philosophy, art, science or theology. We recognise this in the famous quote from his inaugural lecture at the founding of the Free University of Amsterdam (1880):

> No single piece of our mental world is to be sealed off from the rest and there is not a square inch in the whole domain of human existence over which Christ, who is sovereign over all, does not cry: 'Mine!'[6]

For Kuyper, Calvinism was much more than a denomination or group of denominations. It is an all-encompassing world-and-life view which enables us to understand and make sense of reality.[7] According to Neo-Calvinism, all Christians are called in their professional lives to restore, transform and redeem the natural, spiritual, cultural and social realms of God's creation; to bear upon society, to influence and change it, redeeming and claiming it for Christ to whom the whole created order belongs. This divine sovereignty is reflected in a three-fold human sovereignty, namely in the state, in society and in the Church. This sphere-sovereignty of creation order became an important building block in the development of a broad Christian worldview which enabled Christians to take earnest responsibility for their different roles in society. Kuyper tried to do justice to the rich and multifaceted fabric of human existence under the sovereignty of God. This Reformed paradigm gives Christians directions to be wise stewards of society while preventing ecclesiastical authorities from dictating public policy. Kuyper also stressed the need to keep the government in its proper sphere:

> The State may never become an octopus, which stifles the whole of life. It must occupy its own place, on its own root, among all the other trees of the forest, and thus it has to honour and maintain every form of life which grows independently in its own sacred autonomy.[8]

Antithesis and common grace

To explain the ambivalent relationship between Christians and society, Kuyper used two seemingly contradicting doctrines: antithesis and common grace. According to Kuyper, there exists a basic antithesis between the Kingdom of God and the world. The redeemed live out of one principle – love for God, and all other people live out of the opposite principle, namely rebellion against God. In Western culture, these are two ways of life between which we have to choose. There is the naturalistic and humanistic principle of modernity *and* there is Christianity based on God's revelation. In the case of science, the conflict is not between faith and science as such. According to Kuyper all science presupposes some kind of faith. The true conflict is between two fundamentally different assertions of the cosmos: the Normalists and the Abnormalists. The first group perceives the cosmos as being normal as it evolves spontaneously from its structural potentials to its ideal. The second group sees the present cosmos as abnormal, disturbed by the Fall to such an extent that only a regenerating power can warrant the final attainment of its goal. Ultimately, there are two kinds of human consciousness: that of the regenerated and of the unregenerated.[9] This doctrine has a deep impact on all our views on issues in work and society. The gap between these two perceptions of reality is profoundly deep and fundamental in its nature.

Nevertheless, the gap, deep as it is, can be bridged. There is an important point of contact between believers and unbelievers. This bridge is not made by diminishing the effects of sin on humanity. That would be semi-Pelagian and thus uncharacteristic of the Calvinist heritage. Again, Kuyper's proposal is entirely theocentric. The antithesis can only be solved by God himself. So, Kuyper developed his famous doctrine of common grace.[10] It is the idea that in addition to special or saving grace, which is given only to God's elect, there is also a grace that God bestows on all humans. Whereas special grace regenerates people's hearts, common grace restrains the destructive process of sin within humankind in general and enables them to develop the latent possibilities of creation. Through common grace, every person can make a positive contribution to the fulfilment of the cultural mandate as given to humanity before the Fall. Civilization, development and progress should not be ascribed to Satan but seen as proceeding from God. There is a continuous development of the human race with as its supreme end the glory of God. Believers and unbelievers share the gift of common grace. Natural persons are unable to do any spiritual good, but they are nevertheless able to perform civic righteousness. Both groups of people are joint co-workers with God as well as instruments of God.[11] In this sense it is evident how Kuyper could praise the Enlightenment as it brought about the collapse of the ancient regime and gave birth to social democracy. Yet its antireligious stress on human autonomy as a substitute for God's sovereignty was held to be deplorable.

Modernistic paradigm

Neo-Calvinism was developed in the context of modernism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century as an alternative to Hegelian monistic idealism and the dominant evolutionary materialism. Inevitably, it made use of modern forms of argumentation in its critical assessment of culture. It is characterised by the search for a comprehensive worldview with strong rational components based on God's revelation. At its centre is the insight that all created life bears in itself a law for its existence, instituted by God himself. God has set clear boundaries which science can discover. In that sense Neo-Calvinism is still speaking in terms similar to the meta-narratives of modernity. In the attempt to update Calvinism some traditional modern concepts were embraced, as Peter Heslam rightfully observes,

> In fact, however, this programme borrowed liberally from the systems it purported to oppose – from pantheism the idea of coherence unity, from evolutionism the idea of human and religious progress.[12]

Today, the antithetical approach and the claim to have a clear insight in the creational order have an antagonistic ring to them. Postmodern thinkers react with some allergy to all forms of authoritative truth claims and foundationalism. We live not only in a post-Christian but even in a post-secular context. Postmodernity asserts that we are not the masters of the world that surrounds us. There is no such thing as 'the creational order' that we could impose on people from other traditions and sets of beliefs. The Neo-Calvinistic model still has the flavour of 'Christendom', an ideal most people have abandoned a long time ago. There were religious convictions amalgamated with political power where the wickedness of humankind is demonstrated at its very best. In a postmodern mindset Neo-Calvinism might be suspected of being inclined to play a power game using institutional structures to influence society.

We can learn a lot from Kuyper but we have to be aware that the challenges have changed immensely since his time. This doesn't imply that Neo-Calvinism has become totally obsolete under the pressure of postmodern relativism. Interesting attempts are being made to make Neo-Calvinism more relevant in a postmodern context.[13] In some respects, for instance in its epistemology and its denunciation of the presumed neutrality of naturalism, it was way ahead its time. It deconstructed the myth of unbiased science long before postmodernity. Finally, Kuyper was always suspicious about an overly powerful Church because his views were rooted in personal piety.

2. The Neo-Anabaptist paradigm[14]

Constantinianism

In contrast to the more Calvinistic branch of evangelicalism, a growing number of theologians are denying the justification, the feasibility or even the desirability of a Christian state.[15] This pacifist Anabaptist stream is very much alive and seems to fit well with the postmodern mindset. Stanley Hauerwas, a theological ethicist, is an important spokesperson of this Anabaptist paradigm.[16] For Hauerwas, as a theologian of the Radical Reformation, the Neo-Calvinistic approach is too much a *Constantinian synthesis* or a type of *constructive Protestantism*.[17] *Constantinianism* is Hauerwas's shorthand for accommodation to the world and giving in to the seduction of power.[18] Hauerwas claims that up to the present time, especially in the United States, when the relationship between Church and state is considered, the Constantinian mindset still holds Christian thinking captive. This is true of liberal as well as conservative Protestantism. Both think that the church's business is to use the state's means of power, especially through legislation and law enforcement for the improvement of society, regardless of how such a good is to be achieved.

It is exactly this basic assumption, often taken for granted, that Hauerwas tries to prove faulty. One of his books carries the poignant and programmatic title *After Christendom? How the church is to behave if freedom, justice, and a Christian nation are bad ideas* (1991). Hauerwas defies the arrogance of modernism which claims that we can create our own stories. We do not construct our own stories or our own ethics; we are always shaped in and by the context of community. Hauerwas embraces the postmodern critique of the Catholic philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre that confidence in the possibility an objective universal ethic is slowly dying. MacIntyre argues that the contemporary ethical discourse is constituted of fragments from various historical contexts which no longer exist. He opts for virtue ethics to enable human beings to come to their purpose (*telos*). But virtues have to be embedded in specific historical and narrative structures.[19] Hauerwas follows MacIntyre in rooting character formation in a specific narrative of a historic community. In the case of Christianity, our story is a part of God's story. We are not called to be 'moral' but to be faithful to the story which says that we are creatures under the Lordship of God.[20]

Church ethics

According to Hauerwas, we must not focus primarily on the world but on the Church. His ethics is an ecclesial ethics. Let the Church simply be church. Not as an establishment in either legal or cultural form, but as a community of those who are faithful to the story of Jesus Christ. In this way the Church becomes an alternative community that carries out the story of God and participates in a kingdom established in and through Jesus of Nazareth. The Church is an alternative political body opposed to the kingdoms of this world. In opposition to any individualistic ethic, or to any sort of natural ethic based on general human nature or any minimalist liberal ethics, Hauerwas takes the community of believers as the one starting point and focus of all Christian ethics. Christian ethics is Church ethics, not some generally accepted universal philosophical ethic with a broad view on justice. One of the best known quotes from Hauerwas is his dictum that 'the church does not have a social ethic; the church is a social ethic'. This highlights the call for the Church to embody the Christian story and in doing so becoming the visible alternative to the ways of the world. The Church has to train its people to become Christians displaying virtues and character, and to live up to its unique narrative; to be the community of the cross, the people of God's 'peaceable Kingdom'; to reject any use of violence, thereby risking its very security; to set its hope on the providence of its gracious God. The church *in* and *in contrast to* this world. In order to become acceptable and influential in public life, the Church would have to level its unique and radical demands on people's lives.

A typical misunderstanding is to qualify this model as 'sectarian'.[21] Hauerwas does propose a critical and partial participation in society. The gospel doesn't contain a social theory or a preference for some type of governmental structure but it requests that we act in concrete situations. Hauerwas' focus is primarily on the integrity of the Church. The Church's life of discipleship, of displaying a Christ-like character, is not simply self-serving, allowing Christians to live a good life and to feel good about it. Hauerwas' social ethics can be called subversive instead of universal. But in its response it provides a positive programme of character formation through communal practices.[22] Hauerwas constantly thinks of the 'effect' that the Church has on society. So, somewhat paradoxically, while on the one hand criticizing 'liberal' Christianity for diluting the unique Christian message by trying to be accepted and effective in a public that does not share Christian commitments, in his own way Hauerwas constantly has an eye for the impact and relevance of the Church in society as the counter-cultural society, the alternative polis, the body politic that practices politics in a way compatible with and shaped by the way of the Messiah. Hauerwas does not propose a sort of disengagement from the world. Quite the contrary, it seems that practically everything the Church does has social and political consequences.

The way the Church impacts society is not by trying to change it through involvement in the structures of liberal society on its inherent terms, but by witnessing to society about a truly alternative life by means of the Church's members. In doing so the Church helps the world to see that it is the world that is falling short of the intended good, virtuous, peaceful and truthful life exhibited among and by God's people. It is imperative that the Church engage the world on its own terms, not on the terms of the world, that is, liberal, Enlightenment, democratic, pluralist terms. The church's politics is of a different kind than the politics of liberal society. Hauerwas fears that the price Christians are paying for getting a hearing in liberal society is too high; instead of exercising a genuinely Christian influence on society, what happens is that the Church is being compromised in the process by having to deny exactly what makes Christian social ethics 'Christian'.

Dualistic paradigm

The Neo-Anabaptist paradigm reasons from a dualistic split between Church and society. There seems to be a lack of searching for common ground between these two realities. Therefore the interaction is mainly seen in terms of conflict, albeit in a pacifistic form. This turns the Neo-Anabaptist paradigm into a mainly introvert model. Fruitful interaction between the Christian faith and our democratic political culture would require a more positive appreciation of Christian public involvement.[23] One important cause of Hauerwas' conflictual paradigm is his unnuanced and dogmatic view on the sin of the Constantinian turn.[24] But Lesslie Newbigin asks the correct question:

> It is easy to point – as monks and hermits, prophets and reformers in all ensuing centuries have continued to point – to the glaring contradiction between the Jesus of the Gospels and his followers occupying the seats of power and wealth. And yet we have to ask, would God's purpose as it is revealed in Scripture have been better served if the church had refused all political responsibility, if there had never been a 'Christian' Europe, if all the churches for the past two thousand years had lived as tolerated or persecuted minorities like the Armenians, the Assyrians, and the Copts? It is difficult to think so.[25]

So, a more dialectic and theologically nuanced perspective on public life is much needed.

3. Bonhoeffer's christocentric responsibility ethics

The third paradigm: Bonhoeffer's view on the Two Kingdoms

Neo-Calvinism brings a lot to the table for Christians active in the public domain. Its theocentric approach to modern society is very appealing. But as a paradigm it is indebted to a traditional view of the possibility of a Christian nation[26] and to modernistic optimism. Neo-Anabaptism draws us back to the central theme of the Christian community as an alternative *polis* but it tends to reduce Christian ethics to a story of and for the Church only. The first model is characterised by an extravert appeal to all Christians to fulfil their God-given roles in society, whereas the second model of ecclesial ethics entails an introvert move to the community of the faithful. Kuyper provides us with a modern interpretation of the Reformed view of Church and society in relationship, whereas Hauerwas offers a postmodern interpretation of the Anabaptist view. The third well known paradigm for the relation between Church and society (state) is Luther's 'two kingdoms model'. According to Luther, there are two realms of existence, one for the Christian and one for the non-Christian, while the Christian lives in both realms simultaneously. The one at his right hand is the realm of grace and gospel and the other, at his left hand, is ruled by the sword and the law. What is essential is that God rules in both spheres – but in different ways. This is not a form of dualism since good and evil can be found in the two realms.[27]

Bonhoeffer basically follows the Lutheran model but gives his own creative interpretation of it. He mainly reacted to the German Christians[28] who misinterpreted the Lutheran model in a dualistic sense, as if one were dealing with two different realities, one with and one without Christ. According to Bonhoeffer, the monk and the cultural Protestant of the nineteenth century share the error that there are two separate spheres, the sacred and the profane, as if we could exist in only one of these. On the contrary, there is only one reality and that is 'God's reality revealed in Christ in the reality of the world'.[29]

Christocentrism

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's christocentric approach is very appealing to an evangelical social ethic which takes the gospel as its central message. Through his christological ethics Bonhoeffer provides a theological grounding for an introvert as well as an extravert dimension of Christian social engagement. Christian ethics is concerned with the community. But the particularity of the divine mandate of the Church is to proclaim the lordship of Christ over the whole world.[30] Hauerwas appreciates Bonhoeffer's focus on the visibility of the Church as a suffering community of disciples over against a Constantinian state Church.[31]

In *Discipleship* Bonhoeffer gives us a Christ-centred spirituality that incorporates the insights of his earlier writings on Church, faith and community life into the practical area of Christian life. Christian discipleship is the response par excellence to systemic evil in society. Jesus suffered and was rejected by the world. His passion was a passion without worldly honour and this sums up the message of the cross. This 'must of suffering and rejection' has now become the badge of true discipleship.[32] Only through the intense experience of suffering can we understand the meaning of the cross. What Bonhoeffer has in common with Hauerwas' paradigm is the idea that the Church as body is first of all a suffering Church, rejected and persecuted for the sake of the gospel.

Yet the meaning of Christ goes much deeper than simply some form of *imitatio Christi*. Bonhoeffer's ethics is fully Christocentric even as it deals with the world of the secular. In the Christology of Chalcedon the two natures of Christ, his divinity and humanity, are one and yet differentiated.[33] The central event on which our ethics should be based is: 'In Jesus Christ the reality of God has entered into the reality of this world.'[34] This divine event has changed dramatically our perception of reality as a whole. In Christ all things exist (Colossians 1:17). We are now in Christ invited to participate in this actual reality (*Christuswirklichkeit*). Reality is the world as accepted by God in Jesus Christ. There is no dualism between world and Church since in Christ there is only one realm in which the reality of God and the reality of the world are united:

> In Christ we are invited to participate in the reality of God and the reality of the world at the same time, the one not without the other. The reality of God is disclosed only as it places me completely into the reality of the world.[35]

This christocentrism implies a refutation of the autonomy of reason and the independent lawfulness of the secular world (Eigengesetzlichkeit). Christ is the true source and centre of all reason, justice and culture. 'To Christ everything must return; only under Christ's protection can it live.'[36] The only relationship we have to the world is through Jesus Christ. Our involvement in society is not primarily grounded on some theology of creation, natural law, reason or universal human rights.[37]

The christocentric approach tempers the expectation we have for our role in society. Jesus was hardly involved in solving worldly problems.

> His word is not an answer to human questions and problems, but the divine answer to the divine question addressed to human beings. The word is essentially not from below but from above.[38]

We are not there to bring solutions (*Lösung*) for all the problems of the world but to bring redemption (*Erlösung*).[39]

However, this does not discharge us from our calling. Our relationship to the world is one of responsibility for the world in both word and deed. The essence of Christ's personhood is 'being-there-for others' (Dasein-für-andere), so are we called to be present in this world. The Church is only church when it is there for others.[40] This brings us to the important christological concept of deputyship (*Stellvertretung*) or vicarious representative action. Christ lived and died vicariously, and so his disciples are called to vicarious actions out of responsible love.[41] Through Christ's representative actions, a new reality has been created which has now become the life principle of all Christians.

But let us not be overly idealistic. We cannot solve all the problems since there are social, political and economic systems that hinder faith in Jesus Christ and destroy the essence of human beings. Nonetheless we are called to overcome these problems. 'Everything the church has to say regarding the orders of the world can only have the effect of preparing the way.'[42] We should be interested in worldly questions and ask ourselves 'Who is Christ for us today?'

Involvement and creational order

According to Bonhoeffer, there is a dual task for the Church as it deals with secular problems.[43] The first one is to draw a negative boundary through proclaiming the word of God. The Church has to declare guilty those structures that hinder the faith. The second task is a positive contribution, not so much based on the word of God but on the authority of responsible counsel by Christian experts. Distinguishing those two tasks is characteristic for the Lutheran model. It protects the radical character of the word proclamation and differentiates it from the merely human counsel given by Christian experts. In this context Bonhoeffer quotes Luther: 'Teaching is heavenly, life is earthly' (*doctrina est coelum, vita est terra*). The one belongs to the teaching office (Amt), the second to the diaconate or the role of the lay people. The latter are the counsellors for worldly affairs, who have to discover the divine laws within economy and state.

With some hesitation Bonhoeffer speaks of a 'relative autonomy',[44] and there is a striking similarity with Kuyper's doctrine of sovereign spheres.[45] However, Bonhoeffer was critical about 'orders of creation' as separate realities. This idea was often used by German Christians to justify the love for blood, race and German soil. Instead he preferred to speak of 'orders of preservation' (*Erhaltungsordnungen*). This broken world is redeemed by Christ and preserved by the Father until its final consummation. Bonhoeffer's view on nature was entirely christocentric: 'The natural is that which, after the fall, is directed toward the coming of Jesus Christ. The unnatural is that which, after the fall, closes itself off from the coming of Christ.'[46]

Secularised world

The reality of Christ leads us to the reality of the world today. As Bonhoeffer wrote in one of his prison letters:

> I am continuously driven by the question what Christianity or who Christ is for us today. The time when people could be told everything by means of words, whether theological or pious words, is over, and so is the time of inwardness and conscience – and that means the time of religion in general.[47]

Bonhoeffer had a very clear view on the process of secularization. 'God as a working hypothesis in morals, politics, or science, has been surmounted and abolished...'[48] He does not believe there is any valid method for changing the situation and he is critical of the results of some apologetic attempts. These are pointless; the world has simply come of age (*die mündig gewordene Welt*). There is the 'promising godlessness' of the world come of age which arose as a protest against the religiously disguised godlessness of the façade of Christianity. There is no longer room for pseudo-religiosity and metaphysical systems. Humanity is drawn back upon itself, freed from false traditional religious practice. Humanity has stepped out of false solutions, been deprived of the opium of religion and therefore humanity is now open for a true conversion to the reality of God. Living in this secular world is the way of the cross.[49]

> On the cross God lets himself be pushed out of the world. God is powerless and weak in the world and precisely as such is he with us and helps us.[50]

Through *mortificatio* comes *vivicatio*. In this pain we can experience God's nearness. As Ulrik Nissen rightfully observers, 'The secular is not atheological.' The theology of the cross provides the prophetic motive of demonstrating Christ in a secular world as well as the basis for deep piety and Christian mysticism.

But there is another reason why Bonhoeffer speaks positively about secularization.[51] Mankind has liberated itself and is able to stand against ideological powers and false religion. Bonhoeffer was disappointed in the German church as it had failed to confront Nazism powerfully. However, he had met courageous people outside the church who were prepared to take a stand and to struggle for righteousness and truth.

Church and *disciplina arcani*

Bonhoeffer's call to be a disciple publicly is counterbalanced by the hidden dimension of discipleship. As has been noted before, in Bonhoeffer's theology the cross and humiliation of Christ play a central role. Christ did not wield his divine powers before an unbelieving world. There is no room for triumphalism. We as Christians have to act in simple and humble obedience to our Lord, whose divinity was hidden before the wise and powerful of this world. Our existence is not a glorious demonstration of moral superiority but in the shadow of the Cross of Christ.

Bonhoeffer shows his deep aversion against aristocratic Christianity or a triumphal Christianity. In two letters he refers to the ancient tradition of the 'discipline of the secret' (*disciplina arcani*).[52] This was a practice of the early church to protect itself against corruption from the world. Bonhoeffer tries to integrate a rigid spirituality with an involvement in a secular hostile society. Christian ethics should not be imposed upon an unwilling people. This 'cavalier way' is the approach of organised religion, using institutional structures and laws. We rather have to protect the mysteries of faith from religious profanation. Christians should meet each other in all honesty and secrecy for prayer and worship. This is the Finkenwalde Seminary model of intense community of the like-minded. It is the opposite of the more outgoing seeker sensitive mega churches which we find in the United States and which are exported to Europe.[53] The combination of prayer and action for justice is the most distinctive contribution of Bonhoeffer's spirituality.[54] It is only by this combination that Christians are able to overcome systemic immorality.

4. Conclusions

Evangelical Christians need not be stuck in the polarity between the extravert Neo-Calvinist and the introvert Neo-Anabaptist model. At face value, both approaches seem to be in opposition, but as I have demonstrated, they agree in their aim to impact the world, albeit in radically different ways. We recognise that for Kuyper the Church has to stay Church and should not turn into some political force. Kuyper would agree that a deep spiritual life is crucial to fulfil our calling in the world.[55] The similarities between Hauerwas and Bonhoeffer are also evident. Both stand for a Church living as a community of disciples in a secular world. They both emphasize peacemaking and truth telling as core virtues for Christians in contemporary society.

The Lutheran model, as it is interpreted by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, provides an interesting *via media* integrating pietism with a prophetic calling in the world. It has no modernistic triumphalism; it is a theology of the cross. Bonhoeffer's christocentric ethic of responsibility has many attractive features as we confront the challenges of postmodern times. The Church is a community of faith that on the one hand shuns the power of politics and on the other hand has a clear critical voice opposing systemic structures of power. Hauerwas' paradigm is helpful in letting the Church be truly Church and the world truly world. Christian spirituality does not end up in a ghetto of the Church but has a clear calling in this world. It is not 'the cavalier way' but rooted in discipleship and a readiness to suffer and to be rejected. When Christian mysticism becomes Christian activism we are bridging the gap between Church and secular society. A gap that is unreal, since there is only one reality in Christ our Lord.

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Notes

1 This article is based on a lecture given at the conference of The International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education (IAPCHE) in April 2009. Cf. Patrick Nullens, 'Theological paradigms for bridging the gap' forthcoming in A. de Muynck and J.H. Hegeman (eds.), *Bridging the Gap* (Sioux Centre: Dordt Press, 2011).

2 http://www.lausanne.org/covenant

3 Well known are H. Richard Niebuhr's five approaches in *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper & Row, 1951). Using Niebuhr's models this article deals with 'Christ the transformer of culture'; a soft and less sectarian form of 'Christ against Culture' and 'Christ and culture in paradox'. For a brief evangelical reflection on the five paradigms see Dennis P. Hollinger, *Choosing the Good* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002) 189-215. See also Donald A. Carson, *Christ and Culture Revisited* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008).

4 See for instance the Abraham Kuyper Lecture at Princeton by Richard J. Mouw (March 29, 2007) on 'Culture, Church, and Civil Society: Kuyper for a New Century' published in *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 28.1 (2007). Ulrik B. Nissen observes the same dichotomy. He refers to Bonhoeffer and John Milbank for a better theological appreciation

of secular society; see 'Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the Ethics of Plentitude' in *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 26.1 (2006) 98.

5 Scholars distinguish Calvin*ism*, a development in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, from the Reformer John Calvin. Calvinism is 'pluriform in terms of its theological roots, since Calvin never occupied the same dominant position for the Reformed tradition as Luther did for the Lutherans (hence the term 'Calvinism' is itself misleading).' Under the influence of Abraham Kuyper, 'Calvinism also came to be associated with a so-called theological world-view and therefore came to denote a much wider range of concerns than those represented by the strictly theological interests of Reformed confessionalism.' See Carl R. Trueman, 'Calvinism' in Trevor A. Hart (ed.), *The Dictionary of Historical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000) 103.

6 James D. Bratt, *Abraham Kuyper: A Centennial Reader* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 488.

7 Fuller developed in the Reformed philosophy of Herman Dooyeweerd (1889-1977) and Dirk H. Th. Vollenhoven (1892-1978).

8 http://www.ccel.org/ccel/kuyper/lecture.pdf or *Lectures on Calvinism The Stone Lectures of 1898* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2008) 96, 97.

9 Corresponding to the once-born and twice born of William James; see A. Kuyper, *Calvinism, Six Stone Lectures* (1898), the fourth lecture on 'Calvinism and Science'.

10 This was not an entirely new idea; it is well rooted in Calvin's work but Kuyper expanded it and made it more prominent. Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer (1801-1876) in his lectures *Unbelief and Revolution* (1847) maintained that the intellectual revolution of the Enlightenment had subverted the spiritual foundation of European society.

11 Kuyper uses this terminology as he describes the progressive work of common grace; see *Gemeene Gratie* vol. II [1903] (Kampen: Kok, 4th ed. n.d.) 606.

12 Peter S. Heslam, *Creating a Christian Worldview, Abraham Kuyper's Lectures on Calvinism* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1998) gives a penetrating analysis of these modernistic elements in Kuyper's thinking.

13 For example, Guenther Haas interacts critically with postmodern virtue ethics in 'Kuyper's Legacy for Christian Ethics' in *Calvin Theological Journal* 33 (1998) 320-349. For an interaction with the dominant role of social philosophy in postmodernism, see M. Elaine Botha, 'Prospects for a Christian Social Philosophy in a Shrinking World' in Luis E. Lugo (ed.), *Religion, Pluralism and Public Life. Abraham Kuyper's Legacy for the Twenty First Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000) 221-240.

14 The term Neo-Anabaptism is not widely used. It refers to theologians who have sympathies with the more Anabaptist branch of the Reformation but are reinterpreting it and are not so much ecclesiologically connected to this tradition. Stanley Hauerwas is a key figure. John Howard Yoder was a Mennonite and had a strong influence on Hauerwas. Other names in this tradition are Nancey Murphy, Samuel Wells, Glen Stassen and James McClendon.

15 Gregory A. Boyd, *The Myth of a Christian Nation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006) 13, denounces the nationalistic 'idolatry' of American evangelicalism which often fuses the cross and the flag. 'Because the myth that America is a Christian nation has led many to associate America with Christ'.

16 Currently Stanley Hauerwas is the Gilbert T. Rowe Professor of Theological Ethics at Duke University (Durham, North Carolina).

17 Stanley Hauerwas, 'A Christian Critique of Christian America (1986)' in *The Hauerwas Reader* (Durham, London: Duke University Press, 2001) 459-480.

18 Following his master teacher, John Howard Yoder, whose *The Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994) has become a classic statement of Anabaptist, Biblically grounded, social ethics.

19 Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue. A Study in Moral Theory* (London: Duckworth, 1981).

20 S. Hauerwas, *A Peaceable Kingdom* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1983) 68.

21 See Hauerwas' response to James Gustafson's allegation of sectarianism: S. Hauerwas, *Christian Existence Today. Essays on Church, World, and Living In Between* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2001) 3-9.

22 Samuel Wells and Ben Quash, *Introduction to Christian Ethics* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010) 190.

23 Jeffrey Stout, *Democracy and Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

24 In this respect Hauerwas is drawing heavily on Yoder.

25 Leslie Newbiginn, *Foolishness to the Greeks. The Gospel and Western Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986) 101.

26 By the notion of a 'Christian nation' Kuyper never expected a nation of converted Christians, but a nation that identifies itself with Christianity as its main heritage and mindset. It is the special effect of special grace on the outworking of common grace. Bratt, *Abraham Kuyper*, 198-199.

27 Based on Luther's treatise *On Temporal Authority.* Original title: *Von weltlicher Obrigkeit, wie weit man ihr Gehorsam schuldig ist* (1523).

28 The 'Deutsche Christen' were a Nazistic lobby group within the German Protestant Church which became very strong due to the government-sponsored efforts to nazify the Church. This led to a schism with the *Bekennende Kirche* in which Bonhoeffer was heavily involved.

29 Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ethics* in *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works* vol. 6 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005) 57-58.

30 Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, 399.

31 Stanley Hauerwas, *Performing the Faith: Bonhoeffer and the Practice of Nonviolence* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2004) 43. Hauerwas provides an eclectic reading of Bonhoeffer as a pacifist, turning him into an ally of Yoder. He joins the many coups of misappropriation committed on Bonhoeffer, but at least this book demonstrates the significant overlap between the two paradigms.

32 Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Discipleship* in *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works* vol. 4 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003) 84-91.

33 His Christology was expounded in the lectures he gave at Berlin University in 1933, which have been handed down through the notes of students. Christ is the centre of human existence, history and nature. Bonhoeffer, *Christ the Center* (New York: Harper Collins, 1978). For the christological concentration of Bonhoeffer's theology and ethics see Andreaz Pangritz, 'Who is Jesus Christ for us, today?' in John W. de Gurchy (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Dietrich Bonhoeffer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 134-153.

34 Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, 55.

35 Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, 55.

36 Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, 341.

37 Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, 356.

38 Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, 354.

39 Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, 354. Bonhoeffer criticises the Anglo-Saxon approach which implies that Christians have the solutions to worldly problems, such that one only needs to listen to these answers to solve the problems in our world. This refers for instance to Methodist 'campaigns' or 'crusades' to combat worldly evil. In general it refers to the implementation of government power to serve Christian ethical standards. This critique can also be applied to the Neo-Calvinist paradigm.

40 Larry Rasmussen, 'The ethics of responsible action' in *The Cambridge Companion to Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, 206-225.

41 The full meaning of *Stellvertretung* is hard to translate. It is an essential aspect of Bonhoeffer's social ethics; see Clifford J. Green, *Bonhoeffer: a theology of sociality* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999) 56-58; Hans Daub, *Die Stellvertretung Jesu Christi ein Aspekt des Gott-Mensch-Verhältnisses bei Dietrich Bonhoeffer* (Berlin: Münster, 2004).

42 Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, 360.

43 Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, 361-362.

44 Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, 361-362. Unfortunately the manuscript ends abruptly with three words for an outline: 'reason – law of what is created – of what exists'.

45 G. Huntemann, *The Other Bonhoeffer: An Evangelical Reassessment of Dietrich Bonhoeffer* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989) 80-81.

46 Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, 173.

47 D. Bonhoeffer [16 July, 1944], *Letters and Papers from Prison* (New York: Touchstone, 1997) 326

48 D. Bonhoeffer [30 April, 1944], *Letters*, 279.

49 Ulrik B. Nissen observes the same dichotomy, see 'Ethics of Plentitude', 107.

50 *Prison Letters*, quoted and translated by Ulrik B. Nissen, 'Ethics of Plentitude', 107.

51 This is a very complex theme. Huntemann rightfully describes Bonhoeffer's theology as multi-dimensional and processual. The coming of age stands in tension with the powerlessness of God and the mystery of the cross. We experience Christ in this God-forsaken modern world. Huntemann, *The Other Bonhoeffer*, 82.

52 For a brief exposition of Bonhoeffer's 'discipline of the secret' see Geoffrey B. Kelly, 'Prayer and action for justice: Bonhoeffer's spirituality', in *The Cambridge Companion*, 250-252.

53 'If our worship simply mimics the disciplinary practices and goals of a consumer culture, we will not be formed otherwise. Conceiving of the church as a disciplinary society aimed at forming human beings to reflect the image of Christ, we will offer an alternative society to the hollow formations of late-modern culture': James K. Smith, *Who's afraid of postmodernism?* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006) 107.

54 As is observed by Kelly, 'Prayer', 252.

55 W. van 't Spijker, 'Spiritualiteit bij Kuyper', *Wapenveld* 56.4 (2006) 32-38.

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Book Reviews – Recensions – Buchbesprechungen

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Les Actes des Apôtres (1-12)

Daniel Marguerat

CNT Va; Genève: Labor et Fides, 2007, pb., 446 pp.
ISBN 978-2-8309-1229-6

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der erste Band von Professor Daniel Marguerats neuem Kommentar über die Apostelgeschichte zeigt die beträchtlichen Stärken von Marguerats Würdigung literarischer Züge einer Narrative zusammen mit einer besonderen Wertschätzung ihrer theologischen Bedeutung. Dabei bleibt aber ein Anflug von Enttäuschung zurück angesichts der scheinbaren Leichtigkeit, mit welcher der Autor historische Zusammenhänge außer Acht läßt. Die positiven Merkmale dieses Kommentars machen ihn zu einer unerlässlichen Lektüre für Prediger und Lehrer wie auch für Wissenschaftler. Jene, die sich eine ernsthaftere Auseinandersetzung mit den historischen Begleitumständen wünschen, auf welche die Narrative Bezug nimmt, werden einfach andere Kommentare benützen mussen.

SUMMARY

The first volume of Marguerat's new commentary on the Acts of the Apostles exhibits the strengths of his appreciation for literary features in a narrative along with an appreciation for the theological significance of the narrative, while leaving disappointment at the ease with which the author dismisses issues of historicity. The positive features of this commentary make it indispensible reading for preachers and teachers as well as academics. Those who wish to consider more seriously the historical circumstances to which the narrative refers will simply wish to supplement their use of this commentary with others.

RÉSUMÉ

Le point fort du premier volume du nouveau commentaire des Actes des Apôtres par Marguerat réside dans sa mise en lumière des caractéristiques littéraires de la narration ainsi que de l'apport théologique de celle-ci. L'auteur déçoit en revanche par la facilité avec laquelle il évacue les questions d'historicité. Les aspects positifs de ce commentaire rendent sa lecture indispensable pour les prédicateurs, enseignants et chercheurs. Ceux qui s'intéressent plus sérieusement aux circonstances historiques mentionnées dans le texte des Actes devront compléter cette lecture par celle d'autres commentaires.

* * * *

Professor Daniel Marguerat's first volume on Acts is a fine addition to the Commentaire du Nouveau Testament series of exegetical commentaries in French and to the available literature on Acts in general, though it is not equally satisfying in every respect.

In his preface, Marguerat indicates that he intends to present a particular 'reading' (*lecture*) of Acts. He continues, 'Ma lecture des Actes des apôtres combine l'analyse narrative avec la critique historique' (7) ['My reading of the Acts of the Apostles combines narrative analysis with historical criticism.'] The dual emphasis on narrative and history will come as no surprise to those who are familiar with Marguerat's earlier writing. While I believe the narrative emphasis pays rich dividends, I fear that his commitment to a certain form of historical-critical approach has a negative effect on his appreciation of Acts as history.

The Introduction to the commentary is concise (17-31) but deals clearly with the relationship between the Gospel of Luke and Acts; our knowledge of the author ('L'auteur des Actes ne peut être un compagnon historique de Paul,' 19 ['The author of Acts cannot be a companion of the historical Paul']); provenance and date of Acts; the structure of the work; sources; genre; style; 'Luke' as a historian; the theology of Acts; and the text of Acts. On the historicity of Acts, Marguerat comments, in line with many others such as Hengel, that 'Luc n'est pas plus subjective que n'importe quel historien de l'Antiquité : comme eux, il raconte l'histoire à partir d'un point de vue.' (26) ['Luke is no more subjective than any other historian of Antiquity: like them, he recounts history from a point of view.'] However, although Marguerat clearly has a relatively high regard for Luke as a historian, he is nonetheless prepared to say that he 'recompose par la fiction ce que ne lui livrent pas ses sources'. (26) ['reconstructs by means of fiction that which his sources do not provide for him'.]

Each unit of the biblical text is treated in a standard manner. First, there is a French translation of the Greek text. This identifies words that are supplied for good sense in brackets and includes footnotes that provide information on textual variants or a more literal rendering of the Greek where necessary. The translation is followed by a select bibliography relating to the specific passage. The bibliographies generally include works in French, English and German, plus several items in Italian. The most recent title I found dated from 2005. A reasonable number of works by evangelical authors are included. Next comes the '*analyse*' [analysis], which examines fundamental literary and historical matters relating to the passage such as structure and rhetorical strategy. This is followed by a verse-by-verse '*explication*' [explanation] which treats each verse in detail. Finally, there is a short section of '*perspectives théologiques*' [theological perspectives] which highlights important theological issues.

Throughout the commentary, there are a few independent short studies which provide useful contextual information. For example, 'Pentecôte: L'histoire d'une fête' (71-72) [Pentecost: The history of a festival] and 'D'où vient le nom de "Chrétiens"?' (415-416) [From where did the name 'Christians' come?] There are also a few simple black and white maps and illustrations at the appropriate point in the text. The numerous footnotes draw not only on a wide range of recent scholarship but also frequently refer to the church fathers and occasionally to Calvin's commentary on Acts. Thus, while not emphasising the history of interpretation as Bovon does in his commentary on Luke's Gospel in this series, Marguerat demonstrates a healthy appreciation for the contributions of earlier Christian writers.

Marguerat is at his best when he discusses the literary features and narrative flow of the text, often highlighting interesting comparisons, contrasts and structures. He is particularly good at suggesting how one pericope relates to those that precede or follow it. His theological reflections are also generally helpful. On the matter of the historical reliability of the narrative, Marguerat is less clear and convincing. His appreciation for the literary aspects of the text appears to lead him to downplay the historical issue. It is not that he is always pointing out faults in the narrative; in fact, he acknowledges the author's care and precision (27). It simply seems that the matter is of no great importance to Marguerat. As an example we might mention his comment on the narrative of the ascension: 'Luc a historicisé le kérygme de l'élévation (invisible) de Jésus pour l'inscrire dans le cours de l'histoire.' (45) ['Luke has historicised the proclamation of the (invisible) raising of Jesus in order to inscribe it in the course of history.']

I can commend this commentary warmly for what it does well: providing a reading of the text that is sensitive to its narrative features and theological significance. I would simply suggest that the reader supplement his or her study with a volume which wrestles with the historical questions more fully and rewardingly. Even with this caveat, I eagerly look forward to the publication of the second volume of this commentary.

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Communities of Conviction: Baptist Beginnings in Europe

Ian M. Randall

Schwarzenfeld: Neufeld Verlag, 2009, xi + 222 pp., hb., €15,00, ISBN 978-3-937896-78-6

SUMMARY

This book marks four hundred years of Baptist life and describes its beginnings in Europe. Baptist churches are presented as conviction-driven communities, sharing a common commitment towards Bible reading, discipleship and missionary outlook. They grew against oppression by state and state church, and thus religious freedom is in their 'genes'. Particularly striking is the dominant contribution of lay preachers to their development and growth. For the Baptist leader and pioneer Gerhard Oncken, a church of believers is a church of missionaries. This book's challenge is to revive that idea in our churches today.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieses Werk bezeichnet vier Jahrhunderte baptistischer Geschichte und beschreibt ihre Anfänge in Europa. Baptistengemeinden werden als von Überzeugung motivierte Gemeinschaften dargestellt, die eine gemeinsame Hingabe an Bibellese, Jüngerschaft und missionarische Perspektive teilen. Sie sind trotz der Bedrückung durch Staat und Staatskirche gewachsen. Somit findet sich Religionsfreiheit schon in ihren „Genen". Besonders eindrücklich ist der vorherrschende Beitrag von Laienpredigern zur Entwicklung und zum Wachstum dieser Gemeinden. Für den baptistischen Leiter und Pionier Gerhard Oncken ist eine Kirche von Gläubigen zugleich eine Gemeinde von Missionaren. Die Herausforderung des Buches besteht darin, diesen Gedanken in unseren Gemeinden heute wieder zu beleben.

RESUME

Ce livre, tout en décrivant ses commencements en Europe, recouvre quatre cents ans de l'histoire baptiste. Les Églises baptistes sont présentées comme des communautés de conviction, dont les caractéristiques sont la lecture de la Bible, le « discipulat » et l'esprit missionnaire. Elles ont grandi en dépit de l'oppression de l'État et de l'Église d'État, et par conséquent la liberté religieuse fait partie de leurs « gènes. » Les prédicateurs laïcs ont contribué de manière décisive à leur développement et à leur croissance. Pour le leader et pionnier baptiste, Gerhard Oncken, une Église de croyants est une Église de missionnaires. Le défi de ce livre est de faire renaître cette idée dans nos Églises aujourd'hui.

* * *

In the summer of July 2009, more than a thousand Baptists gathered in Amsterdam to celebrate four hundred years of Baptist life in the city where its heritage began in 1609. This book was launched at that congress. The author, Ian Randall, with his broad knowledge of not only Baptist history but also of many evangelical and renewal movements in Europe, is the right man for the job. He knows the sources in impressive detail and is able to retell the Baptist story in a way that is inspiring and sometimes surprising. With the title of his book, he shows his affinity with the work of James McClendon, who paints the Baptist vision as a set of convictions. In *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 36.2 (2009) Randall published an article in which he discerns five Baptist convictions, which may be paraphrased as communal Bible reading, discipleship, covenanting communities, redemptive communities and missionary communities. It is interesting to see how these convictions played a role in the beginnings of Baptist life in many European countries.

The Baptist vision is connected to and partly inspired by the Anabaptist vision, so Randall starts his story not in 1609 in Amsterdam, but in 1525 in Zürich, the city of Zwingli, where his 'Bible reading disciples' were the first to take a radical stand for a Believers Church and accordingly for Believer's Baptism. The same passion we find with men like John Smyth and Thomas Helwys, who, seeking a 'pure' church, separated from the Church of England and fled to Amsterdam to form a community based on New Testament principles, with 'worship from the heart' and 'watch-care over the brother' whilst 'discerning the mind of Christ as a congregation'. Randall explains that Smyth and Helwys not only looked for a new model of church, but also for a new model of society, one free from oppression by the state and/or the state church. The logic of religious freedom came out of Baptist principles, Randall rightly concludes. They are about a free soul ('soul-competency') in a free church (one without political or ecclesial coercion) in a free state.

It is striking to see that in almost all countries of Europe Baptist beginnings met with resistance and persecution. In many cases, the animosity of (state) churches was worse than that of the worldly authorities. In Russia and Switzerland, children were baptised against the will of their parents. In Denmark Baptists were offered a place of refuge in Frederica, but along with that concession it was decreed that their children had to be baptised as infants. Many Baptists were arrested and imprisoned several times, had to pay high fees or lost their possessions. Yet this never silenced them: In Latvia Eduard Grimm was placed in a solitary cell because of his preaching while in prison. When the chief of police told Gerhard Oncken (Hamburg, Germany) that he would always feel the force of his finger, Oncken boldly replied that he was not so much interested in his finger as in the arm of God: 'So long as that arm moves, you will never silence me.' Like Helwys in England in the 17th century, in many countries Baptists were at the forefront pleading for religious freedom. From the Baltic lands they travelled 600 miles to St. Petersburg to hand a petition to the Tsar. In Germany Julius Köbner wrote his powerful *Manifesto of Free Primitive Christianity to the German People* in 1848, just a few months after the *Communist Manifesto*.

Baptist beginnings in many countries owe a lot to Pietism and other revival movements, to missionary societies of various backgrounds and to the Bible Societies. The main influence, however, came from one man, the German evangelist, pastor and pioneer Johann Gerhard Oncken. I have counted sixteen countries where he was involved through his own preaching, support and advice or by inspiring and sending others. For Oncken a church of believers is also a church of missionaries. It was his motto 'every member a missionary' that stamped his work and his church and many after him until today. Thirty years after he was baptised in the River Elbe with six others and formed a Baptist church, the Hamburg church had over sixty preaching stations, mainly located in places where members of the church lived. It is striking to see the role of the laity in this book; among the pioneer evangelists were shoemakers (Germany, Denmark, Serbia), carpenters (Latvia, Hungary, Vienna), tailors (Lithuania), seamen (Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Latvia) and peasants (in Transylvania four of them became known as the 'peasant prophets').

For me, this point provides the most important and challenging lesson of this book. Will we in the twenty-first century be able to release this basic power again and reawaken the conviction that every church of believers is a church of missionaries? Only then will Baptist history feed the future.

Teun van der Leer
Barneveld, The Netherlands

Institution de la Religion Chrétienne

Jean Calvin (mise en français moderne par Marie de Védrines et Paul Wells)

Aix-en-Provence / Charols: Editions Kerygma / Editions Excelsis, 2009, xlv + 1516, €56, hb
ISBN: 978-2-905464-89-7 (Kerygma) / 978-2-7550-0087-0 (Excelsis)

RÉSUMÉ

L'Institution de la Religion Chrétienne est désormais accessible dans un français contemporain grâce au travail remarquable de modernisation du texte de Calvin par Marie de Védrines et Paul Wells. C'est une occasion exceptionnelle pour le lectorat francophone de découvrir ou redécouvrir Calvin dans le texte afin d'évaluer par soi-même la pensée du réformateur et de bénéficier de sa méthode théologique biblique.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG :

Das Buch *L'Institution de la Religion Chrétienne* [*Die Institution der Christlichen Religion*] liegt nunmehr in zeitgenössischem Französisch vor dank der beachtlichen Arbeit von Marie de Védrines und Paul Wells zur Modernisierung des Textes von Calvin. Dies ist eine aussergewöhnliche Gelegenheit für die französische Leserschaft, Calvin im Text zu entdecken oder wiederzuentdecken, um sich selbst ein

Bild von der Gedankenwelt des Reformators zu machen und Gewinn von seiner biblisch-theologischen Methode zu ziehen.

SUMMARY

The book *L'Institution de la Religion Chrétienne* [*The Institution of the Christian Religion*] is now available in contemporary French language due to the remarkable work of Marie de Védrines and Paul Wells concerning the modernisation of Calvin's text. This is an exceptional occasion for the French readership to discover or rediscover Calvin in the text in order to evaluate for themselves the ideas of the reformer and to benefit from his biblical theological method.

* * * *

« L'illustre traité présenté ici dans une nouvelle traduction […] mérite sa place dans la liste restreinte des ouvrages qui ont eu une incidence remarquable sur le cours de l'Histoire ». C'est ainsi que John T. McNeill présentait en 1961 l'édition *en langue anglaise* de *l'Institution de la Religion Chrétienne* qu'il avait supervisée. Malheureusement, l'accès à ce texte fondateur demeurait jusqu'à présent difficile pour les lecteurs francophones : des archaïsmes dans le vocabulaire et dans les tournures de phrases, qu'une édition en « français modernisé » de 1955 n'avait pas su gommer, laissaient perplexes les étudiants en théologie eux-mêmes ! Le cinq centième anniversaire, en 2009, de la naissance de Calvin a offert à Marie de Védrines et à Paul Wells une occasion exceptionnelle de transcrire en français (vraiment) moderne le chef d'œuvre de Calvin. Cette adaptation permet au public francophone, qui l'ignore depuis trop longtemps, de redécouvrir la lumineuse pensée de Calvin.

Celui qui n'a jamais lu Calvin sera surpris : le Réformateur français *n'est pas* un systématicien rigide qui classe tout dans un cadre préconçu. En effet, la méthode de Calvin est avant tout scripturaire : il se fonde sur l'Ecriture et ne lui fait pas dire plus que ce qu'elle dit réellement, si bien que Diestel, l'historien de l'exégèse de l'Ancien Testament, qualifie Calvin de « créateur de l'exégèse authentique ». Par sa sobriété dans l'interprétation des textes bibliques, Calvin se tient à l'écart des spéculations de son temps. Sa volonté est d'obtenir de « tous […] qu'ils ne cherchent pas les choses que Dieu a voulu garder cachées et qu'ils ne négligent pas celles qu'il a révélées » (III.21.4). La sagesse que l'homme peut posséder se limite « presque » à ce « double aspect : la connaissance de Dieu et de nous-mêmes » (I.1.1). Et pour cela l'Ecriture est suffisante !

Parce que la méthode de Calvin était d'abord biblique, le lecteur attentif cherchera en vain un thème structurant, fût-ce celui de la souveraineté de Dieu ou de l'union avec le Christ : Calvin n'a pas agencé sa théologie en suivant une idée principale qui écraserait toutes les autres mais en déroulant les uns après les autres les différents fils de l'enseignement biblique, signalant ce qu'il faut croire et ne pas croire. La Bible, toute la Bible, rien que la Bible: c'est ainsi qu'on pourrait résumer la perspective théologique de Calvin. La modernisation du texte français permet d'en prendre conscience.

Evidemment, tous ne seront pas satisfaits par cette édition. Certains diront que Calvin ne doit être lu que dans l'original, d'autres répliqueront que le registre de langage demeure trop soutenu, d'autres, enfin, regretteront la disparition des expressions imagées et polémiques du Réformateur de Genève. Ces expressions, qui étaient appropriées à une époque où le « politiquement correct » n'était pas encore de mise, sont néanmoins susceptibles de choquer le lecteur moderne. Ainsi « Il ne me chaut de ce que Pighius et tels chiens que lu[i] ab[oi] ent » devient : « Ce que Pighius et ses comparses objectent m'importe peu » ! (III.2.30) Le travail accompli par Marie de Védrines et Paul Wells est colossal, le résultat remarquable, et la lecture plaisante. Avec cette nouvelle édition en français moderne, le lecteur du XXI^{e} siècle ne sera plus distrait par la forme et pourra mieux puiser dans les trésors que Calvin retire de l'Ecriture : l'*Institution de la Religion Chrétienne* redevient le manuel d'instruction biblique du peuple de Dieu qu'il était lors de ses premières éditions. Marie de Védrines et Paul Wells doivent en être vivement remerciés.

Si le format « dictionnaire » de cette édition convient bien au statut d'ouvrage de référence de *l'Institution de la Religion Chrétienne*, la parution d'un format poche en plusieurs tomes est souhaitable et serait assurément un succès. Le théologien amateur ou confirmé aurait alors tout le loisir d'emmener partout sa copie de l'Institution pour la consulter pendant ses vacances ou dans les transports en commun… chose difficilement réalisable avec les dimensions (17,5x25x6,5 cm) et surtout le poids (2,1 kg) de l'édition actuelle !

Pierre-Sovann Chauny
Metz, France

Eccentric Existence: a Theological Anthropology – Volume One

David H. Kelsey

Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press,
2009, xiii + 602 pp, £53.99 (incl. volume two), hb,
ISBN 978-0-664-22052-5

SUMMARY

Kelsey adopts a novel approach to theological anthropology. In his view, previous theological accounts of what it is to be human have confused the three different narratives which the Bible uses to speak about God's relating to creation. Consequently, his approach throughout both volumes of his work is to delineate the three ways in which God relates to his creation: in creating, in eschatologically consummating and in reconciling to himself. Thus the work is divided into three parts to mirror this and the whole scheme assumes a Trinitarian architecture. In the first

volume, Kelsey explores the first two of these narratives: creation and consummation. The second volume explores the last of the three narratives, reconciliation.

RÉSUMÉ

Kelsey cherche une nouvelle voie d'approche pour l'anthropologie théologique. À son avis, les formulations théologiques concernant l'essence de l'être humain ont jusqu'ici confondu les trois récits bibliques différents qui parlent de la relation de Dieu avec sa création. Kelsey se donne quant à lui pour objectif de décrire les trois façons dont Dieu entre en relation avec sa création : par l'acte créateur, par l'établissement de l'état final et par l'œuvre de réconciliation. Son ouvrage comporte trois parties correspondant à ces trois volets et l'ensemble présente une architecture trinitaire. Dans le premier volume, il étudie les deux premiers récits, ceux de la création et de l'accomplissement eschatologique. Dans le second, il explore le dernier des trois récits, qui traite de la réconciliation.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Kelsey geht es darum, einen neuen Ansatz für theologische Anthropologie zur Anwendung zu bringen. Seiner Ansicht nach haben bisherige theologische Berichte darüber, was es bedeutet, ein Mensch zu sein, die drei unterschiedlichen Erzählungen durcheinander gebracht, in denen die biblischen Texte von Gottes Beziehung zur Schöpfung berichten. Folglich intendiert sein Ansatz durch sein ganzes Werk hindurch, die drei Wege aufzuzeigen, durch die Gott die Beziehung zu seiner Schöpfung unterhält: im Schöpfungsakt, bei der eschatologischen Vollendung und in der Versöhnung mit sich selbst. Um dies zu spiegeln, ist die Arbeit in drei Teile gegliedert, und das ganze Schema erhält dabei eine trinitarische Architektur. Im ersten Band erforscht Kelsey die beiden ersten dieser Erzählungen: Schöpfung und Vollendung. In seinem zweiten Band behandelt er die letzte dieser drei Erzählungen, die Versöhnung.

* * * *

From time to time, one comes across a book that instils a feeling of anticipation in the reader; a quiet excitement betraying the realisation that the text lying before you may change the way you view the world or affect whole swathes of opinion within the intellectual sphere. David Kelsey's long expected theological anthropology, *Eccentric Existence*, may well prove to be such a work. Twenty-five years in the making, it may well offer the first real English-language alternative to the extensive anthropologies of Pannenberg, Moltmann, Rahner and Brunner.

The work is broadly developed around two claims. First, exactly what it means to be human is not something that is intrinsic to the human, but is located extrinsically in the active relating of God to 'all-that-is-not-God' (120) – this is precisely what 'eccentric existence' means. Secondly, in light of the importance of 'God relating' for anthropology, Kelsey stresses that this relational account of anthropology should not be unhooked from the traditional accounts of Trinitarian relations without which the Christian doctrine of God threatens to collapse in on itself. Therefore, rather than utilising a one-dimensional narrative of God-creature relation which underpins a theological account of anthropology, Kelsey argues that, 'because it is the perichoretically triune God who relates to creatures, all three hypostases are involved in each of the three ways God relates to creatures, but only in a certain pattern' (121). Whilst the God-creature relation is underlined by the claim that *opera trinitatis ad extra sunt indivisa*, Kelsey emphasises the asymmetry of the three sets of scriptural stories in which the pattern of relationships between the three hypostases changes. Consequently, the work is divided into three parts in which Kelsey develops the God-creature relation in three interrelated but distinct ways: God is understood 'as One who creates, grounding our reality, and its value and well being; as One who promises us an eschatological consummation and draws us to it; as One who reconciles us in our multiple estrangements' (159). In this, the first volume of two, Kelsey's focus is upon the first two of these three narratives – that of creation and that of eschatological consummation. The third narrative, that of reconciliation, is the subject matter of the second volume.

Within each section of the overall work, Kelsey is careful to divide his focus between the context that faces humanity universally ('our ultimate context') and those contexts that face us as specific individuals ('our proximate context'). Such a methodological move betrays a keen desire not to prioritise those aspects of our own proximate context over against those of other contexts, be it temporally or geographically distinct from our own. Thus, the ultimate context in which the creature finds itself is 'God's relating to them as their creator' (160) rather than a more specific account of creatureliness which promotes a principle intrinsic to the creature into a position of superiority above all others (for example rationality, language or self-relation). What it is that makes us creatures is not some compartmental aspect of our being (often determined by ourselves as it suits) but rather the simple fact of our created existence as those related to creatively by God the Father. Nevertheless, rather than simply reifying the general at the expense of the particular, Kelsey also turns to our 'proximate contexts'. Thus, in terms of creation, our proximate context is, quite simply, the quotidian in all its finitude. This is a bold move by Kelsey. In his view, previous accounts of anthropology have confused the asymmetrical narrative accounts of the God-creature relation and, as a result of the narrative of reconciliation supposed that particularity and the finite are to be understood as results of the sinful brokenness of humanity. However, Kelsey suggests that to imagine a humanity without these ambiguities or limitations is impossible and to do so would simply evince a Feuerbachian-type projection onto a *tabula rasa* anthropology.

Consequently, Kelsey can speak of a second manner of God's creative relating in creation: mediately within the quotidian, through address. It is as a result of this that the notion of faith becomes the important aspect of our *created* existence (rather than *reconciled* existence) as we respond to the address of God within the proximate contexts in which we find ourselves. Any deferral or distortion of this faith in God in both ultimate and proximate contexts is the root of evil and sin.

The second part of the volume, focusing on the eschatological consummation of creation, is far more conventional than part one. The ultimate context into which we are born is not simply determined by our creative relating to the triune God but is also determined by 'a second aspect, by God drawing all creation, and with it humankind, to the blessing of final consummation' (442). Whilst God relates creatively in the Father, God relates eschatologically through the Spirit. Proximately, this works itself out in a 'certain goal-oriented overall direction to changes across time in our social and cultural proximate contexts' (499). If faith is the attitude of the proximate context of creation, hope is the attitude of the proximate context of consummation. In this sense, the notion of the quotidian developed in the first part is used beneficially to suggest that the church should not lose its focus upon the everdayness of existence between the times. We should never be in danger of prompting the question, 'Why do you stand here looking into the sky?' Instead, God's relating to us by eschatological consummation leads us to proclaim, 'We are finite creatures empowered by God's call to be and to act, to give and receive in our own places and times.' (525)

In conclusion, Kelsey's work almost defies a simple depiction. Much like the author of the epistle of Hebrews I do not have time to tell about the exploration of subjectivity, election, sin and evil, biological issues, death, ethics and so the list continues. There is no substitute for the reading of a book and, if any book of the last ten years deserves to be read it is this one. If there are to be any overall criticisms of the work they are few and fastidious: the bibliographical material is all found in the second volume; there are too many typographical errors; Kelsey neglects to talk about the recent postmodern criticisms of 'gift giving' and those theological responses, even so far as not referencing the debates in footnotes; there is also an annoying tendency by Kelsey to use 'intentionality' in a phenomenological manner and yet misapplying the term. Nevertheless, such criticisms do little to diminish the importance of such an impressively thought out and well-argued book.

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Eccentric Existence: a Theological Anthropology – Volume Two

David H. Kelsey

Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press,
2009, pp. 605-1092, £53.99 (incl. volume one), hb.
ISBN: 978-0-664-22052-5

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Within the first volume of his theological anthropology (reviewed above), David Kelsey was concerned to develop a structural account of anthropology which took into account not simply the importance of the relation of the human to the divine, but more particularly the relation of the human to the Trinitarian God of Christian theology. Once such a methodological move is made, one is not faced with a unidimensional narrative against which to relate the human person, but rather there appear three asymmetrical accounts of the ways in which God relates to his creation: 'as One who creates, grounding our reality, and its value and well being; as One who promises us an eschatological consummation and draws us to it; as One who reconciles us in our multiple estrangements.' (Vol. 1, 159) In exploring each of these relations as a separate (yet absolutely interrelated) scriptural narratives, Kelsey implies that previous theological anthropologies have been overly reliant upon a universal description of the *ordo salutis*, an approach which undoubtedly leads to reduction in one of his three areas of focus: creation, consummation or reconciliation. In this final volume, Kelsey turns his attention to the canonical narrative of reconciliation.

As before, Kelsey carefully delineates between those aspects of human existence which face all humans ('ultimate contexts') and those aspects of human existence which face us individually ('proximate context'). With respect to the narrative of God's relationship of reconciliation, the ultimate context of the human person is defined in light of the Incarnation: 'In the third mode of divine relating, the triune God's immanence is nothing other than God's being one among us as the incarnate Son to share with us his relationship with the Father.'(624). In light of this relating, the ultimate context of human existence is defined by God's response to the pervasive self-destructive, self-estrangement of the human person. Our ultimate context is, therefore, defined as *agape* and grace. It is because God relates to us in reconciliation by the Father sending the Son in the power of the Spirit that the destructive tendencies of sinful humanity are not our ultimate context but rather love and grace.

Consequently, in shifting to explore the proximate contexts in which we live, move and have our being, any account of anthropological flourishing will be in response to this ultimate context, a context circumscribed by *agape* and grace. 'The flourishing of human personal bodies' identities lies in their responding appropriately to the ways in which the triune God actively relates to them. The appropriate human response to God relating to reconcile is a specific type of love to God and to fellow creatures.' (703). The remainder of the volume follows this schema, asking the questions, 'How we are to be in love to God' (Chap. 21A) and 'how we are to be in love-as-neighbour' (Chap. 22). Following these explorations, Kelsey goes on to define human freedom in terms of these relations: Christian freedom is 'not contradicted by also affirming that they are conditioned, dependent, and limited – finite – in multiple ways.' (846) It is here that we see 'eccentric existence' in its essence; it is only by recourse to the triune God of grace and love that the human person can 'be' at all in love to God and in love-as-neighbour. The remaining chapters of the volume explore the distortive effect of sin upon human ultimate and proximate contexts.

In making concluding remarks on such a *tour de force* in theological writing, it is hard to know exactly where to locate the real bearing of this work. It is undeniable that Kelsey's work is an example of a novel (and much needed) approach to theological anthropology. With his emphasis upon the 'quotidian' and the 'proximate contexts' of human existence, Kelsey has gone a long way towards righting the wrongs of previous theological approaches to anthropology. In light of this, the importance of his doctrine of creation in protecting finitude against its slow erosion into something like a repristinated doctrine of original sin cannot be overplayed. Nevertheless, there is something about Kelsey's offering which holds this reader back from unqualified eulogy. The work is long; too long, for it to have the impact it should have. In many senses, *Eccentric Existence* loses its way in the minutiae, falling into the temptation of becoming a systematic theology, and may die the death of a thousand qualifications. The author does not give the reader the dignity of being able to make 'mental leaps' on their own accord and so feels pressured to dot the i's and cross the t's in every chapter. Nonetheless, time will tell whether or not Kelsey's writing will have the effect it deserves within the contemporary theological milieu.

Jon Mackenzie,
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Martin Bucer's Doctrine of Justification: Reformation Theology and Early Modern Irenicism

Oxford Studies in Historical Theology

Brian Lugioyo

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, 256 pp., $74.00, hb. ISBN 978-0-19-538736-0

SUMMARY

Brian Lugioyo portrays Bucer as a pragmatic negotiator of the Reformation who engaged openly (and secretly) with his Catholic colleagues without denying his strong and consistent theological convictions, especially on the doctrine of justification by faith alone. Lugioyo shows that the agreement on justification, as reached at the Diet of Regensburg, not only bears Bucer's signature but also reflects his earlier position as outlined in his *Romans Commentary*. Martin Bucer was, argues Lugioyo, therefore not a weak mediating theologian, as some say, but a consistent theologian with an irenic approach to reform. With his careful and comprehensive study, Lugioyo not only provides an illuminating account of the past but also a helpful interpretative framework for the understanding of the present ecumenical dialogue.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Brian Lugioyo präsentiert Bucer als einen pragmatischen Verhandlungsführer der Reformation, der sich öffentlich (und im Verborgenen) mit seinen katholischen Kollegen auseinandersetzte, ohne seine starken und stimmigen theologischen Überzeugungen zu verleugnen, insbesondere die Lehre über die Rechtfertigung allein aus Glauben. Lugioyo zeigt auf, dass die Übereinstimmung bei der Rechtfertigung, wie sie in Regensburg erzielt wurde, nicht nur Bucers Handschrift trägt, sondern auch seine frühere Position reflektiert, wie sie in seinem *Römerkommentar* dargelegt ist. Martin Bucer war daher, so Lugioyo, kein schwacher theologischer Mediator, wie einige behaupten, sondern ein beständiger Theologe mit einem friedfertigen Ansatz zur Reform. Mit seiner sorgfältigen und umfassenden Studie liefert Lugioyo nicht nur einen informativen Bericht über die Vergangenheit, sondern auch einen hilfreichen Deutungsrahmen für das Verständnis des gegenwärtigen ökumenischen Dialogs.

RÉSUMÉ

Dans cet ouvrage, Brian Lugioyo décrit Bucer comme un négociateur pragmatique du mouvement de la Réforme qui a dialogué ouvertement (et parfois secrètement) avec ses collègues catholiques, sans renier ses fortes convictions théologiques mais en les maintenant de manière conséquente. notamment sur la doctrine de la justification par la foi seule. Lugioyo relève que l'accord sur la justification atteint à la Diète de Regensburg, non seulement porte la signature de Bucer, mais reflète sa position antérieure telle qu'il l'avait exposée dans son commentaire sur l'épître aux Romains. Martin Bucer n'a donc pas fait preuve de

faiblesse théologique, contrairement à ce que certains pensent, mais il s'est montré un théologien fidèle à ses positions tout en cherchant à favoriser les réformes de manière irénique. Cette étude soignée et complète rend compte du passé de manière éclairante, et fournit de surcroît un cadre interprétatif utile à la compréhension du dialogue œcuménique actuel.

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In *Martin Bucer's Doctrine of Justification: Reformation Theology and Early Modern Irenicism*, Brian Lugioyo, Assistant Professor of Religion and Philosophy at Spring Arbor University, seeks to show that Bucer was not a weak *Vermittlungstheologe* but a diplomat of the Reformation with strong and consistent theological convictions. Over against those who charge Bucer with lacking theological steadfastness, Lugioyo introduces Bucer as an irenic ambassador for unity who did not downplay the importance of the doctrine of justification for the sake of ecclesiastical unity. To illustrate his point, Lugioyo looks at Bucer's position on the doctrine of justification during his dialogue with Roman Catholic theologians from 1539 to 1541, trying to show that it remained consistent with his earlier outline of the doctrine in his *Romans Commentary* of 1536. The author unfolds Bucer's understanding of the doctrine of justification, while at the same time painting a comprehensive picture of Bucer's general soteriological outlook. To bring Bucer in dialogue with his Roman Catholic contemporaries, Lugioyo introduces Johannes Gropper's concept of justification, as penned in the *Enchiridion* (1538), and in a final step traces Bucer's concrete involvement in different Catholic-Protestant debates, culminating in the Diet of Regensburg (1541) where he negotiated as one of the Protestant representatives the Worms Book.

Lugioyo argues that the final version of its fifth article, praised by both Catholics and Protestants at the Diet, was not weak *Vermittlungstheologie*, but is strongly 'expressive of Bucer's theology of justification from 1536' (191). This is obviously debatable, then and now. Whereas Calvin was happy with the final version of the article, Luther was not. Lugioyo points out that 'article 5 is not a patchwork of compromise' (204). However, one could add, it still remains a compromise, and the inevitable problem of a compromise is its openness for the involved parties to read their own interpretation into it. Significant differences might still hide behind the curtain of a sophisticated diplomatic language. Whether one agrees with the picture that Lugioyo paints of the reformer Bucer at Regensburg ('Bucer did not accommodate the evangelical doctrine of justification; he evangelized,' 208), one has to commend the clearly structured manner in which Lugioyo, with close attention to detail, unfolds his line of argument. This is undoubtedly one of the strengths of his work. One could have wished for an illustration of parallels between Bucer and contemporary protestant theologians involved in the ecumenical debate, but that might have been a step too far for a study that explicitly focuses on 'historical theology.' For those who want to dig deeper, the book comes with helpful features, such as the extensive original German and Latin quotations in the footnotes as well as four appendices, consisting in English translations of relevant chapters of Bucer's *Romans Commentary* and a translation of Article 5 of the *Worms Book*.

As Lugioyo combines historical study with a solid dogmatic treatment of Bucer's soteriological approach, both scholars and students with a special interest in church history and systematic theology alike will profit from the book. Furthermore, Lugioyo's study is a valuable resource in that it not only provides material for the interpretation of recent ecumenical conversations, such as 'Evangelicals and Catholics together,' or the 'Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification,' but also works as a signpost for further dialogue. May the debate continue – and not without listening to Bucer's voice from the past, which undoubtedly has something to say to us today.

Michael Bräutigam,
Edinburgh, Scotland

Tight Fists or Open Hands? Wealth and Poverty in Old Testament Law

David L. Baker

Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009, xxiv + 411, £23.99,
pb. ISBN: 978-0-8028-6283-9

SUMMARY

David L. Baker's book is an excellent exploration of Old Testament wealth and poverty laws read within the Ancient Near Eastern context that attempts to highlight the Old Testament's underlying compassion towards the poor and dispossessed. The book offers the author's own translations of biblical texts, in-depth research, a topical organisation and careful comparison with Ancient Near Eastern law codes. While other attempts to tackle the topics of wealth and poverty in the Old Testament often lead to liberation theology or health and wealth gospel, Baker offers his audience an accessible and engaging reading of Old Testament law that demonstrates God's desire for justice for all.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

David L. Bakers Buch ist ein ausgezeichneter Forschungsbeitrag über alttestamentliche Gesetze zu Reichtum und Armut auf dem Hintergrund des Nahen Ostens der Antike. Das Werk zielt darauf ab, die dem Alten Testament zugrunde liegende Empathie mit den Armen und Besitzlosen hervorzuheben. Der Autor bringt seine eigene Übersetzung der biblischen Texte, das Werk bietet eine gründliche Studie sowie eine thematische Anordnung und einen sorgfältigen Vergleich mit den Gesetzeskodices des Nahen Ostens der Antike. Während andere Ansätze zum Thema von Reichtum und Armut im Alten Testament oftmals in eine Befreiungstheologie münden oder in ein

‚Gesundheits- und Wohlstandsevangelium', bietet Baker seinen Lesern eine zugängliche und engagierte Lesart des alttestamentliches Gesetzes, welche Gottes Wunsch nach Gerechtigkeit für alle aufzeigt..

RÉSUMÉ

Voilà une excellente étude des lois de l'Ancien Testament sur la richesse et la pauvreté, replacées dans le contexte proche-oriental ancien. L'auteur souligne le principe de compassion envers les démunis qui les sous-tend. Il propose sa propre traduction des textes bibliques et offre le résultat de recherches approfondies. L'ouvrage est organisé par sujets et effectue des comparaisons attentives avec les codes de loi du Proche-Orient ancien. Alors que d'autres traitements du sujet débouchent souvent sur une théologie de la libération ou sur un évangile de la prospérité, Baker apporte ici une lecture des lois de l'Ancien Testament accessible et convaincante qui démontre que Dieu désire la justice pour tout homme.

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David L. Baker's book is an excellent exploration of Old Testament wealth and poverty laws read within the ANE context that attempts to highlight the Old Testament's underlying compassion towards the poor and dispossessed. Though the topic is ancient, the book is driven by the desire to find biblical responses to contemporary problems like global poverty, human trafficking, political corruption and theft of natural resources. While other attempts to tackle the topics of wealth and poverty in the Old Testament often lead to liberation theology or health and wealth gospel, Baker purposefully avoids these extremes and instead offers his audience an accessible and engaging reading of Old Testament law that demonstrates God's desire for justice for all.

Baker is no stranger to the topic of Old Testament wealth and poverty law, and his experience as both a capable Old Testament scholar and a long-term theological educator in Indonesia is on display throughout. In fact, those familiar with Baker's work will recognise this book as an outgrowth of his former writings. Indeed, some sections rely heavily on his previously published materials.

While Baker covers a wide range of topics, the book's systematic organisation ensures that the reader possesses a clear sense of direction and purpose for each section. The book begins with a brief introduction of the various Ancient Near Eastern (Sumerian, Babylonian, Hittite and Assyria) and Old Testament (Decalogue, Book of the Covenant, Holiness Code and Deuteronomic Laws) law codes that are compared throughout the work. The chapters that follow are built around a topical approach to Old Testament wealth and poverty laws and as a result do not progress in a linear, commentary fashion through Pentateuchal law. Instead, the book is organised around three main sections: Property and Land (chs 2-4: Property Rights, Property Responsibilities, Ancestral Land), Marginal People (chs 5-7: Slaves, Semi-Slaves, Other Vulnerable Groups) and Justice and Generosity (chs 8-11: Just Lawsuits, Shared Harvests, Generous Loans, Fair Trade). Each chapter is broken down into multiple sub-topics too numerous to list here, but when taken together offer a comprehensive review of Old Testament wealth and poverty laws. For example, under chapter 2 Property Rights, Baker examines the Old Testament laws on theft (Exod 20:15; 22:1-4; Lev 19:11a, 13a; Deut 5:19), coveting (Exod 20:17; Deut 5:21), and lost property (Exod 23:4-5; Deut 22:1-4). In chapter 3 Property Responsibilities, he discusses owner liability (Exod 21:28-36; Deut 22:8), negligent damage (Exod 22:5-6), and care of property (Exod 22:7-5). Each sub-section progresses in a uniform manner by first offering the author's own translation of the Old Testament passages, followed by a discussion on the parallel Ancient Near Eastern laws, an examination of the Old Testament law codes and a conclusion. Occasionally Baker's interpretation and discussion of an individual law may hinge on certain translation issues, but the translation of every verse is defended and explained in detailed footnotes. These fresh readings are one of the book's important contributions.

There is little here to criticise, although one may get the overall impression that Baker has moved quickly over some complicated material and is perhaps overly generous when dealing with some of the OT/ANE comparisons. Additionally, a stronger conclusion detailing the most important modern implications of these ancient laws would be welcome. This is not to say that application is ignored, as Baker demonstrates many links between Old Testament law and modern situations within the individual chapters. These references are often insightful, for example, when he notes the connection between ancient laws on weights and measures and the modern problem of monetary inflation. All the pieces are here for readers to build specific applications for many of the problems of poverty and oppression faced by society today.

The author's expertise is apparent as Baker moves seamlessly between the different ANE/OT law codes, the translation issues of the various languages, and enters into discussions with a wide range of OT/ANE scholars. The level of research in the book is deep and obvious, with a large number of footnotes on tangential topics and a 52-page bibliography of up-to-date resources. One of the book's most important strengths is how well written and easy it is to read; and despite the use of Hebrew and technical footnote discussions, it would make an excellent text for advanced undergraduate students as well as ministers looking to make the Old Testament law accessible and applicable to their congregations. Overall, *Tight Fists or Open Hands* is an exceptional resource on the topic of Old Testament wealth and poverty laws that has interesting information woven into every chapter. Baker has opened an oft-neglected section of the Old Testament and offered its timely message to a wide range of readers.

Jason LeCureux
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Divine Presence amid Violence: Contextualizing the Book of Joshua

Walter Brueggemann

Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2009, xii+82, £6.99, pb.
ISBN-13: 978-1842276600

SUMMARY

Walter Brueggemann's booklet interprets Joshua 11, and particularly vv. 6-9, from the perspective of Yahweh's involvement in fighting against oppressive social structures, much in line with the peasants' revolt theory about Israel's origins. However, the text rather simply seems to speak about Yahweh's help against an enemy more powerful than Israel, also in line with comparable parallels from the Ancient Near East.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Walter Brueggemanns Büchlein legt Josua 11 aus, insbesondere die Verse 6 – 9. Dies geschieht aus der Perspektive von Jahwes Involvierung in den Kampf gegen soziale Unterdrückung, und zwar in weitgehender Übereinstimmung mit der Theorie vom Bauernaufstand bei der Entstehung Israels. Der Text scheint jedoch auf eher einfache Weise von Jahwes Hilfe gegen einen Feind zu erzählen, der mächtiger als Israel ist, ebenfalls in Übereinstimmung mit vergleichbaren Parallelen aus der Antike des Nahen Ostens.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce petit livre de Walter Brueggemann étudie le chapitre onze du livre de Josué, et plus particulièrement les versets 6-9, sous l'angle de l'intervention divine pour combattre les structures sociales oppressives. Il se situe grosso modo dans la ligne de la théorie de la révolte paysanne à l'origine d'Israël. Pourtant, le texte semble bien plutôt parler tout simplement de l'aide apportée par Yahvé à son peuple contre un ennemi bien plus puissant que lui, et on lui connaît des parallèles dans le Proche-Orient ancien.

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Walter Brueggemann's booklet interprets Joshua 11 from the perspective of Yahweh's involvement in fighting against oppressive social structures. Brueggemann in many ways follows the peasants' revolt model of Israel's origins proposed by Mendenhall and Gottwald in the latter part of the twentieth century. In this, the origins of Israel stem from a revolt by those socially oppressed against their Canaanite overlords, together with a move to the highlands and establishment of a new egalitarian society. According to Brueggemann, Yahweh's victory over horses and chariots in Joshua 11:6-9 is an indication of Yahweh's action against oppressive political structures. In many ways, this is in line with what we presently would call liberation theology.

The booklet contains a number of interesting insights. However, in the view of this reviewer, the interpretation suggested by the author, while interesting, is not quite what the text actually says. The text simply states that Yahweh is able to defeat a more powerful opponent, in this case a northern coalition of kings. Chariots were a standard part of ancient warfare. In this, it clearly appears that, according to the Bible, in the time of early Israel, they were predominantly used by peoples inhabiting the lowlands (Joshua 17:15-18), in contrast to the Israelites who were concentrated in the highlands. The northern coalition is not an example of an oppressive social structure, but of people groups that are to be vanquished and destroyed in taking the land for Israel. A particularly apt parallel to Yahweh reassuring Joshua can be found in the Zakkur stela (about 800 BC), where Baalshamayn reassures Zakkur by saying (lines 13-15, from Martti Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy in the Ancient Near East*, Society of Biblical Literature 2003) 'F[e]ar not, for I have made [you] king, [and I who will (14) st]and with [you], and I will deliver you from all [these kings who] (15) have forced a siege against you!'. One may also compare with the apology of Hattusilis (thirteenth century BC), lines 22-58.

This said, the fact that there is a debate about the question of Israel's origins and that most commentators today would not give credence to the biblical presentation according to which there was a conquest does somewhat complicate the interpretation of the passage. On that line, if one of the alternative options (the other in essence being a peaceful infiltration theory), the peasants revolt theory, is accepted, as it was by many shortly after Mendenhall and Gottwald proposed the model, even if less so nowadays, there perhaps is some ground for reading the text at least partially as Brueggemann does. However, we can still ask the question if the author *intended* the text to be read in this way. The present reviewer thinks that this is *not* the case. This having been said, anyone interested in the topic is advised to read this short work for themselves and make up their own minds.

Pekka Pitkänen
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The Speeches of Outsiders in Acts: Poetics, Theology and Historiography

Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 144

Osvaldo Padilla

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, xv + 266 pp., £55.00/US$110.00, hb
ISBN: 9780521899819

SUMMARY

In this work, Padilla seeks to provide a hermeneutical framework for interpreting the speeches of outsiders within the Acts narrative. Drawing on a number of interpretive models, Padilla creates a tripartite approach that makes use of narrative criticism, rhetorical criticism and dramatic irony. Through the combination of these approaches and their application to outsider's speeches, based on the model(s) provided by Jewish histories, Padilla looks to identify not only the function of the narrative as a whole, but also Luke's purpose for composing Acts and its generic orientation.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In seinem Werk versucht Padilla, einen hermeneutischen Deutungsrahmen für die Reden Außenstehender in den Narrativen der Apostelgeschichte vorzulegen. Er bezieht sich auf eine Reihe von Interpretationsmodellen und erstellt einen dreiteiligen Ansatz, der die narrative und rhetorische Methode sowie jene der dramatischen Ironie nutzt. Durch die Kombination dieser Methoden und ihre Anwendung auf die Reden Außenstehender, und zwar basierend auf Modellen aus der jüdischen Geschichtsschreibung, will Padilla nicht nur die Funktion der Erzählung als ganzes feststellen, sondern auch die Absicht von Lukas bei seiner Abfassung der Apostelgeschichte und ihrer generischen Zielrichtung.

RÉSUMÉ

Padilla cherche ici à élaborer un cadre herméneutique pour l'interprétation des discours des personnages secondaires dans le récit du livre des Actes. Tirant parti de divers modèles interprétatifs, il met sur pied une approche tripartite faisant appel à la critique narrative, la critique rhétorique et l'ironie dramatique. En combinant ces approches pour les appliquer aux discours étudiés et en se fondant sur le(s) modèle(s) fourni(s) par les histoires juives, Padilla cherche à mettre en lumière la fonction du récit des Actes dans son ensemble, l'objectif recherché par Luc en composant ce livre et son orientation générale.

* * * *

In this work, Padilla seeks to provide a hermeneutical framework for interpreting the speeches of outsiders within the Acts narrative. In his fist chapter, drawing on a number of interpretive models, Padilla creates a tripartite approach that makes use of narrative criticism, rhetorical criticism and dramatic irony. Through the combination of these approaches and their application to outsider's speeches, Padilla looks to identify not only the function of the narrative as a whole, but also Luke's purpose for composing Acts and its generic orientation.

In the second chapter, Padilla traces the history of research on the speeches in Acts beginning from Baur, referencing Cadbury, Bruce, Dibelius, Soards and finishing with Penner. Although Padilla does not make conclusive statements regarding all the aspects of speeches in Acts scholarship, he does show that there was a general lack of concern for the speeches of outsiders due to historical and theological concerns. Furthermore, he also states that the investigation into their historical accuracy is not to be the purview of this work, but how they function within the narrative itself.

Padilla's third chapter seeks to establish a Jewish literary pattern for the use of outsider speeches by using Ezra, Daniel, 1, 2 and 3 Maccabees, Judith and Josephus as literary examples. Although the examples that he selects from these texts do help support his claim that there is a literary topos of using outsiders' speeches as propagating the views and theology of the author, the work would have been strengthened by a greater number of examples within the works discussed. For example, in the entire corpus of Josephus, Padilla only focuses on one speech of an outsider (*BJ* 7.323-36, 341-88). Justifying this by stating that this is the only speech that contradicts the voice of the narrator, Padilla does not interact with any of the other speeches. A similar imbalance is seen in his discussion of 1 and 2 Maccabees. Although this does not negate his findings, it does raise doubts regarding his claim of discovering a 'literary topos' in Jewish historical literature.

In chapters four to seven, Padilla turns his focus to Acts and the different speeches composed for people outside the Christian faith. Evaluating these speeches and narratives in terms of their context, setting, characters, plot and function, Padilla attempts to interpret these passages through narrative, rhetorical and historical criticisms. This is the main contribution of this work as it attempts to show that Luke made use of outsiders' speeches to advance his authorial perspective. By placing positive statements about Christianity in the mouths of prestigious and influential outsiders (although not always), and by making use of narrative irony, Luke attempts to convince the reader that the Christian movement is not only respectable, but is initiated by God. As a result the reader is, one hopes, positively predisposed to this new faith and is willing to provide space for it within the larger Greco-Roman world or, ideally, convert to it.

The final chapter of this work provides a brief, but informative summary of the investigation. In addition, there is also a bibliography and three small, but useful, indices.

Although Padilla claims a unity between Luke and Acts, his generic claim that this 'study takes us much closer to the historiographic moors of Luke' does not interact with the larger debate regarding the generic (dis)unity of Luke-Acts. Although his study has presented an argument for understanding Acts as part of the genre of (Jewish) history, he has not substantiated a claim for Luke's Gospel.

On the other hand, one of the strengths of this work is its application of narrative criticism. In addressing the passages in Acts, Padilla pays particular attention to situating the speeches within their literary context as well as their importance for advancing the immediate and overarching narrative. This provides some literary perspective to the conclusions that he draws.

Overall, this work deals with an area of Lukan studies that has been overlooked by scholars and so is a valid contribution to this area of research. Although further work needs to be done regarding the role of outsiders' speeches within Acts and other Jewish historical works, this work provides a useful conversation partner for all those who attempt such an endeavour in the future, as well as those who take a rhetorical and/or narrative approach to Acts.

Sean A. Adams
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The Assumed Authorial Unity of Luke and Acts: A Reassessment of the Evidence

Society for New Testament Studies
Monograph Series 145
Patricia Walters
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, xv +
238 pp., £55.00/US$99.00, hb
ISBN: 9780521509749

SUMMARY

Patricia Walters attempts to challenge the scholarly consensus that Luke and Acts were written by the same author-editor. She attempts to apply a new methodology by statistically evaluating the prose compositional styles of the authorial seams and summaries of Luke and Acts. Making use of Aristotle, Ps.-Demetrius, Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Ps.-Longinus, Walters proposes that the three key aspects of prose composition (euphony, rhythm and sentence structure) provide access to the authorial compositional techniques of Luke and Acts.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Patricia Walters will den Konsens der Forscher darüber in Frage stellen, dass das Lukasevangelium und die Apostelgeschichte von demselben Autor stammen. Dabei wendet Walters eine neue Methode an: Sie wertet statistisch die Prosastile der Übergänge und Zusammenfassungen des Lukasevangeliums und der Apostelgeschichte aus. Walters bezieht sich auf Aristoteles, Pseudo-Demetrius, Dionysius von Halicarnassus und Pseudo-Longinus und stellt fest, dass die drei Hauptaspekte von Prosa (Euphonie, Rhythmus und Satzstruktur) Aufschluss geben über die Kompositionstechniken des Verfassers jeweils von Lukasevangelium und Apostelgeschichte.

RÉSUMÉ

Dans cet ouvrage, Patricia Walters conteste le consensus académique selon lequel l'Évangile de Luc et les Actes seraient l'œuvre d'un seul et même auteur ou éditeur. Elle met en œuvre une nouvelle méthode consistant à analyser de manière statistique la prose des transitions et des résumés des deux livres. S'appuyant sur Aristote, le Pseudo-Démétrius, Dionysius de Halicarnasse et le Pseudo-Longinus, elle considère que les trois aspects de la composition prosaïque (l'euphonie, le rythme et la structure des phrases) permettent de caractériser les techniques de composition de l'Évangile de Luc et des Actes.

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Patricia Walters attempts to challenge the scholarly consensus that Luke and Acts were written by the same author-editor. While not the first to confront this view, Walters attempts to apply a new methodology by evaluating the prose compositional styles of the authorial seams and summaries of Luke and Acts.

Accordingly, chapter one provides some of the background scholarship to the authorship question of Luke and Acts. Beginning with the supporters of the shared authorship, Walters attempts to outline some of the methodological flaws that underlie this position, while at the same time providing justification for the challenges to this view and why it needs to be challenged again. Following this, Walters outlines her methodology, stating that she will be evaluating the seams and summaries of Luke and Acts that have a majority of support by a selected grouping of representative scholars. Thus, in chapter two, Walters creates her Luke and Acts data sets, based on the majority of support from her selected scholars.

In chapter three, Walters combs ancient Greek grammarians for their insight into the prose compositional techniques of the ancient world. Making use of Aristotle, Ps.-Demetrius, Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Ps.-Longinus, Walters proposes that the three key aspects of prose composition, namely, euphony, rhythm and sentence structure, provide access to the authorial compositional techniques of Luke and Acts.

In applying statistical analysis to Luke and Acts in chapter four, Walters finds highly significant results for hiatus, dissonance, long syllables in long sequences and clause/sentence segues, and significant results for final syntax that challenge the authorial unity of Luke and Acts. With these results, she calls for a re-evaluation of the authorial unity of Luke and Acts.

Overall, Walters makes some positive contributions. One of the benefits of this work is the outlining of the four grammarians' views of euphony, rhythm and sentence structure, in chapter three. These, as well as other aspects of her work, are summarised in helpful charts throughout. Furthermore, Walters promotes a cross-disciplinary approach to biblical studies that attempts to make use of the strength of different disciplines.

On the other hand, there are a number of issues with this work that undermines its conclusions. First, there is the issue of which text Walters used. Walters uses NA^{27} for both her text and punctuation. While NA^{27} is a useful tool, its eclectic nature causes some serious difficulties for the evaluation of different stylistic features. To Walters' credit, she does propose that future study should be applied to the Bezaen text of Acts.

Second, there are issues in the determination of the evidence to be used. While Walters is aware of the inability of modern scholarship to determine some of the ancient prose syllable divisions, there are a few other instances in which the ancient sources are somewhat vague, or outright disagree about the nature and definition of what counts of examples of a particular literary features. As a result, Walters is forced to choose which definition/evaluative method to use.

Another problematic example of what counts as evidence would be the dissonance category in which word dissonances are calculated for Luke and Acts. While a statistically significant result occurred abdicating the same author for Luke and Acts, a large amount of data was not able to be calculated because there were not enough occurrences to make it statistically significant for chi-square calculations. In this case, nine of the thirteen dissonance combinations were omitted, with all but two of them being separated by only one instance. This selection of evidence, and the omission of some similarities between Luke and Acts, undermines Walters' conclusions.

Overall, Walters provides a new approach for determining the authorial unity of Luke and Acts. While her statistical findings suggest that there is reason to doubt the scholarly consensus, there are a few issues that undermine her findings and, as a result, her work is not entirely convincing.

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From Pentecost to Patmos: Acts to Revelation: Introduction and Survey

Craig L. Blomberg

Nottingham: IVP, 2008. 592 pp. £20 h/b. ISBN 978-1-84474-052-0.

SUMMARY

Blomberg has provided a worthy sequel to his earlier volume on *Jesus and the Gospels*. For Acts and each New Testament letter Blomberg treats the questions of introduction and then offers a detailed survey of the contents. This is a well-done first year NT survey textbook for students and all others interested in the NT. Careful study of this volume will lay a solid foundation for Christian ministry.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Blomberg hat eine beachtliche Fortsetzung seines früheren Bandes *Jesus and the Gospels* [*Jesus und die Evangelien*] vorgelegt. Er behandelt Einleitungsfragen der Apostelgeschichte und eines jeden Briefes des Neuen Testamentes und bietet jeweils einen ausführlichen inhaltlichen Überblick. Das Werk stellt ein gelungenes Unterrichtsbuch dar und verschafft Studenten im ersten Jahr und allen, die am Neuen Testament interessiert sind, einen Überblick. Das sorgfältige Studium dieses Bandes legt eine solide Grundlage für den christlichen Dienst.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce volume vient s'ajouter à celui du même auteur sur Jésus et les Évangiles. Pour les Actes et les épîtres du Nouveau Testament, Blomberg traite des questions d'introduction et propose un survol détaillé du contenu de ces écrits. C'est là un manuel très bien fait pour débutants en théologie et autres personnes intéressées par le Nouveau Testament. L'étude sérieuse de ce manuel permettra de poser des bases solides pour le ministère.

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One volume English language textbooks and introductions to the New Testament abound. Several good volumes are available from an evangelical perspective. So in one sense, I have not been eagerly awaiting Blomberg's book. However those who, like me, have used and value Blomberg's excellent textbook *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction and Survey* (Leicester: Apollos, 1997) will be pleased to see that Blomberg, distinguished Professor of New Testament at Denver Seminary, has produced a volume on the remaining parts of the New Testament.

In the brief 'Introduction', Blomberg describes the origin and aims of the book. While other volumes in the field concentrate on matters of introduction, theological significance or specialised forms of analysis that have been growing in popularity, Blomberg concentrates 'on detailed mastery of the meaning of texts of Scripture themselves' (2). Therefore he only offers the most crucial items of introduction in enough detail to provide the necessary background for correctly interpreting NT books. The emphasis lies 'on surveying the actual structure and contents of each book, the main points in each section, the distinctive exegetical cruxes, and several key terms for contemporary application' (3). Blomberg adopts what he calls a 'broadly based evangelical perspective' (3). However, he has read widely, 'interacted with a broad cross-section of scholarship, and tried to offer representative sampling of approaches across a wide spectrum of theological commitments' (3).

For each NT book Blomberg begins with introductory considerations. This is followed by abbreviated remarks in commentary form on the most central, interesting, relevant and/or controversial details of the book. Next we have, in Blomberg's own words 'passage-by-passage (at times even verse-by-verse) comments with footnotes to where specific concepts or quotations originate or to where fuller discussion of issues may be found. Finally, one finds brief remarks with respect to the contemporary application and a selective bibliography of works for further study' (4; advanced and intermediate commentaries, introductory, other studies; the footnotes and bibliography are limited to English-language publications available to introductory theological students). Each chapter ends with review questions. In addition, italicised material, maps, charts and diagrams make the volume user friendly. Altogether, the book can best be described as a detailed survey of the NT, for all its worth and with the limitations of that emphasis.

The introduction contains brief reflections on the canon. The volume does not contain a historical or theological introduction to this part of the New Testament (Acts and the Epistles) or to the relationship of Jesus and the Gospels to Acts, the letters of the New Testament and the Book of Revelation. Neither does the volume offer a concluding chapter, summarising the purposes and theological emphases of these parts of the New Testament or their relationship to the first non-canonical writings of the ancient church.

Part one offers a detailed introduction to the Book of Acts ('The Gospel moves out', 9-82; 'because it appears immediately after the Gospels in canonical sequence and because it forms the narrative context into which many of the epistles may be inserted with greater understanding', 3).

Part two on Paul and his letters begins with a survey of Paul's life and ministry (85-114). The letters appear in chronological order as best as it can be reconstructed:

Galatians: The Charter of Christian Liberty (117-37)
The Thessalonian Correspondence: A Balanced View of Christ's Return
1. Thessalonians: Christ Is Coming Soon (139-49)
2 Thessalonians: But Not That Soon! (151-62)
The Corinthian Correspondence: Countering Misguided Views about Christian Maturity
1 Corinthians: Internal Immaturity and External Hellenizing Threats (163-202)
2 Corinthians: Increasing Maturity but Infiltrating Judaizing Threats (203-32)
Romans: The Most Systematic Exposition of Paul's Gospel (233-69)
The Prison Epistles: General Introduction (271-73)
Philemon: A Christian Response to Slavery (275-84)
Colossians: Christ as Lord of the Cosmos and the Church (285-301)
Ephesians: Unity in Diversity as a Witness to the 'Powers' (303-23)
Philippians: Rejoice in All Circumstances (325-41)
The Pastoral Epistles: General Introduction (343-49)
Titus: A Manual on Church Order (351-57)
1 Timothy: How to Pastor a Church and Turn It Away from Heresy (359-73)
2 Timothy: Pass It On (375-83)

Part three covers the other writings of the New Testament (387-560) under the following headings:

The Epistle of James: 'Faith without Works Is Dead' (387-408)
The Epistle to the Hebrews: The Superiority of Christ (409-39)
1 Peter: Perseverance Despite Persecution (441-60)
The Epistle of Jude: 'Contend for the Faith' (461-71)
2 Peter: 'Where Is the Promise of His Coming?' (473-83)
The Epistles of John: The Tests of Life
1 John: Countering the Secessionists (485-98)
2 John: The Secessionists Attack from Outside (499-501)
3 John: The Secessionists Take Over Inside? (503-07)
The Book of Revelation: God's Plans for Cosmic History (509-60)

The volume closes with indexes of subjects, authors and Scripture references (561-77). It well achieves the goals that Blomberg set for himself and his readers:

> … to better understand first-century Christianity, the literature it produced that came to be treated as uniquely sacred, and through it a better appreciation of the Lord Jesus Christ, worshipped by this fledgling church, often in hostile circumstances and facing difficulties remarkably similar to those the church faces today throughout the world, despite the changes in cultural and technological forms in which those challenges may be cloaked (6).

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Central Themes in Biblical Theology: Mapping Unity in Diversity

J. S. Hafemann, P. R. House (eds.)

Nottingham: IVP, 2008. 336 pp. £20, pb, ISBN 978-1-84474-166-3.

SUMMARY

The seven essays of this volume are written by leading North American evangelical biblical scholars. They focus on seven themes that span the whole Bible and show its essential theological unity: the covenant relationship, the commands of God, the atonement, the servant of the Lord, the day of the Lord, the people of God and the history of redemption. This volume is a welcome introduction to the contents of biblical theology.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die sieben Aufsätze dieses Bandes stammen von führenden evangelikalen Theologen Nordamerikas. Sie konzentrieren sich auf sieben Themen, welche die gesamte Bibel umfassen und deren wesentliche theologische Einheit aufzeigen: Bundesbeziehung, Gebote Gottes, Versöhnung, Gottesknecht, Tag des Herrn, Volk Gottes und Heilsgeschichte. Das Buch stellt eine geschätzte Einführung in die gesamtbiblische Theologie dar.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage comporte sept essais rédigés par des biblistes évangéliques nord-américains de premier plan. Ils abordent sept thèmes traversant l'ensemble de la Bible et s'efforcent de montrer l'unité théologique essentielle de celle-ci : la relation d'alliance, les commandements de Dieu, l'expiation, le Serviteur du Seigneur, le jour du Seigneur, le peuple de Dieu et l'histoire de la rédemption. On a là une bonne introduction à la théologie de la Bible.

* * * *

The present volume is a follow-up volume on *Biblical Theology: Retrospect and Prospect* (Downers Grove: IVP; Leicester: Apollos, 2002). Its purpose is to explore biblical themes that contribute to the wholeness of the Bible. The volume had its origin in conferences held at Wheaton in 2003 and 2005. The editors note in the brief introduction (15-19): 'We wanted to bring together people who saw the need to trace themes and overarching structural ideas through the whole Bible' (15). The biblical theology under consideration is defined as:

> That approach to Scripture which attempts to see the biblical material holistically and to describe this wholeness or synthesis in biblical categories. Biblical theology attempts to embrace the message of the Bible and to arrive at an intelligible coherence of the whole despite the great diversity of the parts.... Biblical theology investigates the themes presented in Scripture and defines their inter-relationship. Biblical theology is an attempt to get to the theological heart of the Bible (16).

Therefore the seven authors of this volume pursue the unifying message of the Bible as it unfolded throughout redemptive history. The editors note that it is common for contemporary scholars to write of the many competing 'voices' and various 'theologies' of the Bible. In contrast to this, 'These essays oppose such trends. They seek to uncover the overarching theology of the Bible as it develops throughout the canon. The themes... are studied with an eye to their integration into the whole fabric of the Bible, their use and reuse by the Bible's writers, and thus to their development across the canon' (17). In addition, doing biblical theology is not merely surveying the contents of the Bible; rather its aim is to establish the conceptual unity of the Scriptures as a whole as they unfold in human events. As such,

> biblical theology seeks its content and coherence in the final propositions and basic ordering of the OT and NT read in their entirety, in their final form, and in concert with one another.... biblical theology is the study of God's self-revelation to human beings for the purposes of redemption through the interpretation of the events and experiences written down in the Scriptures (17).

The essays appear with a deliberate progression in mind. First, 'covenant' is established as an integrative concept that spans the Bible, which takes shape as two interrelated covenants. Based on this foundation, further essays cover God's commands, God's means of atonement, God's sending of servants and his warning about the Day of the Lord as natural outgrowths of the Bible's covenantal structure. The essays on the people of God and the history of redemption summarise God's purpose for relating to human beings in a covenantal way. God is seen as in the process of gathering a holy people, which in effect means that God pursues a redemptive mission in our world (p. 18).

The seven substantial essays are as follows: S. Hafemann, 'The Covenant Relationship' (20-65); T. R. Schreiner, 'The Commands of God' (66-101); F. S. Thielman, 'The Atonement' (102-27); S. G. Dempster, 'The Servant of the Lord' (128-78), P. R. House, 'The Day of the Lord' (179-224); E. A. Martens, 'The People of God' (225-53); R. E. Ciampa, 'The History of Redemption' (254-308). Each essays ends with a detailed conclusion. Indices of Scripture references and of ancient sources round off the well produced volume (309-30). Unfortunately no attempt is made in a further essay to relate the seven themes to each other in more detail. I wonder whether the significance and gift of the land to Israel as part of the covenant, receives enough attention throughout the volume.

While some more recent contributions to NT theology (among them the volumes by Schreiner and Thielman; others are Hahn, Marshall, Matera and Wilckens) have argued persuasively for the substantial theological unity of the NT, these essays go further in showing that there is a considerable theological unity in the whole Bible. Together with the older contributions of Childs and Scobie, these essays on integrative themes are a must for students of biblical theology and provide inspiring insights for biblical studies and systematic theology. This solidly evangelical volume makes a useful textbook for courses in this area. It is well researched and at the same time a pleasure to read. For a recent German contribution see H. Klein, *Zur Gesamtbiblischen Theologie: Zehn Themen*, BThSt 93 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2007).

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Sectarianism in Early Judaism
Sociological Advances
David J. Chalcraft, editor

London: Equinox, 2007, x + 266 pp., £15.99, pb,
ISBN 978-1-84553-084-6

SUMMARY

The multiplicity of definitions for what is considered a 'sect' in early Judaism has become the topic of much debate. Chalcraft offers a clear understanding of the definition of Max Weber and provides a detailed explanation of Weberian sociology and how it has been misunderstood and overlooked in recent studies related to sectarianism. In addition, seven other studies related to this sociological phenomenon are included in this volume which provides an overview of the sociological approaches of Bryan Wilson, Ernest Troeltsch, Rodney Stark and William Bainbridge, as well as Mary Douglas.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die Vielfalt an Definitionen darüber, was im frühen Judentum eine 'Sekte' ausmacht, wurde zum Thema vieler Debatten. Chalcraft bietet ein klares Konzept der Definition Max Webers sowie eine ausführliche Erläuterung der weberianischen Soziologie und wie diese in neueren Studien zum Sektentum übersehen oder missverstanden wurde. Darüber enthält der Band sieben weitere Studien über dieses soziologische Phänomen, die einen Überblick über die soziologischen Ansätze von Bryan Wilson, Ernst Tröltsch, Rodney Stark und William Bainbridge, sowie von Mary Douglas geben.

RÉSUMÉ

La multiplicité des définitions de ce que l'on nomme « secte » au sein du judaïsme ancien fait l'objet de nombreux débats. Chalcraft expose de façon claire la définition adoptée par Max Weber et apporte une explication détaillée de la sociologie webérienne, montrant qu'elle a été mal comprise ou négligée dans les études récentes consacrées au phénomène sectaire. Sept autres études ayant trait au phénomène sociologique des sectes sont incluses dans ce volume qui présente un survol des approches sociologiques de Bryan Wilson, Ernst Troeltsch, Rodney Stark et William Bainbridge, ainsi que de Mary Douglas.

* * * *

Sectarianism in Early Judaism: Chalcraft takes as his point of departure the clarification of the sociology of Max Weber. In the first of three separate essays devoted to this topic, he contends that Weber is often misunderstood and frequently overlooked in relation to modern sociological studies of sectarianism. After providing a rich understanding of the development of Weberian sociology, he then offers an example of Weber's approach to sectarianism in relation to the Pharisees and Essenes from his volume *Ancient Judaism*. Following this example he applies this model to the Qumran community – something Weber was never able to do in light of the later discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Chalcraft's contention is that Weber's sociology of sects developed over time and should not be confined to the overly simplistic 'church-sect' typology that is frequently evoked and then forgotten. In these three essays Chalcraft does a brilliant job of illuminating the development of Weber's sociology of sects and offers fresh insight into how these ideas can be applied to modern studies of sectarianism in relation to Qumran studies.

The second part of this volume includes seven separate studies related to sectarianism by various leaders in the field of ancient Jewish sects from the Second Temple period and Qumran in particular. Lester Grabbe offers a survey of the many Jewish groups in the Second Temple period noting that all, even the Pharisees and Sadducees, can be properly identified as sects. Philip Davies takes a more limited approach, focusing primarily on the Qumran community and noting that there may have actually been two sects reflected in the Qumran texts. His emphasis is on both the formation of these groups and the Judaism from which they arose. Piovanelli relies largely on Wilson's sect types and suggests that the earlier reform movements of the Enochic literature and *Jubilees* ultimately lead to the formation of the more distinct Qumran sect. Eyal Regev focuses on the issue of atonement among the Dead Sea sectarian documents and follows the model of 'tension' with the outside world of Stark and Bainbridge as constitutive of a sect. Cecilia Wassen and Jutta Jokiranta compare the D (*Damascus Document*) and S (*Community Rule*) traditions and compare their findings with Stark and Bainbridge's model of *antagonism*, *separation* and *difference* and conclude that D also reflects a sectarian community. Finally, Baumgarten suggests that these social-scientific models may not be in any way accurate for our understanding of ancient Jewish sects.

While Chalcraft intended to uphold and further promote the use of Weberian sociology in the study of the Qumran community, the latter seven essays predictably do what he hoped to correct; that is, they refer to Weber very briefly, if at all, and then default to Wilson, Stark and Bainbridge, and other more modern sociological approaches. Moreover, in many cases these essays either utilise more modern definitions of a sect or develop their own, thus defeating the purpose of working toward a more unified approach. However, this does not detract from the value of this volume but only demonstrates the complexity of the sociological phenomenon. For anyone interested in sectarianism in early Judaism this volume is a must read. Chalcraft's explanation of Weber's sociology is invaluable and the other essays will bring one well into the discussion of sectarianism in a clear and concise manner.

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A Dictionary of European Baptist Life and Thought

General Editor John H. Y. Briggs

Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2009 xxiii + 541, £45, pb.
ISBN: 978-0-567-03367-3

SUMMARY

This is a dictionary containing entries on subjects from Abortion to Zwingli. The editors' purpose in compiling this reference work was to provide European Baptists with 'an authoritative reference work to assist them to nourish their own constituencies in Baptist identity'. From its beginnings in the sixteenth and seventeenth century Europe, Baptist identity has included three main groupings; Anabaptists, General or Arminian Baptists and Particular or Calvinistic Baptists. The dictionary's attempt to reflect this diversity means that it will not satisfy everyone. Categories covered include Baptist Theology, Ecclesiology, Mission, Ethics and History.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieses Lexikon enthält Artikel zu Themen von Abtreibung bis Zwingli. Die Absicht der Verfasser bei diesem Nachschlagewerk war es, europäische Baptisten ‚mit einem vertrauenswürdigen Nachschlagewerk zu versorgen, um ihren Gemeinden zu helfen, ihre baptistischen Identität zu pflegen.' Von ihren Anfängen im Europa des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts an hat baptistische Identität drei Hauptströme umfasst: Anabaptisten, arminianische Baptisten sowie calvinistische Baptisten. Die Absicht des Lexikons, diese Vielfalt widerzuspiegeln, mag bedeuten, dass es nicht jedermann zufrieden stellt. Als Kategorien wurden baptistische Theologie, Ekklesiologie, Mission, Ethik und Geschichte abgedeckt.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce dictionnaire comporte des articles sur des sujets qui vont de l'avortement à Zwingli. Le but des éditeurs était de procurer aux baptistes européens « l'ouvrage de référence faisant autorité pour les aider à promouvoir l'identité baptiste parmi les membres de leurs Églises ». Dès les débuts de son existence, aux XVI^{e} et XVII^{e} siècles, le mouvement baptiste européen comportait trois branches principales: les anabaptistes, les baptistes arminiens et les baptistes calvinistes. Ce dictionnaire tente de refléter cette diversité, avec pour conséquence qu'il ne satisfera pas tout le monde. Parmi les grandes thématiques abordées figurent la théologie baptiste, l'ecclésiologie, la mission, l'éthique et l'histoire.

* * * *

This dictionary includes entries on subjects from Abortion to Zwingli. The editors' purpose in compiling this reference work was to provide European Baptists with 'an authoritative reference work to assist them to nourish their own constituencies in Baptist identity'. My assessment of this work is shaped by my convictions as a Reformed Baptist, that is a Baptist holding to the decidedly Calvinistic Second London Baptist Confession of 1689.

As is acknowledged throughout this work, Baptists do not speak with one voice on all theological matters. From its beginnings in the sixteenth and seventeenth century Europe, the Baptist family was divided into three main groupings; Anabaptists, General or Arminian Baptists and Particular or Calvinistic Baptists. What Particular Baptists think about predestination, for example, is quite different from their General Baptist cousins. Added to this, some Baptists have not always been keen on being tied to creeds or confessions of faith. This makes it difficult to say with certainty what Baptist thought might be on various theological matters. However, given this diversity of belief, the dictionary emphasises that most Baptists are broadly Evangelical in their doctrinal outlook.

From the reviewer's perspective the dictionary's theological entries are the least satisfactory aspect of this work. Every effort has been made to be fair to the Calvinistic and Arminian strands in Baptist theology. However, the fact that the Baptist movement is divided along these lines does not make for a coherent presentation of the doctrine of salvation. The article on *Sin* speaks in terms of 'total depravity' and the entry on *Regeneration* stresses that the new birth is a monergistic act of God, but the piece on *Humankind* makes the virtually Pelagian statement that, 'Humankind is able to follow the law of God, though recurrently fails to do so.'

It is repeatedly emphasised that Baptists hold to the final authority of Scripture, but the entry on *Infallibility and Inerrancy of the Bible* dismisses the traditional Evangelical position on biblical inerrancy, preferring to say that the Bible is 'entirely trustworthy' rather than without error. This represents a weakening of biblical authority. Also, little reference is made to Scripture in the dictionary's treatment of major theological subjects. A case in point is the entry on the *Trinity*. Mention is made of the unorthodox view that in the Trinity God is asexual, the Son male and the Spirit female, but the biblical basis of the doctrine of the Trinity is not even hinted at. Neither is an account given of the Church's historic confession of Trinitarian theology at the councils of Nicaea (325) and Constantinople (381). It might be objected that space constraints did not allow for more in-depth treatment of this doctrine. However, given the central importance of the Trinity for Christian theology, that is not a valid defence, especially when the ample space devoted to other subjects of lesser magnitude is taken into account. The entry on the *Trinity* amounts to approximately one half-page column, while just over four columns are devoted to *Social Class*. Similarly, the article on *Justification* includes no references to the text of Scripture. The entry sets out the elements of the traditional Protestant understanding of the doctrine and discusses the relationship between justification and sanctification. The reader, however, is not referred to the biblical basis for this truth in Romans and Galatians (or elsewhere in

Scripture for that matter). Part of the dictionary's stated aim was to provide a one-stop resource for Baptists in Eastern Europe, where theological literature is not so readily available. One fears that Eastern European Pastors looking for a deeper understanding of the biblical doctrine of the Trinity or justification will find little help here.

The atoning work of Christ is close to the heart of Evangelical theology. Yet this doctrine has recently been the subject of heated controversy, ranging around the teaching of penal substitutionary atonement. The article on *Atonement* mentions Steve Chalke's view that this understanding of the crucifixion amounts to 'cosmic child abuse'. It is suggested that Chalke had 'extreme versions' of penal substitutionary atonement in mind. (Incidentally, Chalke is on record as opposing the very idea that Christ bore the penalty of sin at the cross.) The entry fails to clearly handle this issue, saying that the controversy over Chalke's views shows that there is room for differences of opinion in Evangelicalism on penal substitutionary atonement. Chalke, a prominent Baptist Union Minister is later singled out as a paragon of Evangelicalism (*Evangelicalism, Baptists and*). Along similar lines, the issue of whether the Bible teaches the eternal, conscious punishment of the wicked or some form of annihilationism is left an open question. See *Annihilation and Universalism* and *Judgement*.

Some of the theological contributions are more helpful, but on the whole, the dictionary's treatment of Baptist theology leaves a lot to be desired. The reference work's treatment of the Baptist view of the Church is much better. There are solid entries on *Baptism, Believer's Church* and *Volkskirche*, and *Separation of Church and State*. Pieces devoted to why Baptists reject Roman Catholic teaching on issues such as the *Infallibility of the Pope and Purgatory* are clear and incisive. This having been said, the dictionary is more open to Baptist involvement with ecumenical ventures such as the World Council of Churches than many Reformed Baptists would be prepared to tolerate. Articles on the pastoral *Ministry* imply that this form of Christian service is open to women as well as men. Many Baptists, arguing from Scripture, would not accept female pastors. In keeping with the Baptist tradition associated with pioneer missionary William Carey, the dictionary has a strong emphasis on *Mission*, both in terms of preaching the gospel and helping the poor.

Articles are also devoted to ethical concerns such as *Abortion* and *Euthanasia*, where the reference work's stance is in line with mainstream Christian thinking. Interestingly, the entry on *Just War Theory* opens up the differences between those in the pacifist Mennonite camp and most other Baptists. Sadly, the piece on *Sexual Orientation* contents itself with describing various attitudes towards homosexuality in the Baptist community rather than seeking to set out the authoritative biblical teaching.

The historical and biographical entries make for fascinating reading. It is moving to follow the story of the growth of Baptist churches in Eastern Europe despite much persecution during the era of Soviet Communism. Articles are devoted the Reformers Martin Luther and John Calvin and key Baptist figures such as C. H. Spurgeon. In the interests of historical accuracy it should be pointed (contrary to what is said in *Images: Icons, Baptist use of*) that Welsh preacher Christmas Evans was only blind in one eye.

There are some good things here, but the dictionary's disappointing handling of important theological subjects means that it is unlikely to receive a ready welcome among all European Baptists.

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The Cambridge Companion to Orthodox Christian Theology

M.Cunningham and E. Theokritoff (ed.)

Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2010, xii + 230, £50.00,
hb. ISBN: 978-1-4094-0007-3

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage rassemble dix-huit articles d'auteurs contemporains qui présentent, dans un esprit d'unité, différents aspects de la théologie orthodoxe. Sa ligne principale vise à montrer l'articulation de la théologie orthodoxe avec l'Écriture, l'héritage des Pères, la tradition, ainsi que la vie sacramentelle et liturgique de l'Église. La fidélité aux doctrines traditionnelles doit être maintenue malgré les difficultés que cela pose dans le monde contemporain, et, en même temps, les réalités actuelles nous invitent à une nécessaire transformation dynamique.

SUMMARY

This publication contains eighteen articles from contemporary authors who reflect in a spirit of unity different aspects of orthodox theology. The main tendency is to show a mutual interaction of theology, the Holy Scripture, the heritage of the Fathers of the Church, tradition, the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church. The contemporary realities are considered as a challenge to the fidelity towards the traditional doctrines and at the same time as an urge to a necessary dynamic transformation.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der vorliegende Band bemüht sich, in achtzehn Artikeln zeitgenössischer Autoren unterschiedliche Aspekte orthodoxer Theologie in einem Geist der Einheit zu präsentieren. Die hauptsächliche Tendenz besteht darin, die gesamte Interaktion zwischen der orthodoxen Theologie, der Schrift, dem Erbe der Kirchenväter, der Tradition, dem Leben der Kirche in Sakrament und Liturgie darzustellen. Die Realität der gegenwärtigen Situation wird als Herausforderung anerkannt zum einen an die Treue zur ursprünglichen Lehre und zum anderen an eine notwendige dynamische Veränderung.

* * * *

Les éditeurs indiquent dans la préface qu'ils se sont efforcés de réaliser un assemblage assez large de sujets différents, ce qui présente l'inconvénient de ne traiter que brièvement certaines notions importantes. Cet ouvrage, constitué d'articles de dix-huit auteurs, nous paraît bien représentatif de la théologie orthodoxe contemporaine pour en apporter une vision d'ensemble.

Le livre comporte deux grandes parties, la première intitulée *Doctrine et Tradition* et la seconde *Théologie orthodoxe contemporaine : sa formation et son caractère*. Au fil de la lecture, on peut repérer, en parallèle avec l'exposé de sujets doctrinaux de base, une succession de thèmes qui s'enchaînent et s'éclairent mutuellement : l'autorité partagée de l'Écriture sainte et de la tradition, l'importance de la vie sacramentelle et liturgique de l'Église, l'influence réciproque de la théologie et de la spiritualité, par le passé et aujourd'hui, au sein d'une chrétienté orthodoxe contemporaine qui se développe à l'Est et à l'Ouest.

Dès le début, nous sommes avertis que la théologie orthodoxe ne peut se séparer de l'effort chrétien pour « vivre la vérité ». Ainsi se confirme la tendance chez les orthodoxes à prendre leurs distances par rapport à l'Occident (catholicisme et protestantisme) qui, selon eux, a dangereusement séparé le rationnel de l'existentiel.

Les orthodoxes veulent maintenir la doctrine des Pères de l'Église qui considéraient l'Écriture dans son intégralité comme constituée des paroles inspirées de Dieu. Au centre du message biblique se découvre le mystère du Christ éternel, voilé dans l'Ancien Testament et dévoilé dans le Nouveau. La tradition constitue cependant le summum de l'annonce du salut de Dieu en Christ et par le Saint-Esprit. Cette annonce a pour points principaux la victoire sur le péché et la mort, l'inauguration de la nouvelle création et la préparation de la glorification eschatologique du cosmos entier (Theodore Stilianopoulos, « Scripture and tradition in the Church », 21-34). Le problème de l'interprétation de la Bible est lié au rôle de la tradition. Puisque les différentes approches d'interprétation biblique ont engendré la division, les chrétiens sont appelés à revoir leurs principes et leurs présupposés herméneutiques dans un effort de dialogue œcuménique, en vue d'une « synthèse néo-patristique » relisant la tradition à l'aide de méthodes d'interprétation contemporaines dynamiques et créatives.

L'archimandrite Ephrem Lash relève que la liturgie orthodoxe est imprégnée de la Parole de Dieu, en particulier des Psaumes et des Évangiles. L'Apocalypse est absente des lectures liturgiques à cause de son statut canonique discutable au cours des quatre premiers siècles (« Biblical Interpretation in Worship », 35-48).

Les articles consacrés aux points de doctrine principaux sont rédigés dans l'esprit de la *symphonia* orthodoxe élaborée au fil des siècles et valorisée au siècle dernier.

1. Le dogme du mystère trinitaire de Dieu est développé par le père Boris Bobrinskoy, professeur de théologie dogmatique et ancien doyen de l'Institut de théologie orthodoxe Saint Serge à Paris. Il souligne l'importance de l'expérience ecclésiale, liturgique et sacramentelle, pour les Pères à leur époque et pour nous de nos jours, pour pouvoir formuler et comprendre ce mystère. En reconnaissant l'importance des études bibliques à ce sujet, il les oriente vers la découverte du « sens sacramentel de la parole de Dieu » (« God in Trinity », 49-62). Il faut noter l'évolution de la position orthodoxe, qui, selon Bobrinskoy, doit considérer le concept occidental du *filioque* comme « incomplet plutôt qu'erroné ou hérétique ». Cela veut dire qu'il ne faut jamais séparer, dans l'ordre relationnel, l'engendrement du Fils de la procession de l'Esprit du Père.

2. Elizabeth Theokritoff apporte quelques précisions importantes sur le dogme du Dieu Créateur en relation avec son œuvre, la création (« Creator and creation », 63-77). Elle évalue le travail effectué au sein de l'Église orientale en réponse aux tendances gnostiques, panthéistes ou déistes. Elle traite aussi de la controverse *sophiologique* qui s'est développée à la fin du XIX^{e} siècle et au début du XX^{e}, avec Vladimir Soloviev, Pavel Florenski et Sergei Bulgakov. Selon elle, « la sophiologie a influencé la pensée cosmologique orthodoxe d'une manière particulière ». La majorité des théologiens orthodoxes n'ont pas suivi les spéculations les plus extravagantes de ses protagonistes, mais le désir de donner plus d'élan à la vision de l'unité du monde avec la présence de Dieu a orienté leurs travaux.

3. Nonna Verna Harrison propose une synthèse de l'anthropologie orthodoxe. On n'est pas surpris de la voir reprendre le concept de la coopération entre Dieu et l'homme pour son salut. Les conséquences de la chute sur l'image de Dieu sont fortement minimisées et ne sont vues que comme une perte de sensibilité de « la perception spirituelle » (« The Human Person as Image and Likeness of God », 78-92). Elle recommande par conséquent de se livrer toute sa vie à l'ascèse de purification, guidé par des écrits comme ceux de la *Philocalia*, pour redécouvrir les « facultés de la perception spirituelle ». Les hommes ont gardé la liberté de s'engager sur cette voie, même s'il est plus difficile de choisir le bien dans la condition résultant de la chute. La question de la sexualité reste débattue, entre ceux qui croient qu'elle représente des composantes ontologiques et ceux qui doutent que les différences sexuelles fassent partie de l'intention créationnelle première de Dieu et qu'elles doivent persister au-delà de la résurrection. Face à l'humanisme moderne, face au collectivisme impersonnel du communisme et face à l'individualisme du capitalisme, l'orthodoxie défend le modèle d'un humanisme théocentrique.

4. Peter Bouteneff propose un traitement intégré de deux thèmes majeurs : le Christ et le salut (« Christ and salvation », 93-106). Pour comprendre le salut, il faut connaître la personne, la nature et le ministère du Christ. Le salut (personnel) est compris comme *theosis* (divinisation) de l'homme, accomplie par l'incarnation du Christ comme Dieu-homme, par son enseignement, par son sacrifice sur la Croix et par son Église. On peut

particulièrement remarquer chez cet auteur le lien établi entre l'œuvre de création et l'œuvre du salut : « Il est impossible d'isoler les actes du salut de Dieu puisqu'ils cohabitent avec les actes de la création ». Le salut dans son sens général comporte la réconciliation entre Dieu et la création par la médiation de l'être humain.

5. Selon le père Hilarion Alfeyev, le XX^e siècle a donné à l'Église orthodoxe l'occasion de repenser sa propre *eschatologie* et de se libérer de l'influence des schémas catholiques adoptés, paraît-il, au XVIII^e et au XIX^e siècles (« Eschatology », 107-120). Le grand débat se cristallise autour de la question de la destinée des hommes après la mort et le jugement dernier. Il nous semble qu'Alfeyev tente de défendre une interprétation apaisée et plutôt psychologique : « Dans la compréhension orthodoxe, le jugement dernier n'est pas tellement le moment de la rétribution… Il est la révélation de la miséricorde et de l'amour de Dieu… Subjectivement, l'amour divin et la lumière divine seront perçus différemment par les justes et par les pécheurs ». Même si Saint Siméon le Nouveau Théologien se signale pour sa conviction que notre destinée future doit se régler sur cette terre, l'enseignement orthodoxe dominant est autre. Il est possible d'être libéré des tourments de l'enfer par la pratique des prières pour les défunts, même pour « ceux qui se trouvent en enfer ». Nous devons nous armer de bonne volonté pour obtenir une vision équilibrée de l'évolution de la controverse apparue au début du XX^e siècle avec l'enseignement de Serge Bulgakov et Nicolas Berdyaev, promoteurs de la thèse du salut universel. Les quelques voix de la nouvelle génération de penseurs orthodoxes qui s'élèvent contre ce « néo-origénisme » ne suffisent pas encore à enrayer leur influence. L'abbé Alfeyev, qui défend plutôt des idées proches de l'universalisme, tente de contourner le problème en disant : « la question du salut de toute l'humanité ne peut être considérée théoriquement : elle invite non pas à la spéculation mais à la prière ».

6. Matthew Steenberg présente l'enseignement sur l'Église d'une manière bien structurée, sans trahir la spécificité du langage correspondant aux accords théologiques dominants (« The Church », 121-135). L'Église, corps du Christ, l'Église, lieu de rencontre avec Dieu et lieu de service de Dieu, l'Église catholique et apostolique trouve dans l'Eucharistie sa définition complète. L'Église accomplit le travail de Dieu en Christ pour la transfiguration et la déification de l'homme et de toute la création. Elle est le lieu de la transfiguration de l'homme. Cette belle définition découle évidemment du concept orthodoxe du caractère sacramentel et mystique de l'Église. Les sacrements principaux de l'Église ont pour effet la transformation de l'homme.

7. Un tel déploiement de doctrines ne peut passer sous silence la théologie de l'icône (Marianna Fortounato et Mary B. Cunningham, « Theology of the Icon », 136-149). Dans la tradition orthodoxe, l'icône est davantage qu'une image. Lorsqu'elle représente le Christ, Marie, les saints ou une scène de concile œcuménique, elle devient confession de foi et témoin de l'Incarnation. L'intérêt récent pour les icônes comme héritage du passé ou comme œuvres d'art ne devrait pas laisser de côté la reconnaissance de leur sens primordial comme présence vivante devant laquelle on peut prier.

8. John Chryssavgis a bien saisi la nécessité de donner une réponse plus approfondie aux questions, souvent naïves, posées par diverses personnes sur les expressions de la spiritualité qui se sont développées au sein de l'orthodoxie (« The Spiritual Way », 150-163). Nous trouvons bien instructif pour les chrétiens contemporains le rappel qu'au début de l'ère chrétienne, le silence a joué un rôle très important pour exprimer une pleine soumission à Dieu et pour découvrir de nouvelles voies d'apprendre et de vivre. Cependant Chryssavgis constate que, pendant des siècles, le concept de l'ascétisme a été détourné par des idées convergeant pratiquement vers une « désincarnation » conduisant à l'inimitié à l'égard du monde. L'ascétisme doit rencontrer ce qui se nomme *theosis*. Selon une interprétation contemporaine, cela voudrait dire voir toutes choses en Dieu et Dieu en toutes choses, discerner la grâce sans limites dans les limites du corps humain et la création.

Le développement contemporain de la théologie orthodoxe est bien ancré dans l'enseignement des Pères de l'Église. Une série d'exemples de personnages marquants se termine avec celui de Grégoire Palame qui a redéfini la doctrine, quelques décennies avant la chute de Byzance sous l'empire Ottoman (Agustin Casiday, « Church Fathers and the Shaping of Orthodox Theology », 167-187). Le développement de la théologie orthodoxe contemporaine est marqué par un « réveil patristique » et le mouvement de la « synthèse néo-patristique ». Il est lié au prestige de deux penseurs, Georges Florovsky et Vladimir Lossky, qui ont mené une lutte contre le concept de *sophiologie* jusqu'au point de sa condamnation en 1938. Il est évident que les éditeurs de cet ouvrage soutiennent la tendance générale de la synthèse néo-patristique, a laquelle ont adhéré aussi Kallistos Ware, Dimitru Staniloae, John Chrissavgis et d'autres.

Quelques articles de la deuxième partie fournissent plusieurs détails intéressants sur la spécificité du développement théologique en Russie durant le régime soviétique et après, puis en Grèce, au sein de l'Église d'Antioche, et en Occident.

Le dernier article touche au problème de l'œcuménisme qui suscite une vive tension entre deux positions au sein de l'Église orthodoxe. L'une est fermement exclusive et interdit le dialogue avec les autres confessions chrétiennes, ou le permet à condition qu'il vise « l'incorporation des autres formes de chrétienté dans la véritable Église, c'est-à-dire l'Église orthodoxe » (John A. Jillions, « Orthodox Christianity in the West : the Ecumenical Challenge », 276-291). L'autre position est plus souple, y compris dans son expression, et selon nous plus sage. Elle est exprimée avec différentes nuances par John

Zizioulas, Nicolas Afanasiev, Pavel Evdokimov, Christos Yannaras. Nous suggérons prudemment que cette deuxième tendance, plus réfléchie, va prendre le dessus dans la théologie et la politique de l'Église orthodoxe.

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A Sociology of Religious Emotion

Ole Riis and Linda Woodhead

Oxford: University Press, 2010, vi + 270 pp., $55, hb.
ISBN: 978-0-19-956760-7

SUMMARY

Ole Riis and Linda Woodhead's *A Sociology of Religious Emotion* is founded on the simple premises that while religious emotion (defined as *any* emotion that occurs in a 'religious context') is more visible than ever in contemporary society, it nonetheless remains an under-studied and under-theorised phenomena. Riis and Woodhead attempt to fill this gap with an explicitly mixed-methods approach that draws not only upon sociology, but also upon anthropology, social and biopsychology, linguistics, phenomenology, hermeneutics, existentialist philosophy and theology.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Ole Riis' und Linda Woodheads Buch gründet sich auf die einfache Prämisse, dass religiöse Emotion (definiert als *jedwede* Emotion, die in einem ‚religiösen Kontext' vorkommt), während sie mehr als je zuvor in unserer gegenwärtigen Gesellschaft in Erscheinung tritt, dennoch ein zu wenig erforschtes und theoretisch behandeltes Phänomen bleibt. Riis und Woodhead sind darum bemüht, diese Lücke zu schließen mit einem Ansatz, der auf einer Mischung von Methoden beruht und sich nicht nur auf Soziologie bezieht, sondern auch auf Anthropologie, soziale und Biopsychologie, Linguistik, Phänomenologie, Hermeneutik, existentialistische Philosophie sowie Theologie.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage est né du constat que, bien que l'émotion religieuse (définie comme *toute* émotion qui s'exprime dans un « contexte religieux ») soit devenue plus visible que jamais dans la société contemporaine, elle demeure un sujet d'étude peu abordé et faisant l'objet de peu d'études théoriques. Riis et Woodhead tentent de combler cette lacune à l'aide d'une méthodologie mêlant explicitement des approches tirant parti non seulement de la sociologie, mais aussi de l'anthropologie, de la psychologie sociale, de la biopsychologie, de la linguistique générale, de la phénoménologie, de l'herméneutique, de la philosophie existentialiste et de la théologie.

* * * *

Ole Riis and Linda Woodhead's *A Sociology of Religious Emotion* is founded on the simple premises that while religious emotion (defined as *any* emotion that occurs in a 'religious context') is more visible than ever in contemporary society, it nonetheless remains an under-studied and under-theorised phenomena. Riis and Woodhead attempt to fill this gap with an explicitly mixed-methods approach that draws not only upon sociology, but also upon anthropology, social and biopsychology, linguistics, phenomenology, hermeneutics, existentialist philosophy and theology. Given this breadth, the book clearly cannot be said to have one main theoretical stance and instead seeks to produce a blend of methodologies that at times feels innovative and insightful and at others feels like a thinly spread hodge podge of incongruous ideas.

While the conceptual 'meat' of *A Sociology of Religious Emotion* does at times feel somewhat overwhelmed by its own eclecticism, the actual structure of the book is clear and straightforward. The introduction attempts to account for the neglect of the study of religious emotion (hereafter 'RE') up to now and then describes the authors' stated aim – that of 'proposing a new conceptual framework that can integrate social, cultural and humanistic approaches' (5) through the notion of an 'emotional regime'. Chapter one seeks to develop a 'relational view' of emotion not as a 'thing' or an 'interior state' but as socially contingent exchanges of passion, feeling, sentiment and affect. Chapter two builds on this definition of emotion by moving to a closer consideration of what RE actually is. Chapters three and four examine emotional connectedness and disconnectedness to further develop a theory of the multifaceted nature of RE 'regimes'. Chapter five examines the relationship between RE and power in social relationships and chapter six ends the main part of the analysis by turning to an assessment of RE in 'late modern' societies. The book concludes with a return to its central problematic, that of accounting for the neglect of the social scientific study of RE. The book also contains a lengthy appendix detailing various methodological approaches to the study of RE.

As suggested already, the eclecticism of the authors' theoretical and methodological approach is both a strength and a weakness. A considerable amount of the analysis is devoted to three distinct areas of investigation, that of self, society and symbol. While this focus is most clearly seen in chapters three and four, it also plays a major role in other parts of the analysis. This tripartite approach offered considerable insight into the outworking of RE in not only the ('inner') lives of individuals (where research into emotion so often begins and ends) but also in social structures and through symbolic forms. From an anthropological perspective, the attention paid to the role of religious symbolism was particularly welcome because it enabled the authors to take seriously the efficacy of material objects *as things* without relegating their role to a mere 'vehicle'. The range of examples used (including icons, statues, incense, photos of Elvis and tarot cards as well as religious art, Bibles and religious buildings) helpfully showed the role objects have in the religious lives of those across many cultures. By developing this threefold focus on structure, agency and the symbolic, readers will be left with a well rounded sense of who (and what) is active in the formulation of RE.

One unhelpful (and unnecessary) by-product of this threefold approach is the plethora of technical terms that the authors insisted on developing across most of the chapters. While technical language is not unhelpful per se, in this case (and only at certain points) these terms added little to the clarity to the overall argument. There are concluding sections in the book that reference all of the main key concepts: not only do we have community, agent and symbol, but we are also asked to juggle objectification/subjectification, internalisation/externalisation, consecration/insignation, ultra-externalisation/ultra-internalisation, ultra-objectification/ultra-subjectification, ultra-consecration/ultra-insignation and fetish/kitsch. While some of these seventeen technical concepts are already established within the canon of sociological terminology, others are not – it is more than possible that this heavy use of discipline specific language will alienate many readers, especially those coming from a humanities background (theologians interested in sociological perspectives on religion, for example) with their own very different lexicon.

Anthropologists might wish to see more ethnographic evidence. Both authors made repeated reference to their own participant observation among churches in England and while the evidence, when presented, was very insightful, it would have been helpful to have the fieldwork context filled in more fully. Also, with this fieldwork being the main source of *primary* data, the book did feel as if it was distinctly slanted towards the Christian perspective. While this is unlikely to be a problem to readers coming from a theological background, it is unlikely to sit well with those researching 'non-Christian' religions. The (limited) direct engagement with the theological tradition was interesting when it occurred, in particular with reference to the authors' explication of emotional regimes through some interesting engagement with the Puritan tradition. Equally, the methodological appendix was interesting insofar as it gave some welcome groundedness to an otherwise fairly theoretical text.

The main strength of this book is also its main weakness: its eclecticism. At times it felt rich and varied; at others it felt confused and confusing. Readers may well be left wondering if more original insight could have been gained had the authors spent less time developing a multi-disciplinary overview and instead devoted themselves more fully to their own *sociological* perspective. That being said, a book that claims to be nothing more than a first step toward a more general appreciation of the importance of the scientific study of RE may well have succeeded in achieving exactly what it set out to do, that is, to provide a broad overview of the theoretical and methodological possibilities held within this badly neglected but rapidly developing field.

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The Cambridge Companion to Christian Philosophical Theology

Charles Taliaferro and Chad Meister

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, xiv +
264 pp., £17.99, pb. ISBN 978-0-521-73037-2

SUMMARY

The aim of *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Philosophical Theology* is to provide an up-to-date and accessible introduction to the entire field of Christian Philosophical Theology. As a collection of essays it seeks to offer critical and philosophical reflection on the Christian tradition. The work is divided into two parts: God and God in relation to creation. In the first part the divine nature and attributes are considered in overview. Approaches to these vary quite widely from full-blooded classical theism to a more revisionist understanding, particularly with regards to God's eternity and foreknowledge. The second part is similarly mixed, with some essays offering strong defences of major Christian doctrines and others effectively watering these down.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Das Werk *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Philosophical Theology* [*Der Cambridge Begleiter zur Christlichen Philosophischen Theologie*] will eine moderne und zugängliche Einführung in das gesamte Gebiet der christlichen philosophischen Theologie geben. Die Aufsatzsammlung beabsichtigt, eine kritische und philosophische Reflektion über die christliche Tradition zu bieten. Das Buch ist zweigeteilt: Gott und Gott in Beziehung zur Schöpfung. Der erste Teil betrachtet die göttliche Natur und ihre Attribute im Überblick. Die Ansätze variieren dabei erheblich von einem vollblütigen klassischen Theismus bis hin zu einem eher revisionistischen Verständnis, insbesondere was Gottes Ewigkeit und Vorherwissen angeht. Der zweite Teil ist ähnlich bunt gemischt: einige Ausätzen, die zentrale christliche Lehren stark verteidigen, und andere, welche dieselben wirkungsvoll verwässern.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage a été conçu pour servir d'introduction accessible à la théologie philosophique chrétienne en tenant compte de ses récents développements. Cette collection d'essais vise à apporter une réflexion philosophique et critique sur la tradition chrétienne. L'ouvrage comporte deux parties : la première traite de Dieu, la seconde de Dieu en relation avec la création. La première traite dans les grandes lignes de la nature divine et des attributs de Dieu. Les points de vue y varient grandement, entre un pur théisme classique et une position plus révisionniste, notamment pour ce qui concerne l'éternité et la prescience de Dieu. La seconde partie est pareillement mélangée, certains essais élaborant une solide défense des principales doctrines chrétiennes tandis que d'autres les émoussent sensiblement.

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The aim of *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Philosophical Theology* is to provide an up-to-date and accessible introduction to the entire field of Christian Philosophical Theology. Here it should be immediately noted that the editors' broad understanding of Christian Philosophical Theology, as involving philosophical reflection on the Christian tradition rather than as a distinctively Christian approach to Philosophical Theology, is crucial for determining the scope of their undertaking. As a consequence the work itself is diverse, both in its very nature as a collected volume of essays on a whole range of topics and moreover in representing a wide spectrum of Christian and scholarly opinion. It therefore resists easy categorisation, with some authors defending full-blooded classical theism and others seeking a more revisionist understanding.

The work itself is divided into two parts: God and God in relation to creation. The collection begins with an essay by Ronald Feenstra on the Trinity. The choice to start here was, I believe on reflection, a good one. In such a work it is important to establish right from the outset the particular distinctives of a *Christian* Philosophical Theology. Unfortunately, while the essay establishes the biblical grounding of the doctrine and offers an extremely brief survey of the tradition, lack of space precludes any substantial development of the ideas presented here. Although the two main paradigms of Social and Latin Trinitarianism are certainly presented, one is left uncertain of their ultimate significance. Furthermore if the editors' intention to open their collection with an article on the Trinity was to signal the doctrine's fundamental importance, this is on the whole not reflected by the essays in the rest of the volume.

In comparison the following articles by Brian Leftow on necessity and Brian Davies on simplicity are much more philosophically satisfying. Both offer cogent defences of these concepts, stressing the need to retain them in any meaningful philosophical account of God, Leftow via perfect-being theology and a possible worlds' defence of necessity and Davies through a lucid explanation of Aquinas' doctrine of simplicity. In addition Davies' article is important for establishing divine simplicity as a bedrock for speaking of divine transcendence. He therefore warns us against the temptation of assimilating God to human understanding. Continuing this theme, in his essay on omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence William Wainwright points out the traditional importance of divine simplicity in establishing these claims. However his own defence of them at times arguably risks violating some of the established canons of classical theism. Even more so is this true of William Hasker whose fascinating exposition of eternity and providence ends up veering towards a temporal, everlasting God as the only satisfactory solution to the antinomy of divine timelessness and human free will. Surely, however, whatever the issues involved, this is an unacceptable domesticating of God. Finally in this section we must mention John Hare's essay on divine goodness which offers a marvellously compressed survey of this topic from classical philosophy, through Aquinas and Scotus, right up to the present day.

It is unfortunately not possible here to survey all of the essays of the second part but as extremely fruitful reflections those of Katherin Rogers on the Incarnation, Stephen Davis on Resurrection, Paul Moser on sin and salvation and Chad Meister on the problem of evil stand out. In the first of these Katherin Rogers offers a spirited defence of Chalcedonian Christology drawing extensively on Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo* as well as her own imaginative reworking of a standard incarnational analogy. Stephen Davis, while perhaps slightly weak on the philosophical implications of Christ's own Resurrection, nevertheless offers a satisfying account of how God's will is the 'glue which binds the world together', thus enabling the solution of knotty identity problems often raised in this area. In one of the best offerings of this collection Paul Moser gives an excellent scripturally anchored account of soteriology, in a refreshing manner seeking to orient this towards a Trinitarian perspective of the Christian life. Finally Chad Meister draws attention to the fact that conventional discussions of the problem of evil have largely ignored Christ and have therefore missed the opportunity of reconfiguring this around his work of redemption. By contrast from an evangelical perspective the articles by Gordon Graham on atonement, Harriet Harris on prayer and Jerry Walls on heaven and hell are largely disappointing, all representing a watering down of traditional doctrines, whether by a capitulation to process theology in Harris' case, a denial of the finality of hell for Walls or a conflation of penal substitution and inherent righteousness in Graham's essay. However as we have already made clear such doctrinal diversity is characteristic of the volume as a whole and while at times frustrating at least gives an accurate snapshot of the field of Philosophical Theology today.

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Theological Interpretation of Culture in Post-Communist Context: Central and Eastern European Search for Roots

Ivana Noble

Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2010, xii + 230, £50.00, hb. ISBN: 978-1-4094-0007-3

SUMMARY

Under the dictatorial regimes of Communist Europe, the Church suffered violent persecution that attempted to suppress its efforts at answering the pressing existential issues of the day. During the same period, artists, in their own unique languages and genres, took up the mantle of dissidence, seeking to find expressions to their repressed inner searches for meaning. Despite these atrocities, aspects of both answers remain embedded within Central and Eastern European culture. Ivana Noble seeks to connect these cultural texts with theological discourse in a search for roots and identity within the desert of meaninglessness.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Unter den diktatorischen Regimen des kommunistischen Europa litt die Kirche unter heftiger Verfolgung. Diese hatte zum Ziel, die Bemühungen der Kirche zu unterdrücken, Antworten auf die dringlichen existentiellen Fragen der Zeit zu geben. Zur gleichen Zeit hüllten sich Künstler mit ihren jeweiligen Sprachen und Genres in den Mantel der Dissidenten und suchten dabei, ihrer unterdrückten inneren Suche nach Sinn Ausdruck zu verleihen. Trotz dieser Gewaltanwendung haben sich Aspekte beider Antwortbereiche nachhaltig in die zentral- und osteuropäische Kultur eingeprägt. Ivana Noble bemüht sich darum, diese kulturellen Texte in Beziehung zu bringen zum theologischen Diskurs, um inmitten einer Wüste von Sinnlosigkeit Wurzeln und Identität auszumachen.

RÉSUMÉ

Sous les régimes dictatoriaux de l'Europe communiste, l'Église a souffert de violentes persécutions visant à supprimer ses efforts pour répondre aux grands problèmes existentiels du moment. Au cours de la même époque, des artistes ont revêtu le manteau de la dissidence, avec leur propre langage et leur style unique, pour trouver des moyens d'expression pour leur quête intérieure de sens, qui se trouvait réprimée. Malgré les atrocités répressives, certains aspects de ces deux courants demeurent ancrés dans la culture de l'Europe centrale et orientale. Ivana Noble cherche à établir des liens entre ces textes culturels et le discours théologique, en quête de racines et d'identité dans le désert où le sens fait défaut.

* * * *

Ivana Noble's *Theological Interpretation of Culture in a Post-Communist Context* gives voice to previously dissident discourses found in several culture texts of Central and Eastern Europe from the interregnum war period of the twentieth century to the present. These literary, musical and cinematic expressions find resonance with theological discourse because both 'in their "ultimate concern" are related to "Ultimate Reality"', laying the foundation for a 'genuinely reciprocal dialogue between theology and culture' (6). Such dialogue, Noble hopes, will enable us to 'reopen lost access to the symbolic worlds of meaning…in which communication between our cultural and theological belonging is renewed' (9).

Justin Martyr's notion of *logos spermatikos* and its further association with the *logos Christos* provide Noble with a theological basis for noting the positive aspects of culture in its plurality of forms and its ability to open participants to new realities beyond themselves. Yet, culture has a dark side as well when it becomes idolatrous and self-referential, making itself the measure of all things. To navigate between the iconic and idolatrous, Noble leans heavily on Paul Tillich's methodology of correlation where theology is the basis of culture while culture provides new avenues of expression for theology. Building upon Tillich's methodology, she considers the Church (i.e., the location of religious symbols and their theological expressions) and culture to be intertwined such that one assists in interpreting the other since she assumes both to be distinct manifestations of the Holy Spirit.

Noble begins, then, with cultural artefacts and interprets them theologically, exploring images of the world, memory, and the meaning of ultimate fulfilment. In Part 1, she presents various images of the world articulated by Karel Čapek, a leading Czech author, and Bashevis Singer, a Polish-American Jewish author and winner of the Noble Prize for literature. Both address the atrocities brought about by the Nazi and Communist regimes, seeing the world as imperilled but also as a place where humans can flourish. To communicate these themes, Čapek uses the metaphors of the world as factory, garden and an open horizon while Singer wrestles with art after Auschwitz by vividly telling the stories of a begotten world 'lived in cities and villages, in poverty and persecution, and imbued with sincere piety and rites combined with blind faith and superstition' (16). Noble conceptually expands upon these themes, understanding the world as both gift and task such that there is a dialogical relationship between God and the world by drawing upon primarily patristic sources and the Orthodox tradition.

In Part 2, Noble tackles the issue of memory and remembering of painful events and how these memories can become redemptive elements in a new future. Vladimir Vysotsky, a suppressed Russian artist whose works shaped the counter cultural movements in Communist societies, and Jaromír Nohavica, the ever-popular Czech folk musician and distant pupil of Vysotsky who did the same, are her case studies. Vysotsky's and Nohavica's music recall the horrors and brutality of a totalitarian culture where conflicts are not reconciled and a guiding sense of a purposeful life is, at best, illusive. Although Vysotsky embraces the tragic, Nohavica, in his post-Communist music, sees reason for hope and healing in rebuilding one's world. Nevertheless, both offer sharp criticisms of an omnipotent and omnipresent God who surely was 'drunk with cheap Balkan liqueur' while people suffered these cruelties (110). In light of these painful memories, Noble offers an alternative theological trajectory to the common understanding of a providential God by abdicating theologies that glorify Christ as a victim and emphasizing the reciprocity between God and humanity. Christ redeems us, then, *with* our painful memories as they rest in the eschatological hope and open futures of both God and creation.

Part 3 examines the notion of ultimate fulfilment as that which 'invites and transcends our imagination of the future' in an effort to determine its impact on human life (143). Through various cinematic pieces, Noble begins by comparing István Szabó's *Mephisto* and Vladimir Michálek's *Forgotten Light* to discern why someone pursues self-fulfilment or gives of themselves. She then considers how love may be the gift given in Krzysztof Kieślowski's trilogy *Three Colours*. In the end, she concludes that a conversion toward love is only possible through relationships as one embraces their roots rather than exchanging them for another. Theologically speaking, Noble connects the gift of love with the Holy Spirit as Giver, noting that this love is non-sacrificial as it renews all of creation's communion with God. Yet, the Holy Spirit's *kenosis* (i.e., self-giving) is insufficient. What is needed for deep fulfilment, for the restoration of the human self, is a conscious relationship to God where one's 'yes' to God encounters and overcomes one's 'no'.

Noble's work is a cultural and theological gem that seeks to address the existential questions inherent in all cultures, particularly though in Central and Eastern Europe. Her nuanced understanding of secularisation is an apt reminder to readers that secularisation is not a univocal concept but is shaped by varying cultural forces that give it a measure of elasticity. Although she is right to link a positive view of culture to Justin Martyr's notion of *logos spermatikos*, a thicker description, in my estimation, can be given through a robust understanding of common grace and the cultural mandate elucidated in Richard Mouw's *He Shines in All That's Fair: Culture and Common Grace* (Eerdmans, 2001).

Her assumption that the Holy Spirit is operative in both the culture and the Church begs for clarification, leaving readers to wonder what the mission of the Spirit is in relationship to the other persons of the Trinity. This lack of development is evidenced by the ambiguous criteria for adjudicating between icon and idol and perhaps her understanding of doctrine as primarily descriptive rather than directive. Consequently, human freedom constrains God's freedom. Yet, such efforts to bolster human responsibility turn on a category mistake, entangling God's identity with his creation thereby blurring the Creator-creature distinction. In doing so, God is rendered less worthy of worship since humanity no longer depends solely on the God revealed in Christ by the Spirit to overcome the evil of this world.

Although readers may disagree with some of Noble's doctrinal adjustments (e.g., God, atonement, love, etc.) in order to address her culture, her efforts to provide a theological interpretation of culture are a step in the right direction as she attempts to bridge two horizons of meaning – theology and culture – that are constructed from within various frameworks. Moreover, her attentive ear to culture's critique of inauthentic expressions of faith, hope and love should cause us all to pause and examine our own efforts in the Spirit to deny ourselves, take up our crosses and follow Christ. Noble's book should gain a wide hearing, particularly among those who are interested in *doing* theology and not simply talking about it.

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Antiquity in Antiquity: Jewish and Christian Pasts in the Graeco- Roman World

Kevin Osterloh and Gregg Gardner (eds.)

TSAJ 123; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008; 475 pp
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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Diese Sammlung von Aufsätzen erforscht, welche Rolle ein kollektives Gedächtnis und eine gemeinschaftliche Geschichte gespielt haben, und zwar in den Bereichen Identitätsbildung, politische Öffentlichkeitsarbeit, soziale Beziehungen, künstlerische Ausdrucksformen, religiöse Glaubensformen und ihre Praxis und was die Entstehung beglaubigter Sammlungen von Familien- und Volkstraditionen anbelangt. Es geht dabei um Juden, Christen und ihre heidnischen Nachbarn in der antiken Welt des Mittelmeers und des Vorderen Orients in der späten Antike beginnend mit dem 3. Jahrhundert v. Chr. bis ins 7. Jahrhundert n.Chr. Kurz gesagt: Wie haben die Menschen in der Antike ihre eigene Vergangenheit gesehen und mit welcher Zielsetzung? Der Band entstand bei einem Kolloquium zum Thema *Antiquity in Antiquity: Jewish and Christian Pasts in the Greco-Roman World [Antike in der Antike: Jüdische und Christliche Vergangenheit in der Griechisch-Römischen Welt]* an der Universität in Princeton im Januar 2006.

SUMMARY

This collection of essays seeks to explore how collective memory and group history played a role in identity formation, political propaganda, social relations, artistic expressions, religious beliefs and practice and the establishment of official corpora of ancestral traditions for Jews, Christians and their pagan neighbours in the ancient Mediterranean World and the Near East in late antiquity from the third century BC to the seventh century AD. In short, how did people in antiquity view their own past and for what purposes?

RÉSUMÉ

Cette collection d'essais cherche à explorer comment la

mémoire collective et l'histoire communautaire ont joué un rôle dans la formation de l'identité, la propagande politique, les relations sociales, les expressions artistiques, les croyances et les pratiques religieuses. Cet impact a aussi eu un effet dans l'établissement d'un corpus officiel de traditions ancestrales pour les Juifs, les Chrétiens et les voisins païens. Cette étude se limite au monde méditerranéen ancien et au Moyen Orient pendant l'Antiquité tardive, depuis le troisième siècle avant notre ère jusqu'au septième siècle de notre ère. En résumé, quel était le sens que les peuples de l'Antiquité donnaient de leur perception de leur propre passé ?

* * * *

The essays of this volume emphasise the analysis of communal over individual history; the process of communal identity construction and/or reinvention within the context of contested legacies; the nature of tradition; and tradition as reinterpreted by members of rival elite groups. The editors provide the opening essay, entitled 'The Significance of Antiquity in Antiquity: An Introduction' (1-23) which describes the issues at hand and the context of the following essays. 'Such reinterpretations are undertaken to remake the individual and social-group identity in order to strengthen discursive borders between in-group and out-group and to establish group continuity with (and the discontinuity of rival groups from) the common ancestral legacy' (5). The editors note that there was a preoccupation among the ancients with the reinterpretation of the past. The ancients were characterised by an emphatically classicising stance with respect to their own antiquity. They viewed their own communal identity, memory and tradition as the continuation of an earlier glorious age. This past perpetually served as the lens through which they understood themselves. The editors further describe three classicising ages in antiquity in which the past played a particular role for the present (7-22).

Part one addresses 'Jewish and Pagan Antiquities from the Late Hellenistic to the Early Imperial Period'; 'The End of Jewish Egypt: Artapanus and the Second Exodus'; 'Remembering and Forgetting Temple Destruction: The Destruction of the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus in 83 BC'; 'The Greeks and the Distant Past in Josephus's *Judean War*' and 'How Was Antiquity Treated in Societies with a Hellenistic Heritage? And Why Did the Rabbis Avoid Writing History?'.

Part two covers 'Jewish, Pagan, and Christian Antiquities in the Greco-Roman World'; 'Rabbis and Priests, or: How to Do Away with the Glorious Past of the Sons of Aaron'; '"Jewish Christianity" as Counter-history?: The Apostolic Past in Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* and the Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies*'; 'Jewish Collective Memory in Late Antiquity: Issues in the Interpretation of Jewish Art' and 'Tradition and Transmission: Hermes Kourotrophos in Nea Paphos, Cyprus'.

Part three is devoted to issues of 'antiquities of late antiquity and today': 'The Bavli's Discussion of Genealogy in *Qiddushin* IV'; 'The Spoils of the Jerusalem Temple at Rome and Constantinople: Jewish Counter-Geography in a Christianizing Empire'; 'A Debate about the Rebuilding of the Temple in Sixth-Century Byzantium'; 'Helena's Bridle and the Chariot of Ethiopia' and 'The Ancient Near East in the Late Antique Near East: Syriac Christian Appropriation of the Biblical East'.

The volume closes with a list of contributors and indexes. The contributions are of high quality and offer fresh perspectives on the material under consideration. In addition to their contribution for understanding an important aspect of the ancient world and of ancient notions of history and historiography, they also indicate the ongoing relevance of Greco-Roman, Jewish and Christian antiquity not only for antiquity but for modernity as well:

> In common with twenty-first century moderns and the many generations in between, the ancients were often compelled to demonstrate continuity with – and the discontinuity of rivals from – a shared past through an ongoing interpretation of communal tradition.... Down through the ages, established group histories and collective memories have continued to play decisive roles in the processes of communal identity construction, political advancement, religious legitimisation and the enhancement of political status (2).

These essays provide questions and methods for examining the role of the past that can easily be transferred to other contexts. The themes of this volume (the nature of tradition, contested legacies, and socially constructed identities and memories) are applicable to the study of any human society – ancient, medieval or modern – regardless of geography.

Christoph Stenschke, Pretoria, South Africa

The Spirit and Creation in Paul

WUNT II/251

John W. Yates

Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008, xii + 218, €54.00, pb,
ISBN: 978-3-16-149817-6

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

John Yates verfolgt eine Tradition durch die hebräische Bibel und spätere jüdische Texte hindurch, bei der das Werk des Geistes in der Schöpfung als Hintergrund für die Aussagen von Paulus über den Geist als Lebensspender gesehen wird. Der Autor behauptet, dass das soteriologische Werk des Geistes eigentlich ein Ausdruck für die Aktivität des Geistes in der Schöpfung und deren Erneuerung ist. Er legt ein gründliches Augenmerk auf die Aussagen von Paulus über den Geist in Römer 8. Der Geist bringt Auferstehungsleben hervor, und die Gläubigen haben gegenwärtig und zukünftig Anteil daran. Jene, die an paulinischer Theologie interessiert sind, werden das Buch mit Gewinn lesen.

SUMMARY

John Yates traces a tradition of relating the Spirit's work in creation through the Hebrew Scriptures and later Jewish texts as a background to Paul's statements about the Spirit as life giving. He contends that the Spirit's soteriological work is actually an expression of the Spirit's activity in creation and renewing creation. He gives detailed attention to Paul's statements about the Spirit in Romans 8. The Spirit is the agent who brings about resurrection life and believers participate in this resurrection life now as well as in the future. Those interested in Pauline theology will benefit from this book.

RESUME

John Yates présente la tradition qui s'est développée dans les Écritures hébraïques puis dans les textes juifs concernant l'œuvre de l'Esprit dans la création. Elle constitue l'arrière-plan des formulations pauliniennes présentant l'Esprit comme dispensateur de vie. Il soutient que l'œuvre sotériologique de l'Esprit est une expression de son action dans la création et de son œuvre de renouvellement de celle-ci. Il s'attache en particulier aux déclarations de Paul concernant l'Esprit en Romains 8. L'Esprit est l'agent qui produit la vie de la résurrection, à laquelle les croyants participent aussi bien maintenant que dans l'avenir. Ceux que la théologie paulinienne intéresse tireront profit de la lecture de cet ouvrage.

* * * *

This book, a slightly revised version of Yates' Cambridge PhD thesis, addresses those instances in Paul's letters where he ascribes to the Spirit the ability to give life. It deals with two basic questions: Is there a background to Paul's depiction of the Spirit as giving life and what exactly does Paul mean when he ascribes this role to the Spirit? The study itself is situated within the scholarly discussion by contrasting the positions of J.D.G. Dunn and G.D. Fee. Yates is particularly concerned to challenge descriptions of the Spirit's work under the category of 'soteriological'. He contends that the soteriological function of the Spirit is actually an expression of the Spirit's actions in creation and in renewing creation.

In Part One, Yates describes a Jewish tradition of thought that begins with Genesis 2:7 and runs through various books in the Hebrew Scriptures, several Second Temple texts and works from the Rabbinic period. The primary role of this survey is to clarify a potential background for Paul's statements about the Spirit as giving life. Yates contends that two traditions develop. The first is centred on 'the breath of life' clause from Genesis 2:7. The other focuses on the Spirit's role in creation as an active agent and typically this is connected with notions of renewing creation. These traditions converge in Ezekiel 36-37, a text that becomes very important in later writings.

Yates devotes special attention to the description of the Spirit in the *Hodayot*. Here one finds reflections on both Genesis 2:7 and Ezekiel 36-37. He argues that one can detect a difference between the Spirit 'formed' in humans at creation and the Spirit 'given' to humans as an act of recreation. This distinction develops from the two scriptural texts and it shows that the community thought they were the recipients of Ezekiel's promises.

In Part Two, Yates turns to 1 Corinthians 15, 2 Corinthians 3 and Romans 8, with additional comments on Galatians 5-6. The bulk of this part is devoted to Romans 8. Yates situates the chapter within its context in Romans by making special notice of the use of life and death language in Romans 5-8. He seeks to turn attention from Paul's comments about the Torah to his depiction of the Spirit in these chapters. Yates demonstrates that Paul is drawing on Ezekiel 36-37 in his portrayal of the Spirit and this scriptural influence indicates that the Spirit is the agent of resurrection, which is itself an act of creation. This act of resurrection, Yates argues, does not belong solely to the future. Instead, through the Spirit's activity, resurrection life is experienced in the present, and it is characterised by righteousness.

Two implications arise from his argument. First, Paul's understanding of the Spirit is deeply influenced by the Scriptures. Ezekiel 36-37 in particular directs much of what Paul says about the Spirit. Secondly, Paul's description of the Spirit moves toward a Trinitarian conception of the divine identity. While it would be anachronistic to interpret Paul as a post-Nicene theologian, as Yates notes, one finds here the beginnings of orthodox theology.

This volume is a welcome contribution to the growing discussion of Paul's view of the Spirit. It helpfully situates Paul within a potential Jewish background. Yates' discussion of the Jewish context is cautious and he notes on several occasions the limited amount of material that ascribes to the Spirit a role in giving life. Yet, his survey shows clearly that this idea was already available before Paul. His discussion also makes clear that the Spirit's role in giving life and renewing creation was vitally important to Paul's theology.

One does wish for more detail at points, however. Two points will be noted here. First, nowhere does Yates deal with the growing tradition that reads Paul's argument in Romans against the backdrop of Greco-Roman philosophy. His interpretation of Romans 8, however, stands diametrically opposed to these attempts to soften Paul's claim about divine action in the Spirit. This lack of engagement does not damage Yates' argument, but rather leaves the reader slightly unsatisfied. Secondly, the connection between new (resurrection) life and moral enablement in this life in Paul's thought (as well as the *Hodayot*) is left undeveloped. The connection is addressed at points, but a more sustained discussion would have been helpful. These are certainly not criticisms of Yates' conclusions. If anything, they indicate points at which one can expand upon Yates' firmly established conclusions.

Those interested in Pauline theology will profit from a careful reading of this book.

Jason Maston
Dingwall, Scotland

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Editorial

Pieter J. Lalleman

The present issue of the *European Journal of Theology* focuses heavily on Europe – and what could be more appropriate?! The first three articles look at our continent from the perspective of the decline of the church and the need to win Europe back for Jesus Christ. Europe is once again a mission field – but can we handle this situation? The first two articles are edited versions of papers presented at the 2010 conference of the Fellowship of European Evangelical Theologians (FEET) in Berlin; the third also started life as a conference paper but for a more Reformed audience. Our readers are welcome to write responses to this group of articles which I would like to receive by January 2012.

In many ways the fourth article is also a very European article: it discusses Jewish responses to the great tragedy of the Shoah or Holocaust which happened on European soil in the last century. The responses discussed are those of Jews from all over the world but the subject is one which should continue to concern European evangelicals. However, as far as I know this article is the first to appear on the subject in EJT.

The number of nationalities represented among our contributors continues to be encouraging but I would appreciate even more variety. The same is true for reviewers of books and potential reviewers are invited to contact Dr James Eglinton.

It is now time to put the 2012 FEET conference in your diaries. The conference theme is 'Beyond the Bible: Moving from Scripture to Theology and Practice' and we will meet, God willing, in Berlin on 24-28 August, 2012. More than at previous conferences the participants will be able to meet in subject groups.

EJT (2011) 20:2, 100–110 0960–2720

Authentic Evangelism? Revelation, truth and worship in late modern, pluralistic Europe

Krish Kandiah

SUMMARY

This article on evangelism in a European context explores the relationship between the revelation of God in Christ the word of God, our words about him as we seek to express the Gospel and the corporate worship of the local congregation. The article draws heavily from the work of Lesslie Newbigin whose missiological project directly interacted with these three aspects of the doctrine of revelation. Newbigin's belief in a homogenous European culture, however, is first discussed and found wanting. His emphasis on the role of the Church is still very valuable.

* * * * * * * *

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieser Artikel über Evangelisation in einem europäischen Kontext untersucht die Beziehung zwischen der Offenbarung Gottes in Christus, dem Wort Gottes, unseren Worten über ihn im Bemühen, dem Evangelium Ausdruck zu verleihen, und dem gemeinschaftlichen Lobpreis der Ortsgemeinde. Die Abhandlung schöpft zu einem großen Teil aus dem Werk Lesslie Newbigins, dessen missiologisches Konzept sich unmittelbar mit diesen drei Aspekten der Offenbarungslehre auseinandersetzt. Zuerst wird jedoch Newbigins Idee einer homogenen europäischen Kultur zur Diskussion gestellt und als mangelhaft befunden. Doch seine Betonung der Rolle der Kirche ist immerhin sehr beachtlich.

* * * * * * * *

RÉSUMÉ

Cet article traite de l'évangélisation dans le contexte culturel européen. Il explore les relations entre la révélation de Dieu en Christ, Parole de Dieu, nos paroles humaines sur Dieu lorsque nous exposons l'Évangile, et le culte communautaire de l'assemblée locale. Il tire abondamment profit des travaux de Leslie Newbigin dont le projet missiologique attribuait une place importante à ces trois aspects de la doctrine de la révélation. L'auteur commence cependant par exposer la conception de la culture européenne comme une culture homogène chez Newbigin et la juge déficiente. Son accent sur le rôle de l'Église reste par contre très pertinent.

* * * * * * * *

Postmodern Europe?

I was asked to engage with the concept of Europe as a pluralistic and postmodern context.[1] I am convinced that Europe is a pluralistic continent – the raw data on demographic and migratory shifts point to increasing diversity of religious beliefs in Europe.[2] However, I would like to make a small caveat about the description of Europe as a postmodern context. Ernest Gellner, Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge, states that: 'Post-modernism is a contemporary movement. It is strong and fashionable. Over and above this, it is not altogether clear what the devil it is.'[3] The term postmodernity is notoriously difficult to define but it does seem to intimate a definite break or leaving behind of modernity. Yet Vinoth Ramachandra argues that postmodernity

> is best understood as a continuation of the process of modernisation but with increasing intensity and scope… the result of that intensification has been to erode the stability of modernity and throw it into some confusion.[4]

Rather than moving beyond modernity, Ulrich Beck describes the phenomenon as 'modernity turning upon itself'[5] resulting in 'reflexive-modernity'.[6] Zygmunt Bauman argues that postmodernity is the modernisation of modernity.[7] Jean François Lyotard's oft-quoted definition of postmodernity as 'incredulity regarding metanarratives'[8] fits within this description of reflexive modernity as the critical tools of modernity are being applied to the very assumptions of modernity itself, resulting in scepticism towards all overarching descriptions including that of modernity itself. This article assumes a reflexive understanding of modernity and thus, following Anthony Giddens,[9] the term late modernity will be adopted in preference to postmodernity.

The doctrine of revelation

The starting point for this article is that the doctrine of revelation can provide a useful framework for the nature of evangelism in the current European context. The doctrine of revelation might seem a strange place to explore the nature of evangelism because evangelism – if it receives any theological analysis at all – is usually placed within the confines of practical or pastoral theology.[10] However, there are a number of problems in placing evangelism under the rubric of practical theology. Firstly, it suggests an implied division of theology into practical and non-practical – or even worse 'impractical' – theology! The existence of a discipline known as practical theology calls into question the nature and purpose of theology in general, a subject too vast to be explored here. Suffice it to say that all Christian theology should serve God's purposes, which are intrinsically tied to the *Missio Dei* of which evangelism is a central facet. Secondly, by separating evangelism from the mainstream of theological reflection it is often left bereft of the resources of the centuries of systematic theological reflection and instead becomes allied to pragmatism.

At first sight locating evangelism as a subset of the doctrine of revelation seems to be unorthodox but there is a worthy precedent provided by the magisterial figure of Karl Barth. In his seminal *Church Dogmatics* Barth expounds the theme of the word of God by characteristically starting with God's revelation in Christ, then exploring the revelation of God through Scripture and finally exploring God's revelation through the preaching of the Church.[11] Although he does not embark on a full-scale theology of evangelism, his location of the preaching of the Gospel by the Church within the remit of the doctrine of revelation provides sufficient historical precedent to locate evangelism here.

Evangelism in Europe: Is there a European mindset?

The title I was given assumes that Europe is a 'postmodern context' for evangelism. There is an implicit assumption that there is such a thing as a European mindset. This echoes an assumption made by Lesslie Newbigin's programmatic essay 'Can the West be converted' published in 1985:

> If one looks at the world scene from a missionary point of view, surely the most striking fact is that, while in great areas of Asia and Africa the Church is growing, often growing rapidly, in the lands which were once called Christendom it is in decline. Surely there can be no more crucial question for the world mission of the Church… Can there be an effective missionary encounter with this culture – this so powerful, persuasive, and confident culture which (at least until very recently) simply regarded itself as 'the coming world civilization'.[12]

Newbigin asked both a prophetic and a culturally naive question. He offered a clarion call to missiologists who had been so busy engaging with the cultures of the non-western world that they had neglected an adequate missiological engagement with European cultures. But Newbigin seems to assume there is such a thing as a monolithic western culture. He argues this point specifically when he writes:

> … our culture – not our culture in the multicultural sense but in its more mono-cultural sense… I mean that whatever may be the varieties of culture that are represented in our society we share what sociologists call 'a plausibility structure'.[13]

Despite his misappropriation of Peter Berger's 'plausibility structure concept'[14] this quotation demonstrates Newbigin's conviction that there is an overarching homogeneity to western societies despite their apparent multi-cultural diversity. Newbigin assumes that all the inhabitants of a society – regardless of their individual cultures – share a common 'plausibility structure'. He goes on to argue that 'this plausibility structure – determines whether in any society any particular belief is plausible or not'.[15] Thus for Newbigin it is the common plausibility structure that ultimately homogenises society and acts as the arbiter of what is held to be true by all the members of the society.

The above are not isolated quotations. In another paper addressing the issue of mission in a pluralistic society[16] Newbigin's opening statement is that 'No society is totally pluralist.' In every society there is what Peter Berger calls a 'plausibility structure'.[17] Note the reference to a single plausibility structure which diminishes the importance of subcultural particularities.

Newbigin's failure to grasp the degree of diversity that is present within western society is hard to explain. The idea of homogenised western multicultural societies may be attributed to an assimilation model of cultural diversity. For example, despite the British government's commitment to multicultural policies that 'advocated integration rather than assimilation',[18] where assimilation was seen as a 'flattening process' and integration promoted 'equal opportunity accompanied by cultural diversity in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance',[19] there is a homogenising tendency in British society. Being British does have an impact on all immigrants but to argue that it becomes the defining characteristic of the intellectual life of those immigrants is, I believe, naïve.

It is also true that globalisation often means westernisation[20] but this globalisation thesis is too simplistic an approach. It fails to take into consideration the way that 'non-western ideas also travel… back'[21] and the way in which the perceived westernisation effect of globalisation has produced a culturally conservative backlash in some parts of the world.[22] The same process can be seen in microcosm within western societies, as Konrad Raiser writes:

> While there is the fear that globalisation will lead to the imposition of a unified culture based on the Western clause of consumerism, there is also growing evidence of the resistance of local communities defending their own culture or of migrants and indigenous communities trying to recover their cultural values and mark their difference from the dominant environment.[23]

But by focussing virtually exclusively on a presumed shared Enlightenment bifurcation between fact and value, Newbigin underplays the significance of the cultural diversity within western societies. At first sight it might seem that he has fallen prey to what Graham Huggan describes as 'virtual multi-culturalism',[24] that is, Newbigin has adopted the unintentionally optimistic, and often politically motivated, skewed depiction of cultural integration. But his own experience of life in Winson Green, Birmingham, where he describes the relative openness of migrants to the Gospel[25] in comparison to people of English heritage, and his writings on Islam in Britain, demonstrate his awareness of the depth of cultural diversity. He also writes in a very different tone in a book that was published in the year of his death. In a chapter entitled 'Multiculturalism and Neutrality'[26] Newbigin writes:

> … we are a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural society. The histories our children learn in school… are not coherent but vastly diverse. Whether at school or in the mosque, temple or gudwara, children learn many different histories and are shaped thereby into different identities. There are agonising tensions.[27]

He was also well aware of the extent to which cultures shape concepts of identity and rationality due to the influence of both Berger and Alasdair MacIntyre on his epistemology and his approach to cultures. We can conclude that Newbigin was aware of the tensions between cultural groups in western societies. Why then does he so often write in a generalising way about supposed commonalities and not about the specifics of individual cultures? It may well be that he simply sought for a short-cut to engaging western cultures with the Gospel and therefore chose to ignore their diversity. But if the Church does not take into consideration the cultural uniqueness of the various ethnic groups in western societies it aligns itself with a new form of hegemonic imperialism. The Gospel demands to be contextualised into the subcultures of Europe. There is not a single articulation of the Gospel that is going to connect with the pluralism of the continent. Indeed, the European Values survey of 2008[28] shows an enormous variation in degrees of secularity. For example, the answers to the question about belief in God ranged from 95% affirmative answers in Turkey to just 16% in the Czech Republic and Estonia! The average affirmative response was 52%, exhibited in Austria and Lithuania. The suggestion that there is a single European mindset goes against the figures.

Late modernity and mission

Without either endorsing Newbigin's commitment to a single western 'plausibility structure' or discounting his vast missiological wisdom, his programmatic essay 'Can the West be converted?'[29] will be explored for its implications for contemporary European evangelisation. Newbigin sets out the contours for a missional engagement between the Gospel and western culture. He points out that the key area of contention in this engagement is the nature of religious belief and specifically the bifurcation between the public world of facts and the private world of values. This observation plays such a significant part in his missiological project that it is worth exploring some of its implications for his doctrine of revelation and in particular for his theology of evangelism.

Newbigin argues that the Enlightenment was the decisive moment in the dichotomy of western thought into the public and private. Thus a central element in his apologetic approach is to tackle head-on this public/private dichotomy. Newbigin asks:

> … what in our culture is the meaning of the word 'fact'? In its earliest use in the English language it is simply the Latin *factum*, the past participle of the verb 'to do', something which has been done. But plainly it has acquired a much richer meaning. In ordinary use 'fact' is contrasted with belief, opinion, value. Value-free facts are the most highly prized commodities in our culture.[30]

The public/private division in knowledge continues in many European public discourses to this day:[31] there is a distinction between, for example, religious truth and scientific truth, as Newbigin argues:

> Our values, our views of what is good and bad, are a matter of personal opinion, and everyone is free to have his own opinions. But on the facts we must all agree. Here is the core of our culture.[32]

This distinction between scientific truth and religious values continues despite contemporary philosophical deconstructions of the myth of scientific objectivity by philosophers of science such as Karl Popper[33] and Thomas Kuhn.[34] Newbigin argues that this dualistic approach has

> at least from the eighteenth century… been the public culture of Europe, and has – under the name of 'modernisation' – extended its power into every part of the world.[35]

Objective facts are for the public realm, taught at school and presented without the need for the preface 'I believe', while subjective values belong to the private world of religion and ethics.

> With respect to what are called 'facts' a statement is either right or wrong, true or false. But with respect to values, and supremely with respect to the religious beliefs on which these values ultimately rest, one does not use this kind of language…. They are matters of personal choice.[36]

The empiricist movement effectively made science the arbiter of truth. Along with this came the 'corresponding downgrading of non-scientific systems of belief'.[37] This scepticism with regard to non-scientific truth claims can be clearly seen in the dismissive writings of David Hume:

> If we take in our hand any volume, of divinity or school metaphysics, for instance; let us ask, does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity or number? No. Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence? No. Commit it then to the flames: for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion.[38]

Hume limits real knowledge and hard facts to mathematics and empirical science whilst relegating ethics and theology to the irrational and subjective world of personal values. This same approach is described by Newbigin in his analysis of contemporary western cultures. The fact/value dichotomy between science and religion became and was to remain a prevailing characteristic of modernity. The reaction to the elevation of science at the expense of values was that every other discipline tried to justify its existence by claiming to be a science. Paul Hiebert shows how many of the systematic theologies produced in the first half of the twentieth century reformulated theology in scientific terms.[39] Having been dismissed into the realm of the subjective, Christians reacted by defending the truth of Christianity through appealing to the objective facts of the resurrection or through arguing for the concrete existence of God through rational, self-evident proofs. This approach is still evident in popular apologetic literature.[40] It can also be seen in the way in which much preaching (including evangelistic preaching) is undertaken – we seek to boil a passage down to its basic components so that we can turn a biblical narrative into a series of bullet points. The very popular 'Four spiritual laws' presentation of the Gospel is a case in point. The introduction to this four point Gospel presentation is 'just as there are physical laws that govern the physical universe, so are there spiritual laws which govern your relationship with God.'[41]

In contrast, late modernity has a pessimistic view of the ability of the human mind to grasp reality. This leads to the view that truth is a mind-dependent projection based on the context of the beholder in time and space. James Sire explains that under late modernity, truth cannot be objective because the 'ontological substructure'[42] of the universe is not available, since an individual's mind looks at the world through a skewed perception of reality. Betty Craige illustrates this point when she writes, 'Things and events do not have an intrinsic meaning. There is no inherent objectivity, only continuous interpretation of the world.'[43]

Newbigin and others provide this picture of the West, influenced by the late modern Enlightenment. But it is not a homogenous picture: Generationally, ethnically and geographically there is a huge diversity of worldviews across Europe.[44] Perhaps Newbigin's description best describes the predominant worldview accepted in some of the corridors of power across the continent, such as the European Parliament building in Brussels, the headquarters of MTV in Warsaw and the BBC World Service in London.

It is into this broad 'public European culture' that the Church seeks to carry out its mission. The rest of this article will explore two key missiological relationships that are vital to negotiate. Firstly, how do Christ, the Word of God and the words of the Gospel relate together? Secondly, what is the relationship between the words of the Gospel and the worship of the Church?

The word of God and the words of the Gospel

An Albanian church leader was asked to go on a fundraising trip to the United States for a campus based ministry whose two main evangelistic tools are a video presentation of the life of Christ and a four point Gospel outline. Standing in front of a crowded room of prospective supporters he said: 'For God loved the world so much that he sent, not a video, not a tract, but his Son.'[45] To be sure, things did not go as well as expected on the fundraising side; but this Albanian theologian raises an important question: What is the relationship between Christ's incarnation as the 'central revelatory act of God'[46] and the preaching of the Gospel? In the current phase of salvation history, how can one know the revelation of God in Christ? It does seem that according to the New Testament the normative post-ascension means of coming to know Christ is through the preaching of the Gospel. Jensen argues that the

> …earliest Christians regarded [the Gospel] as the power of God for salvation, the indispensable way to the knowledge of God. For them it was primary revelation, the initial and fundamental way into the presence of God.[47]

Jensen's argument is convincing; Paul in his epistles uses the terms Gospel and Christ interchangeably.[48] This is possible because the New Testament conception of the Gospel, as will be demonstrated, is preaching the person of Christ including the significance of his words, deeds and life.

But the Albanian's dissatisfaction with the *modus operandi* of the proclamation of the Gospel as merely a video to be broadcast or a set of bullet points to be transmitted from one person to another is still worth exploring especially as we sense a shift in the public discourse of Europe. Not every articulation of the Gospel is an accurate, appropriate or accessible presentation of the Gospel. The dissatisfaction with pre-packaged, impersonal regurgitations is worth exploring. I would like to suggest three signposts provided by Lesslie Newbigin's missiological project that have assisted my own evangelistic practice in European university missions and churches.

1. The Gospel and story

The recent emphasis on narrative in contemporary theology and preaching owes much to the post-liberal writings of people like Hans Frei and I believe also to Newbigin. Newbigin was ahead of his time in engaging with the narrative nature of the Gospel message. However, this emphasis was not always present in Newbigin's theology. In *What is the Gospel?*[49] Newbigin – in a similar vein to C.H. Dodd – sought a lowest common denominator approach to the Gospel, in which the key elements of the Gospel were distilled out of Peter's Pentecost sermon in an apparent bid to work out the minimal noetic elements of the Gospel. But Newbigin's evangelistic appropriation of the post-liberal approach to narrative theology led him to assert later:

> The dogma, the thing given for our acceptance in faith, is not a set of timeless propositions: it is a story… here I think the eighteenth century defenders of the faith were most wide of the mark. The Christian religion which they sought to defend was a system of timeless metaphysical truths about God, nature, and man… Any defence of the Christian faith… must take a quite different route. The Christian faith, rooted

> in the Bible, is… primarily to be understood as an interpretation of the story – the human story set within the story of nature.[50]

Newbigin identified for me the inadequacy of much of the apologetic literature that I had been devouring. I had tried to use the classical arguments for the existence of God with little fruit. My two-step process meant that I had to convince the listeners that a first cause, moral lawgiver or designer existed using pure reason and then also convince them through the use of historical and biblical evidence that this God was the Triune God of the Bible. Whereas this approach may have engaged some people from a monotheistic religious background such as Jehovah's Witnesses or Muslims, it completely failed to engage anyone influenced by the late modern critique of the objectivity of rationality. Newbigin undercut this approach recognising, along with Alasdair MacIntyre, the need to ask the question, 'Which Justice and Whose Rationality'?[51] If a supra-cultural rationality is not available to us then the idea that there would be a watertight apologetic argument that will work in every context is a myth.

Newbigin's challenge to evangelists was to tell the biblical story, allowing it to provide a window (or a tacit connection) to God's character, purpose and explanatory power of the universe. It is a very relevant approach for our age despite the alleged suspicion of meta-narratives and it has transformed my own preaching, apologetics and evangelism. My use of a four-point Gospel outline was rendered virtually redundant, replaced by a desire to present something of the grand sweep of the biblical story as a way of understanding who we are, why we are here and what we are supposed to be doing. I suggest that in my experience Christianity is the best explanatory framework that makes sense of who we are and what we do and is the story in which our own stories make sense. I find myself spending most of my time telling stories about Jesus or retelling stories he told to win people's allegiance to himself – recognising both who he is as the glory of God revealed and what he has done for us, as our Saviour and Lord.

2. The Gospel as public truth

Sometimes those who emphasise the narrative approach to theology underplay the historicity of the Jesus story. Newbigin shows how the two elements need not contradict each other. In his later books we find assertions such as:

> It is of the essence of the Christian faith that this story is the true story.[52]

> The gospels are 'human perceptions of the things that really happened'.[53]

His thinking in this area was altered after a specific encounter of interreligious dialogue in which a Hindu commented told him:

> I can't understand why you missionaries present the Bible to us in India as a book of religion. It is not a book of religion… I find in your Bible a unique interpretation of human history…[54]

As a result Newbigin was forced to reconsider the pietism, the ghettoisation and the reductionism of much evangelism. He was also provoked to think beyond the bifurcation between the subjective world of private values and the objective public world of facts that he attributed to the Enlightenment. Once again influenced by Michael Polanyi's philosophy of science, Newbigin debunks the myth of scientific objectivity. He commandeers the philosophy of Polanyi to argue against the alleged pure objectivity of the scientific process but he also wants to argue for the historicity of the Christian story. This not only refutes the Enlightenment's privileging of scientific knowledge but also refuses to allow Christians to reduce the Gospel to personal piety. Newbigin carefully avoids the excesses of rationalism without falling into absolute subjectivism. This approach revolutionised my own understanding of the Gospel – I find that I am less comfortable with approaches that focus solely on helping people to know that they are going to heaven when they die. (More recently, N.T. Wright has further helped my thinking in this respect.[55]) I also find it imperative to talk about the implications of the Gospel not just for personal piety but also for politics, community, relationships, economics and justice. Our public as well as our private life is radicalised by the Gospel of grace. The words we speak in evangelism must accurately portray Christ, the word of God, who is not just a personal saviour but the cosmic Christ, Lord over all creation.

3. The Gospel in four dimensions

In *Sin and Salvation* Newbigin explained how sin amounts to four dimensions of alienation.[56] In a chapter entitled 'What is Salvation?' he outlines this four-dimensional schema as follows:

- Humankind is in a state of contradiction against the natural world

- Humankind is in a state of contradiction against his fellow human
- Humankind is in a state of inner self-contradiction
- Humankind is in a state of contradiction against God[57]

Far from reducing the Gospel to four bite-size chunks, this schema points us to recapturing the immensity of the Gospel in four grand-scale dimensions. Newbigin then goes on to show that salvation can be understood as the repairing of these four fractured relationships which leads to 'the restoration of creation to its original purpose'.[58] Using this outline, the Gospel story can be expanded by following through how each of these four dimensions of salvation is worked out through creation, fall, redemption and consummation – a theme that I developed in my own evangelistic book.[59] This approach resonates well with younger adults, as there is recognition of the sense of the connectedness that exists between all things, and it naturally calls people to receive from God his gracious gift of reconciliation. It presents the need for integrity rather than for a dualistic soul insurance. It also calls people to join the adventure of participation in the *missio Dei*.

The Gospel according to Newbigin challenged my own understanding of the Gospel as simply a message that needed to be intellectually assented as a means to avoid eternal damnation. Of course, the Gospel is of immeasurable importance to the individual, with the need for personal faith and a personal response to God's call. But when salvation looks like the private rescue of an individual soul for an ethereal eternity rather than the radical restoration of all things we can fall into a number of traps. Sometimes we minimise repentance and the importance of the atonement, sometimes we underplay the resurrection and the social implications of the Gospel, sometimes we fail to pass on the importance of Church, community and ecology. Newbigin opened my eyes to the fact that the Gospel is bigger than we think and needs to include all four aspects of salvation. And in my experience, instead of putting people off the faith, the scale of the thing actually draws people in. Instead of being a lifestyle choice, Christianity returns to being a cause to live and die for which transforms relationships and the environment as well as our personal eternal destiny.

The words of the Gospel and the worship of the Church

> … evangelism is the activity of the redeemed community seeking to share with all men the joy of redemption, and to welcome all men into the fellowship of those that share that joy. Much harm has been done by the wrong kind of individualism. The human element in evangelism must be the fellowship.[60]

Pre-Newbigin my apologetics usually included an apology for the state of the Church. I argued that the personal relationship with God was central, not experience or impressions of the Church. I would compare the Church to a school orchestra generating a cacophonous noise playing a Mozart concerto and challenge people to conclude that either Mozart was a terrible composer or the performance was flawed. But Newbigin rightly argues that the Church is the chosen means of God's revelation of the Gospel – 'the hermeneutic of the Gospel'.[61]

A communal approach to apologetics and evangelism could have a profound impact on the church in Europe. The various commonly accepted modes of evangelism are individualistic: the platform apologist addressing a large crowd of sceptics and the individual Christian talking about the Gospel at a coffee break at work. But evangelism without respect for the Church and an understanding of the need for renewal and reformation of the Church is counterproductive. The evangelist Newbigin invested much of his life into ecumenism, arguing consistently and passionately that the Gospel is best served by a unified Church. In my own experience it is sadly often those who are most concerned about evangelism who are the least concerned about unity. This is probably an outworking of the minimalist, personalised Gospel that is preached.

In *The Reunion of the Church* Newbigin gave a theological defence of the 1947 Church of South India (CSI) unification scheme in which he played a strategic role.[62] The CSI was the unification of the South India United Church (made up of Reformed, Presbyterian and Congregational Churches), the South Indian Methodist Church and Anglicans from the Church Missionary Society to form one visible institutional church. Newbigin saw that disunity undercut the Gospel in three key ways: firstly, division contradicts Christ's sufficiency; secondly, division contradicts the reconciliatory purpose of God; and thirdly, division contradicts the eschatological destiny of redeemed humanity.[63] Newbigin's powerful arguments challenged me to cross the tribal boundaries of evangelicalism as I worked with churches as diverse as Baptists, Brethren and Anglicans, with conservatives, charismatics and café-style church-planters. Ultimately it led me into my current position seeking unity for mission through the British Evangelical Alliance.

Newbigin was not an armchair theologian or a missiological number-cruncher working in an office block. He was a reflective practitioner – an idealistic prophet who called for the reformation of the Church with his feet firmly planted on the ground both when he was a bishop who equipped his diocese in Madras to be at the cutting edge of poverty relief, evangelism and apologetic engagement and when he was an aging missionary church leader in Winson Green, Birmingham.[64]

Reconciliation

Understanding the significance of the local congregation as the hermeneutic of the Gospel has an important implication. If Newbigin's articulation of the four dimensional Gospel is accurate, a reconciled community is the best medium for the message of reconciliation. Newbigin argues this in his defence of his evangelistically motivated ecumenism:

> A gospel of reconciliation can only be communicated by a reconciled fellowship… it will be communicated by the way of election, beginning from one visible centre and spreading always according to the law that each one is chosen in order to be the means of bringing the message of salvation to the next.[65]

If the Gospel is the offer of individualised salvation, it is fitting for an individual with a privatised Gospel to be the basic unit of communication. But if the Gospel is the mystery hid before the ages, the multifaceted wisdom of God, if it is the secret of how Jews and Gentiles can be reconciled with God and with each other – as Ephesians declares it to be[66] – then the local church living out the Gospel as living attestation is a more fitting basic unit.

Worldview

N.T. Wright's approach to worldview function and maintenance highlights four interrelated axes which connect the elements of *story, questions, praxis and symbols*.[67] Firstly, 'worldviews provide the *stories* through which human beings view reality'.[68] Secondly, 'from these stories one can in principle discover how to answer the basic *questions* that determine human existence'. Thirdly, the answers that the stories provide to basic questions are expressed in cultural *symbols*. Fourthly, worldviews include 'a praxis, a way-of-being-in-the-world'.[69] The local congregation is the place where the Gospel can be experienced in all four dimensions and thus function as a hermeneutic of the Gospel.

Firstly the proclamation, study and meditation on God's word are vital for establishing as well as for maturing faith. It is how the Church knows its *story*. There is an urgent need for the Church to recapture clarity and confidence in the retelling of the biblical story, not as a set of atomised proof texts but as a real story of which every human being and indeed all of creation is part. Secondly it is in the faithful retelling of the story that people's *questions* about their existence will be answered. There is a dynamic interplay between these two axes of story and questions. If the questions of a culture dominate the teaching of the congregation there is the danger of compromising the integrity of the telling of the story of God – as the culture may centre on a set of questions that God's word subverts. Allowing a culture to set the agenda for the story can lead to distortion and corruption of the story. However, to ignore the cultural questions can compromise the communication of the Gospel; the listeners can end up dismissing the Gospel as irrelevant or insufficient because it seems to offer no answers to the questions that drive them. There is a need to practice 'faithful relevance', making sure the double listening takes place that preachers like John Stott have constantly called for.[70] In the answering of questions there is of course room for straight apologetics but the answers must be embodied in the life of a believing community – in other words, apologetics and systematic theology must be grounded in the third aspect – the *praxis* of the church.

According to Wright, the third aspect of worldview creation and sustenance is crucially connected with the life of the congregation. It is the translation of the word of God into the *praxis* of the church life. This is vital for the credibility and intelligibility of the Gospel. It is in the communal life of the church that people experience for themselves the praxis of the Gospel – in compassionate acts, in pastoral care one for the other, in the ethos of the common culture of the church's life together, in conversation, prayer for one another, in the models provided for raising children, in political engagement, in the church's unwritten curriculum, in the simple and unintentional 'way things are done around here'.[71] This praxis of the communal life is shaped and informed by the congregation's grasp of the story of God's dealings with his people and his planet as revealed in Scripture.

The fourth and final axis is that of *symbol*. The sacraments are a key aspect of how the communal life of the congregation embodies the story of the Gospel and provides tangible, multisensory experiences that underline the answers that the Gospel story provides to the questions of the culture. Baptism and Communion are deliberately corporate sacraments so that they provide another mechanism for the congregation to act, as Newbigin describes it, as the hermeneutic of the Gospel.

These four aspects of worldview construction and maintenance work synergistically. Hence in the life of the local church there is a need to reform all four areas to maximize the ways in which the corporate life of the church communicates the Gospel. As a communal apologetic is emphasised, the enlightenment bifurcation of fact and value, personal and public, is countered. The storied nature of the Gospel of Jesus is underlined. The potential of the multi-dimensional Gospel that presents spiritual, personal, social and environmental implications of the death, resurrection and return of Christ to be fully embodied in a people can be realised.

If the Gospel is simply the transfer of information from one person to another then the basic unit of Gospel communication can be a tract, a video or a sermon. But if the Gospel is both the announcement of the good news that universe transforming events have taken place and the working through of the implications of that news in repentance and faith at both an individual and corporate level, then it includes the renewal of minds, the transformation of affections away from idols to the true and living God, and the rethinking of how resources are used and distributed – to name but a few elements. Then we are talking about worldview transformation which is best achieved not just in oral, written or cinematic form, but through the embodied life of a congregation. A congregation provides the concrete set of relationships that not only allow for the speaking of Gospel truth but also for the practices that make the Gospel plausible and for the experience of participating in sacraments that were instituted to both proclaim and experience the Gospel. This approach makes sense of the heavy emphasis on ecclesiology in the New Testament, of the Early Church's strategy of church planting, and of the insistence on Communion and Baptism as constituting practices of the Church.

Conclusion

In the complex missional context of pluralistic Europe with its overlapping mix of pre-modern, modern and late modern worldviews which compete with each other for superiority, Newbigin's missiology helps to call the Church back to biblical evangelism which clearly proclaims the biblical story as the true story about the whole of creation that is grounded in the public life of the whole Church as an embodiment of the Gospel message. Only when the Church faithfully communicates Christ, the Word of God, through preaching and enacting the biblical story will we effectively communicate the Gospel. In short, Newbigin calls the Church back to the practice of the Early Church which appeared to be no more than a powerless minority in a pluralistic society yet still dared to share the Gospel of Christ with great confidence and courage. Let us follow in their footsteps for the re-evangelisation of our continent.

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Notes

1 This article is the edited version of a paper presented at the 2010 conference of the Fellowship of European Evangelical Theologians (FEET) in Berlin.

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5 Z. Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000) 6.

6 Bauman, *Liquid Modernity*, 6.

7 Bauman, *Liquid Modernity*, 28.

8 J.F. Lyotard, *The Post-modern Condition; a report on knowledge* (Theory and History of Literature Volume 10; Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997) xxiv.

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10 For example J. Woodward and S. Pattison (eds.), *The Blackwell Reader in Pastoral and Practical Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000) contains not a single reference to mission or evangelism in its extensive index. There is a single fleeting reference to mission and evangelism on page 83.

11 K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics I/2: The doctrine of the Word of God* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1958) 743-853.

12 L. Newbigin, 'Can the West be converted', *Princeton Seminary Review* 6 (1985) 25-37.

13 L. Newbigin, 'Evangelism in a Multi-cultural Society' – unpublished transcript made of Newbigin's address to the Hitchin Council of Churches on February 20, 1991 [Lesslie Newbigin Papers held in care of the Orchard Learning Resources Centre, Information Services, The University of Birmingham, Hamilton Drive, Weoley Park Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham B29 6QW, U.K.] page 1.

14 Berger means by the term 'plausibility structure' a form of group legitimisation and thus the social structure of religious practice. Newbigin uses it as a synonym for worldview. See P.L. Berger and T. Luckman, *The Social Construction of Reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967).

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17 Newbigin, 'Mission in a Pluralist Society', 158.

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27 Newbigin et al., *Faith and Power*, 3.

28 http://www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu/evs

29 Newbigin, 'Can the West be converted', 13.

30 Newbigin, 'Can the West be converted', 30.

31 There are of course notable exceptions such as the uproar after the cartoons of Muhammad published in the Danish newspaper Politiken. In 2010 the paper made a public apology for this. But this was certainly not a case of privatised belief bowing to the public discourse of fact; in fact, quite the reverse. See http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/feb/26/danish-cartoons-muhammad-politiken-apology [accessed 10/08/2010].

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41 www.godlovestheworld.com, the website of Global Media Outreach, an internet ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ.

42 J. Sire, 'On being a fool for Christ and an idiot for nobody' in T.R. Phillips and D.L. Okholm (eds.), Christian *Apologetics in the Post-modern World* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1995) 102.

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44 Indeed many staff workers of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students can testify to this through the heavy utilisation of the worldview survey across campus ministries.

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54 Newbigin, *Walk*, 4.
55 N.T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope* (London: SPCK, 2008).
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60 L. Newbigin, *The Reunion of the Church: A Defence of the South India Scheme* (London: SCM, 1948) 32.
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62 Newbigin, *Reunion*.
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64 G. Wainwright, *Lesslie Newbigin: a theological life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
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66 Ephesians 3.
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68 Wright, *New Testament and People of God*, 123, emphasis added.
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European Christian Renaissance and Public Theology

Johannes Reimer

SUMMARY

This article argues that European culture has to a large extent been formed by Christianity and its values but also points to the numerical decline of the Church. This came about because modernism / rationalism and Pietism have failed to influence Europe deeply due to their one-sided approach to life. For a well-planned Christian renaissance it is crucial to know which factors influence culture: not only the cognitive but also the material, the social and the religious. The way to effective Christian influence on culture and thus to change is engagement with the cultural elite by means of public theology; hence a Christian renaissance requires theology to go public. But so far this has hardly happened.

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RÉSUMÉ

L'auteur souligne que la culture européenne a été en grande partie façonnée par le christianisme et ses valeurs, mais il constate le déclin numérique de l'Église. La raison en est que le modernisme ou rationalisme et le piétisme n'ont pas pu influencer profondément l'Europe à cause de leur vision trop étriquée de la vie. Une renaissance du christianisme ne pourra venir que si l'on prend en compte les facteurs qui déterminent la culture : non seulement les idées, mais aussi les facteurs matériels, sociaux et religieux. En vue d'exercer une influence chrétienne sur la culture européenne et son évolution, il est important d'entrer en dialogue avec l'élite culturelle, et, pour se faire, de porter la théologie sur la place publique. Mais jusqu'à présent, on ne s'y est que trop peu employé.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dieser Artikel stellt die Behauptung auf, dass die europäische Kultur zu einem großen Teil durch das Christentum geprägt worden ist. Er weist aber auch auf den zahlenmäßigen Rückgang der Kirche hin. Diese Entwicklung ist darauf zurückzuführen, dass Modernismus und Rationalismus sowie Pietismus – bedingt durch ihren jeweils einseitigen Zugang zum Leben – es versäumt haben, einen tief greifenden Einfluss in Europa auszuüben. Wenn eine Wiedergeburt des Christentums gut geplant werden will, dann ist es von entscheidender Bedeutung die Faktoren zu kennen, welche eine Kultur beeinflussen, und zwar nicht nur die kognitiven, sondern auch die materiellen, sozialen und religiösen Faktoren. Der Weg zu einem nachhaltigen christlichen Einfluss auf eine Kultur und somit auch zu ihrer Veränderung liegt in der Auseinandersetzung mit ihrer kulturellen Elite mittels „public theology", d.h. dem öffentlich und gesellschaftlich relevanten Bereich der Theologie. Daher verlangt eine Renaissance des Christentums danach, dass die Theologie in die Öffentlichkeit geht. Dies ist bis heute aber kaum geschehen.

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1 Christian Europe?

Europe essentially exists because Christianity developed.[1] Nothing could be truer than the reality of the close relationship between the historical development of Europe and the Christian Church. Since the apostle Paul crossed the Aegean Sea in response to the Macedonian call, the destiny of Europe has been designed in conversation with Christian beliefs. The late pope John Paul II claimed:

> The history of the formation of the European nations runs parallel with their evangelization, to the point that the European frontiers coincided with those of the inroads of the Gospel.[2]

The European civilisation is genuinely Christian. It was formed by its Christian movements, monasteries, universities, cathedrals and churches. It is no exaggeration to suggest that most of the Christian world today had its beginnings in Europe. Western civilisation at its heart is European and to a great extent Christian. The missionary movement of the Christian Church started in Europe and introduced European Christian values to the world.

But things have changed since then. Sadly enough, it was again Europe that introduced secularisation to the world with all the implied decadence. The late Pope John Paul II was correct when he passionately called his church to evangelisation and at the same time pleaded for the re-evangelisation of the old Europe:

> Today after twenty centuries, the Church senses the urgency and the duty to carry on with renewed efficacy the work of evangelising the world and re-evangelising Europe. It is a pastoral choice, re-proposed in view of the third millennium that flows from the mission to save the whole human and all humans in the truth of Christ. Today more than ever, the evangelisation of the world is tied to the re-evangelisation of Europe.[3]

2 Europe in need of renewal

We may question the words of the Polish pope about the importance of Europe for the salvation of the world. European churches, however, do need renewal. Millions of Europeans have left their churches and some major Christian denominations will soon cease to exist if nothing major happens. Let us consider the situation in Great Britain, for example. If current trends continue, there will be no classic British Christianity in less than one generation.[4] The Church of Scotland would lose its entire membership by the year 2033[5] and the Methodists would disappear in 2031.[6] In the forty years between 1960 and 2000, the active membership of English churches dropped from 9.9 million to 5.9 million; a reduction of 40%.[7] If we take the population growth into consideration, the reduction even increases to almost 50%. In only forty years the Church of England lost half of its membership, closed more than 6,000 church buildings and employed 7,500 less pastors.[8] This is truly a devastating development, only comparable to the destruction of church life in the Communist countries of Eastern Europe.

The situation in other Western European countries is not much better. In Germany hundreds of thousands of people leave their churches annually. Take, for instance, one of the most vital and active German Protestant churches, the 'Evangelische Kirche of Württemberg'. 201,054 members turned their backs to this church between 1991 and 2004, an annual average of 14,361.[9] A church-wide analysis of the Sunday worship attendance in 47 of 51 church districts, conducted in the year 2003, uncovered the following figures: 47.6% of the attendees were 60 years of age and older, 28.2% between 40 and 60; 17.9% were between 20 and 40 and only 6.4% of the church visitors were under 20 years of age.[10] No wonder Willi Beck calls his own church a 'Seniorenkirche', a church of seniors.[11] According to a recent membership questionnaire of the EKD (German Protestant Church), no more than 33% of its members attend services occasionally[12] and regular attendance is below 5%.[13] The Roman-Catholic church and other Christian denominations are undergoing a similar development.

Christianity is losing its stand in Germany, Britain and other European countries. Christianity will become a marginal religious group, if nothing major happens. The appeal of Pope John Paul for the re-evangelisation of Europe has meanwhile become a common concern of many.[14] European Churches need a new reformation – but how? Europe must be re-evangelised! But again, how?

The marginalisation of European Christianity runs parallel with a permanent decay of European culture in general. Our countries are financially bankrupt, socially alienated and morally in muddy waters. The idea of a socially just state, forcefully promoted by the proponents of the social market economy, is dying. Today, millions of Europeans are poor and more than one third of us are indebted to the banks without any real chance to leave this financial dependency. If the present trend continues, the European population, which in 1960 formed 25% of the world's population, will drop to 5% by the middle of this century. These figures have led some to speak of the 'demographic suicide of Europe'. On a demographic, ethical, moral, economic and political level, there are many demons in Europe working hard on her destruction and decay. Not only the European churches need renewal – Europe itself must be renewed.

So do we need a Christian Renaissance of Europe? The Roman-Catholic Father Peter Bristow claims, 'Renaissance and renewal are the special features of Christianity.'[15] Its doctrine of the cross and conversion enables humans and civilisations to rise like 'the phoenix from the ashes'. Peter Bristow again:

> It is a bold and prophetic vision recalling Belloc's view expressed in the early 1930s that Europe would be Christian or it would not exist at all. If there is a renaissance of the Faith in Europe and the old continent rediscovers its identity, its Christian roots and spiritual values, it can contribute to the flowering of a new age of civilization and peace all over the world.

Surely we Christians agree, don't we? But let us, for a moment, consider this: Why has Christian Europe ended up where we are now? There were no real external forces obstructing Christianity in Western Europe to foster and nourish a Christian culture. In fact, the opposite is true. In many Western European countries Christian denominations enjoyed the status of a state church. The doors for evangelisation have always been wide open for them. Christianity has, as a matter of fact, been the main force behind the story of Western success.[16] Who then marginalised the church? Which forces and powers are winning the battle for the minds and hearts of the Europeans? Are those forces inherent in the system of Christendom itself?

A growing number of concerned Christians tend to believe exactly that. According to their analysis, it is the Christendom paradigm which has become the main stumbling block for the church to develop and transform the European culture.[17] Alan Kreider, for example, states: 'We will not fully understand the current malaise of Western Christianity until we come to terms with the phenomenon of Christendom in its many dimensions.'[18] The term *Christendom* describes a certain view of the world. The church and its role in society developed in Europe after Christianity became *religia legitima* in the Roman Empire through the Edict of Milan in 313 under Emperor Constantine (272-337). Christianity soon became an imperial religion and its future was very much determined by its relation to the state. Time and space do not allow the discussion of this Christendom phenomenon in more detail and depth.[19] I am concerned with the question of transformation and change in a given culture. Therefore I am limiting myself to those issues of the modern Christendom paradigm which seem to successfully hinder the church to transform European cultures.[20]

3 Understanding culture and cultural change

Transformation requires knowledge of the target. You have to know what you want to transform before you start to develop a working theory of change and transformation. Transformation of culture requires an understanding of culture. Limited understanding of the target automatically leads to failure. Therefore, we will have to examine carefully our predominant Christian understanding of culture. How do Christians in Europe generally view culture? Is our understanding relevant? Does it help to grasp cultural reality fully?

Secondly, transformation requires a philosophy of change. You have to know how to transform in order to be successful. Transformation is more than an experiment. It is a process following a working theory. The approach we take will considerably influence success or failure. What approach do the majority of European Christians use to change people and society?

The two basic questions, as we will see, are of utmost relevance to the issues we are discussing. Both questions address missiology, the theological discipline which determines the path of Christian expansion in a given society. The challenge of transformation and change in Europe is indeed a challenge to missiology.

3.1 Common understanding of culture and change

How do the majority of European Christians see culture? In my observation, the most common definition identifies culture with a set of values an individual or a collective of individuals holds. Culture is then manifested in the choices the individual or community subscribes to or is intrigued by in order to design a way of life. Values guide choices and choices determine behaviour. Good values produce good choices and as a result determine a good social culture. The rise and fall of civilisations, according to this theory, depends upon the set of values their people hold on to. To change and transform culture requires a change of values. Consequently, one will appeal to people's reason and expect a change of mind, a decision for better ideas. We might call this kind of definition ideological because it identifies values with the right ideas and views. Or we may say it is a world-view driven definition of culture. Most of our missiology today follows such a definition.

It is easy to see where such a definition came from: it is a typical product of a modern mind, which defines humans by their ability to think. It reflects Rene Descartes' (1596-1650) famous logion 'Cogito ergo sum' (= I think, therefore I am).[21] This logion became a *fundamentum inconcussum*, an unquestionable principle of the rationalist Cartesian philosophy. European rationalism finds its fundamental principle here, which for centuries determined all epistemology. Consequently Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) believed that ideas are central to all reflection on life and existence. Ideas move history. Right ideas create right living! The mover and shaker is the human individual.[22] Likewise the individualism of John Locke (1632-1704) saw the autonomous and rational individual as the main actor of social change.[23] These and similar philosophical thoughts are the sources of the ideological view of culture. At the end of the modernist journey, culture became a rational construct of values, views and cognitive decisions.

European Christianity has been deeply influenced by rationalism and its view on culture. Some even praise Christian theology as being the source of rationalism in Europe.[24] It is not my task here to debate the role of Christianity in setting the stage for rationalism in Europe. The truth is, however, that there is a close correlation between Christianity on the one hand and rationalism on the other. The 'victory of reason' in European Christianity is evident everywhere. Rational theology, it seems, is a sign of Christendom.[25] Even in large parts of the Christian Church, where you would least expect rationalistic thinking, the modern paradigm of culture is in operation. Consider, for instance, the Pietistic movement that was largely responsible for most of the European spiritual revival and mission. Pietism dates Christian existence, in terms of a personal relationship with God, to the moment of a personal decision of the individual to follow Jesus in all of life, leading to a conversion of mind and heart. August Hermann Francke (1663-1727), the father of the Pietism in Halle, wrote: 'First you have to repent of all your evil deeds, and then your mind will have to change within you. Only then is there "the beginning of Christianity".' In reality such a conversion would stand for an intellectual acceptance of a set of values based on the Holy Scriptures. The text of the famous black American gospel song puts it to the point: 'I have decided to follow Jesus – no turning back.'[26]

The pietistic act of conversion has become the model for most of evangelical and charismatic evangelism and mission. Attached to the pietistic conversion is the promise of a changed life. In popular terms: You give your life to Christ, you accept his teachings, and your life will be radically changed.[27] And changed individuals will change society. Here is the reason for the enormous 'informational activity' that evangelism-minded Christians have developed: millions of tons of tracts, books, CDs, TV programmes, sermons etc. appeal to the minds of people around the world to accept Jesus into their lives. And many do accept him as their Lord and Saviour. Has this, then, changed the world?

Sure enough, many people have reported a life-changing experience after a typical pietistic conversion. I am a child of Pietism myself. But did society and culture change as a result of pietistic mission? Maybe. I am aware of some interesting results. But in general? I do not think so; surely not in Europe, the motherland of Pietism! And neither in the USA. Pietism may have had considerable influence on the shaping of the Church in Europe but its culture has hardly been influenced. The opposite seems to be true. The rise of pietistic influence in Europe seems to have been paralleled by an alienation of society from Christianity. A decision for Christ and Christian values, a change of mind, seemingly does not change society automatically. In fact, I would argue, it even hinders such a development. Why? Because the prevailing concept of culture as a set of values and of change of culture through making value choices is simply wrong.

How can you change reality without understanding it properly? Jesus Christ himself shows the way by saying: 'You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free' (John 8:32). Whenever we do not know the truth, sustainable change is impossible! Ignorance, says the apostle Paul, results in alienation from a life in God (Ephesians 4:17-18). Has the ignorance of the Christian community regarding culture led to the decay of Christianity in Europe? I believe it has! It will not be enough to appeal to the Christian community for re-evangelisation, as John Paul II and many other ecumenical and evangelical Christians are doing. Sticking to a modernist understanding of culture and cultural change will foster a re-confessionalisation of Europe, and here and there boost a certain denomination at the expense of other denominations, but it will never manage to re-evangelise Europe. Whoever appeals to a Christian renaissance of Europe will have to come up with an alternative concept of culture. A task which Evangelical missiology must take as seriously as possible.

3.2 Culture as a design for living

No other term has produced more questions and opinions than the concept of culture. After all, what is culture? How do cultures function and what are ways of cultural change? The Latin term *cultura* suggests a comprehensive view of the total reality of human existence. Modern-day anthropology develops its definitions along similar lines. The father of contemporary cultural anthropology, Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917), defined culture as the totality of human philosophy of life and behaviour in a given social context. Every attempt to define culture from a particular perspective on human reality has failed so far. Culture is a complex phenomenon and requires a comprehensive definition. Louis Luzbetak rightly claimed culture as 'design for life'[28] and Lothar Käser defined culture as 'strategy for human existence'.[29] Culture is the way of life of a people. It embraces all strata of life in a given group of people, the immanent as well as the transcendent, the material and the social, the cognitive and the religious.[30] So it is not easy to come up with a simple definition of culture.

Ferraro suggests defining culture as a multi-levelled reality. According to this view there are four layers determining culture:

1. The things we have (the material culture) form the basic level.
2. The things we do (the social culture) come on top of it.
3. The third level is formed by what we think (the cognitive culture).
4. Last but not least, the things we believe (the religious culture) form the highest level.[31]

The same concept can be represented by concentric circles.[32] At the bottom of the pyramid or in the outward circle of culture lay the material values of a given culture, consisting of every materially accessible value. You will easily recognise a Muslim woman in Germany just by her outward appearance. Or, both the Turks and the Greeks consider anise brandy a national digestive, even if the Turks call it *raki* and the Greek *ouzo*. The custom of both cultures prescribes anise brandy as a digestive even when other alcoholic drinks are not permitted. You can picture many other outward material signs of your own culture.

The next layer of culture describes things we do: codes, norms and institutions, or systems of behaviour. It is those systems which ultimately determine the right or wrong behaviour of people. Codes of behaviour are set by systems and institutions of a given culture. A young man in the Caucasus, for example, will never be allowed to marry a woman of his choice without consulting his family clan. The way you generally behave in the German public is determined by a code of behaviour called Knigge. You do not know the Knigge? Well, that means you will not really make it in society. In German society, I mean.

All cultures determine their codes and norms of behaviour in one way or another. Those codes are usually formed by the ideas and views people have. The worldviews shape behaviour.

At the heart of every culture, there is religion, a set of beliefs which transcend the obvious and the real. Anthropologists holding to this view of culture will argue that you will only access culture by starting with the material, crossing the social and the cognitive, and finally reaching the religious values. It is impossible to enter the religious heart of a given culture directly. It takes time to understand a culture and it takes even more time to change it.

The modernist view on culture suggests looking at culture as a cognitive construct. We can now see how lopsided this view is and how problematic in terms of cultural change. Comprehensive structures always require comprehensive ways of change. This is a general truth and it clearly applies to a Christian theology of transformation.

3.3 Cultural change – what is needed?

How do cultures change? Is it enough to introduce a set of transformed values into a given culture, as the modernist paradigm suggests? Or is it rather important to change the material forces of the production, as the scientific materialism tries to convince us? How do cultures change? Some preliminary thoughts.

1. Cultural influence runs from the top to the bottom, from the centre to the outside. In other words, the religious culture informs the cognitive, the cognitive the social and the social the material culture. To introduce change means to enter the power highway of a given culture and control it.[33] You will have to understand the totality of a culture to be able to enter that highway. You will simultaneously have to identify with and criticise a given culture, recognising and naming the weak points of a cultural system in order to change it.
2. Cultural influence is guarded and preserved

by cultural institutions and systems. This might be a tribal leadership or intellectual elite. Change requires comprehensive access to those systems of power. Without change in those elites culture is not changeable.

3. Cultures are never static; they are in a constant process of change largely due to intercultural exchange and the growing knowledge of humankind. A representative of a culture may discover material expressions not known to her or his own material culture and will then introduce them to his or her social space. Hence a certain moral behaviour is changed because of intercultural exchange or because this certain concept is found attractive. And some may go through life-changing spiritual experiences. Regardless where the gap happens, the result of introducing something new to a culture will create a tension between the different layers of a given culture. To name the tensions means to identify the needs of a culture, which then offer opportunities for change. To know the gaps in a cultural system means being able to define areas of change.
4. Cultural change is most powerful if it approaches all layers of a culture. People who control the power highway, running through the different layers of culture, are likely to become the most wanted agents for transformation.

4 Christian Renaissance – more than a vision

For a Christian renaissance in Europe, the above suggests that it is only possible if cultural change is in process. This requires a proper understanding of culture and cultural change. Transformation will only be successful when both the target and the method of transformation are clearly defined. One cannot transform postmodern Europe by simply applying modern definitions of culture and cultural change. Christian renaissance requires a comprehensive approach to culture and cultural change. This can only be done by a holistic missiology.

The multilevel concept of culture, as discussed in this paper, offers a frame of reference for a theology of transformation which will have the capacity to foster a Christian renaissance of European society. Such a theology will approach change on all four levels of culture: the material, social, cognitive and religious levels. It will have to look carefully at the areas of cultural tension and debate them on the background of the issues discussed by the elite of a given culture. Discussing theology in public means to promote a public theology. As a matter of fact, public theology is the only way towards cultural change. A theology developed within the four walls of the church will miss out on issues relevant to culture and become irrelevant for the process of transformation. In other words, we plea for a contextual missiology – a missiology which intrigues and fosters public theology.

But what is public theology? The term was developed in the USA in relatively recent times. It is meant as an attempt to practice theology in the frame of reference offered by culture and society.[34] It is a contextual theology at its best, whereas you do not necessarily reflect publically discussed issues in a theological way. This, however, has been common to systematic and practical theology for centuries. Public theology discusses life-relevant issues in public! The public theologian literally enters the public sphere, becoming a vital and active member of the intellectual elite. He or she not merely reflects the work of the elite in an interdisciplinary manner, but rather looks to access the issues intra-disciplinary, as Johannes van der Ven suggested.[35]

Public theology by definition incorporates other cultural disciplines such as sociology, psychology, cultural anthropology, economy and political sciences, to mention a few. It requires empirical research and will highly profit from the work of empirical theology and empirical missiology.[36] Cultural change follows networks, systems and institutions of power, identifying cultural tensions and offering comprehensive solutions. Public theology looks for ways to enter such networks and use their venues of influence and change.

It is, nevertheless, important to underline the fact that such networks and systems are seldom systems of real political power. They may inform the institution of exercised power, such as state and administrative institutions or even state churches, but at the same time they set trends by critically evaluating the practised power. To give an example, we look at the mass media in Germany. The most popular and bestselling newspaper, *Bild*, runs millions of copies. This massive market seems to suggest a powerful tool of influence but in reality trends are rather set by an exclusive news magazine called *Die Zeit* with a relatively small circulation. Similar structures exist in all strata of society. Large universities, globally operating NGOs, and nationally as well as internationally operating institutions may reach the masses, but do they also set trends? Is there enough critical thinking involved or do these systems more or less serve the current paradigm? Transformers will look for innovative, critical and at the same time influential networks. The public theologian targeting change must be in this sphere of operation.

Do Christians in Europe today belong to structures of change? Is a Christian renaissance visible because Christians are addressing the issues of change? No, we are not. Few European departments of Theology have introduced public theology as part of their curriculum. The European theological tradition concentrated on doing theology mainly as a philosophical exercise. No wonder theology, as an academic discipline, has become one of the least attractive disciplines for potential students. Nowadays, many theological schools struggle to attract students. In Germany some famous theological departments at universities have already closed their doors. None of the private elite universities in continental Europe have ever established a faculty of theology. Only in recent years have European theologians started to investigate concepts of contextual theology and only in this decade has public theology become a matter of theological interest. I do not yet see more than experimental thinking coming to the surface. If public theology is a presupposition for societal change, and if Christian renaissance requires theology going public, any talk of an approaching re-evangelisation of Europe is highly speculative because the basic foundations of change do not exist. European elites are not interested in Christianity and the change networks of Europe have few Christians working for them, if any.

We might even go one step behind the ability of European Christianity to introduce change. Most European churches still operate inside a modern paradigm, reading culture from a perspective of an outdated and inaccurate definition. Evangelism still aspires towards value change, Christian education concentrates on ethics and morals, and Christian social involvement concentrates on managing the social space. Beyond doubt, European Christianity itself needs transformation. Without considerable change in Christian theology and church practice, there will be no Christian change agent for Europe.

Does this mean that the idea of Christian renaissance was dead before it even started? Is it a utopia? I do not think so. I feel the winds of change approaching. There is a growing tumult in Christian European circles about the state of Christianity and the continuing process of marginalizing the Church and the Christian faith. A group of 'post-Christendom theologians' demands a new paradigm of church existence in the context of Europe. They see and promote the new emerging theology and structures. There is reason to hope for a new day in European Christianity. And it is in fact a major challenge and task of missiology to promote such a change in theory and praxis.

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Notes

1 This article is the edited version of a paper presented at the 2010 conference of the Fellowship of European Evangelical Theologians (FEET) in Berlin.

2 Pope John Paul II, 'Declaration to Europe', 9 September 1982, 71.

3 Pope John Paul II to the European Convention of the Missionaries to Migrants, 27 June 1986.

4 On the situation of Christian denominations in Great Britain, see Callum G. Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain. Understanding Secularization* (London: Routledge, 2000); S. Bruce, 'The Demise of Christianity in Britain' in G. Davie, P. Heelas and L. Woodhead (eds.), *Predicting Religion: Christian, Secular and Alternatives Futures* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003); Peter Brierly, *Religious trends* (London: Christian Research, 1999); Duncan MacLaren, *Mission Implausible. Restoring Credibility to the Church* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2004).

5 Brown, *Death of Christian Britain*, 5.

6 Bruce, 'Demise of Christianity', 53-63.

7 Brierly, *Religious trends*, as quoted in MacLaren, *Mission Implausible*, 1.

8 MacLaren, *Mission Implausible*, 2.

9 Willi Beck, *Gottesdienst – die Mitte der missionarischen Gemeinde. Zweitgottesdienst – Entwicklung als Baustein für eine zukünftige Sozialgestalt der evangelischen Landeskirche in Württemberg* (Unpublished MTh Dissertation; Pretoria: UNISA, 2007) 35.

10 Friedemann Stöffler, 'Wird Luthers Kirche zur Seniorenkirche?' in *Zitronenfalter* 11/2003; cf. Beck, *Gottesdienst*, 43.

11 Beck, *Gottesdienst*, 43.

12 Wolfgang Huber, Johannes Friedrich & Peter Steinacker, *Kirche in der Vielfalt der Lebensbezüge. Die vierte EKD Erhebung über Kirchenmitgliedschaft* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2006) 453.

13 Beck, *Gottesdienst*, 44.

14 Friedemann Walldorf, *Die Neu-Evangelisierung Europas* (Giessen: Brunnen, 2004), examines differ-

ent strategies to re-evangelise Europe; readers can notice the helplessness of ecumenical, Roman-Catholic and evangelical leaders alike.

15 Peter Bristow, 'A Christian Renaissance for Europe' (1 June 2008) on www.christendom-awake.org/pages/pbristow/renaissa.html.

16 See in this regard Rodney Stark, *The Victory of Reason: How Christianity led to freedom, capitalism, and Western success* (New York: Random House, 2005) who demonstrates the close involvement of Christianity in shaping the capitalist West.

17 Stuart Murray-Williams, *Post-Christendom* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2004) 145ff.

18 Alan Kreider, *The Change of Conversion and the Origin of Christendom* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press, 1999) xiv.

19 See Stuart Murray-Williams' work on the development of the phenomenon, *Post-Christendom*, 23.

20 For an analysis of the relation between the Gospel and culture in Europe see A. Wessels, *Europe: Was it ever really Christian? The Interaction between Gospel and Culture* (London: SCM, 1994).

21 Descartes justified his fundamental principle in *Principia philosophiae* (*Die Prinzipien der Philosophie*; Amsterdam: Elzevier, 1644) chapter 1:7; in a modern German edition: René Descartes, *Philosophische Schriften in einem Band* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1996) 55.

22 For a critical reflection on Hegel and his system see for example Pirmin Stekeler-Weithofer, *Hegels Analytische Philosophie. Die Wissenschaft der Logik als kritische Theorie der Bedeutung* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1992).

23 John Locke, one of the main representatives of the British Renaissance, saw individuals and their rights as central for all human society; see John Locke, *Ein Brief über Toleranz* (English – German), transl., intr. and comment by Julius Ebbinghaus (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1996).

24 Stark, *Victory of Reason*, 5ff.

25 Stark, *Victory of Reason*, 3ff.

26 August Herrmann Francke, at www.bible-only.org/german/handbuch/Francke_August_Hermann.html [accessed 1 September 2010].

27 For an overview, see Markus Matthias, 'Bekehrung und Wiedergeburt' in Hartmut Lehman & Ruth Albrecht (eds.), *Geschichte des Pietismus* (ed. Martin Brecht) Band 4: Glaubenswelt und Lebenswelten (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004) 49-82; Helmut Burkhardt, *Die biblische Lehre von der Bekehrung* (Giessen/Basel: TVG Brunnen, 2005).

28 A deeper discussion of views on culture is in my book on the theology of society-relevant church growth: Johannes Reimer, *Die Welt umarmen. Theologie des gesellschaftsrelevanten Gemeindebaus* (Marburg: Francke, 2009) 189-193.

29 Lothar Käser, *Fremde Kulturen. Eine Einführung in die Ethnologie* (Bad Liebenzell: Verlag Liebenzeller Mission, 1997) 37.

30 Stephan Dahl, 'Einführung in die Interkulturelle Kommunikation' [2001] on www.intercultural-network.de/einführung, 4 [accessed 1 September 2005].

31 Reimer, *Die Welt umarmen*, 191

32 See Dahl, 'Einführung', 4; Reimer, *Die Welt umarmen*, 192.

33 Reimer, *Die Welt umarmen*, 189.

34 See for instance Willie James Webb, *The Way out of Darkness. Vital Public Theology* (Bloomington IN: Author House, 2007); Elaine Graham & Anna Rowlands (eds.), *Pathways to Public Square* (Münster: LIT-Verlag, 2006); Gavin D´Costa, *Theology in the Public Square: Church, Academy and Nation* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005).

35 Johannes van der Ven, *Entwurf einer empirischen Theologie* (Weinheim: Deutscher Studienverlag, 1990).

36 Van der Ven, *Entwurf*; Tobias Faix, *Gottesvorstellungen bei Jugendlichen: Eine qualitative Erhebung aus der Sicht empirischer Missionswissenschaft* (Empirische Theologie, Band 16; Münster: LIT-Verlag, 2007).

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Stefan Paas

RÉSUMÉ

Il est largement reconnu que l'Europe est devenue une « terre de mission ». Pourtant, la plupart des unions d'Églises n'ont pas intégré ce fait dans la formation théologique qu'elles dispensent à leurs futurs pasteurs. Cet article commence par définir les contours d'un « ministère missionnaire ». Ce ministère doit viser à équiper les saints en vue du service. Il considère ensuite certains traits typiques de l'Europe post-chrétienne ou sécularisée et la compare à une divorcée. Il présente et analyse la réponse chrétienne à apporter en termes d'adaptation, de conservation et d'innovation. Il reconsidère enfin quelle formation on donne actuellement aux pasteurs dans ce contexte et fait quelques propositions pour l'améliorer. Les pasteurs doivent être des étrangers dans la culture occidentale, profondément enracinés dans les Écritures, expérimentés au plan pratique, et à même de servir de guides spirituels.

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SUMMARY

It is widely believed that Europe has become a 'mission field'. However, most denominations have not really processed this in the theological training they give to their future ministers. This article defines first what a 'missionary ministry' entails. It sees the task of ministers as equipping the saints to ministry. Secondly, it reflects on some characteristics of post-Christian or 'secular' Europe which is compared to a divorcée. The Christian responses of adaptation, conservation and innovation are analysed. Finally, the current training of pastors in this context is reviewed and some suggestions for improvement are made. Ministers must be strangers in Western culture, deeply rooted in the Scriptures, familiar with practice and spiritual guides.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Es ist eine weithin verbreitete Überzeugung, dass Europa zum ‚Missionsfeld' geworden ist. Die meisten Denominationen haben jedoch diese Erkenntnis noch nicht in der theologischen Ausbildung umgesetzt, die sie ihren künftigen Pastoren angedeihen lassen. Dieser Artikel definiert erstens, was einen ‚missionarischer Dienst' ausmacht, und sieht die Aufgabe von Pastoren darin, die Heiligen zum Dienst auszurüsten. Zweitens betrachtet er einige Charakteristiken des nachchristlichen oder ‚säkularen' Europa, das mit einer geschiedenen Frau verglichen wird, und analysiert die christlichen Antworten von Angleichung, Bewahrung und Neuerung. Schließlich überprüft der Artikel in diesem Zusammenhang die gegenwärtige Ausbildung von Leitern und macht einige Verbesserungsvorschläge. Pastorale Leiter sollten nicht in der westlichen Kultur, sondern stattdessen tief in der Schrift verwurzelt sein. Auch sollten sie mit praktischem Dienst und geistlicher Leiterschaft vertraut sein

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Introduction

In this article I will set out some thoughts on the theological training of future ministers in the context of secular Europe.[1] This theme is located at the intersection of three important questions: 1) What is 'mission'?, 2) What is ministry?, and 3) What is our modern European context? Together these three questions sharpen our focus on the issue of missionary theological education for pastors in 21st century Europe. Only after we have tried to answer them, we can draw some outlines of how pastors may be prepared for their task in today's Europe.

1. What is mission?

So, what is mission? Unfortunately, our problems start here, right at the outset. Mission and evangelism[2] today suffer from a lack of clarity and purpose.[3] We must take some time, therefore, to consider what we mean by 'mission' and 'missionary ministry'. (Is there also a 'non-missionary' ministry?) Is it something we *do* or first and foremost something we *are*, an essential identity mark of the Church? Does mission happen overseas or can it be done in Europe as well? Does mission include social justice advocacy or should it be limited to evangelism? I cannot conduct these discussions here. Let me just list seven brief statements that sum up what I believe about 'mission':

1. Mission begins with God who sends out his people in the world to call his chosen to discipleship and to gather them in a community of his followers, called to worship God, to serve and love their neighbours, and to care for God's creation. The term *missio Dei* has often been misconstrued and it carries the burden of a thousand definitions. Yet, it is a wonderful term to indicate that mission is primarily the work of the Trinity and not ours. Mission is first and foremost the great work of the sovereign God and his love for his creation, urging him to elect, call, save and reconcile human beings. In mission we do not bring an absent Christ to an abandoned world. God is already ahead of us in mission, through his Holy Spirit. However hostile and resistant our world may be, it is essentially not an alien territory: it is God's world.[4]
2. God's primary instrument of mission is his Church. The Christian Church cannot be but a missionary church. Its very identity is to represent and give witness to God, the creator and ruler of the universe. Our mission is witnessing to this good news of God's love as it has been revealed throughout the Bible, but ultimately in the incarnation, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Every word, every deed that bears witness to this story of God working his purposes in the world is in principle missionary by its very nature.[5]
3. We need both words and deeds to do this act of witnessing. Mission is therefore wider than evangelism. It is everything the Church has been called to do in the world as witness of Christ. This does not involve each and every possible good deed, but especially those that were the focus of Christ's own work on earth as he announced the coming of the Kingdom: feeding the hungry, healing the sick, attending to the prisoners, prophesying against injustice, reconciling broken relationships.
4. However, without evangelism there can be no true Christian mission. This was the core of Jesus' incarnate life and that of the work of the apostles. It is the essential criterion of mission that we 'name the Name' where it is not known and invite non-believers in the community of Jesus' disciples. We cannot talk about the Kingdom of God in any meaningful sense if we leave out the one who represented this Kingdom among us.
5. All this means that the entire life of the Church has a missionary purpose or dimension. But this purpose can be recognised most clearly when the Church reaches out beyond its inner life and bears witness to the Gospel in the world. Christian mission is most visible where it happens at the frontier between faith and unbelief, as an act of costly witness.[6]
6. Mission presumes a local community that in its very life reflects the Gospel of the Kingdom. The medium is the message, or, in the words of Lesslie Newbigin: 'The congregation is the hermeneutic of the Gospel.' As soon as mission is cut loose from a loving, graceful community, it tends to become a 'programme'. It runs the risk of being understood in terms of methods, effectiveness and measurable results.[7] This is why the Church should never outsource her task to parachurch movements, even if those organisations can be necessary at certain stages of the missionary process.
7. When we understand what mission is, we must not limit 'mission' to countries far away. What 'mission' is, is not defined by an address or geographical location. Since the early twentieth century it has increasingly been recognised that it is impossible to divide the world in 'Christian' and 'pagan' territories. Europe is a mission field just as every other continent is the object of God's mission. It may be a very special mission field, one with a unique history, but mission is in principle never finished. As long as Christ has not returned, this is the time of God's favour, the day of salvation (2 Corinthians 6:2). When Johann Hinrich Wichern, the 19th century German evangelist, founded his *Innere Mis-*

sion ('home mission') he said: 'Mission in our times in this country is nothing but the continuation or the resumption of what the first missionaries had begun in Europe.'[8] I agree. Training for mission that comprises our western culture will require that we approach this frontier in missionary rather than in pastoral terms.

2. What is ministry?

Again, I will try to keep this section as concise as possible and just state what I think about this, without too much argumentation. In doing this I will be informed by my own Reformed background, but I believe that the following remarks may also be relevant for evangelicals who would not count themselves within this particular tradition. I want to make three points: 1) ministry must be distinguished from discipleship, 2) the ministry of the Word is the most essential ministry of the Church, and 3) the task of this particular ministry is to equip the saints for mission.

Sometimes the word 'ministry' seems to mean virtually everything a Christian does in his or her life of discipleship. (This has been caused, partly, by identifying it exclusively with the Greek *diakonia*.) But if it means everything, it does no longer mean anything special.[9] Ministry is not equivalent with general Christian behaviour such as worshipping, praying, evangelising, helping elderly people and so on. These are all aspects of discipleship, but not every disciple is a minister. Ministry implies a calling, a public recognition and an appointment for a certain task. Ministers (in the general sense) are people with a special responsibility. Ministry depends on the definition of gifts (*charismata*) by the community of Christians.

To be clear about this: having a gift of praying or serving or evangelising may result in an appointment into ministry for this special task. I am not suggesting that ministry is to be reserved for preachers, elders and deacons – or whatever we call our formal leadership.[10] It may be a very good thing to recognise publicly that certain members of the congregation have a special calling within or outside the Church and to officially 'send them out' for this task. Especially people working in highly secular workplaces deserve support like this. Lesslie Newbigin believed that this stress on the calling of individual believers in the public square was a characteristic contribution of the Reformed tradition to missionary ecclesiology.[11] According to Darrell Guder, it is important that the Church provides forms of instruction and spiritual formation to help *all* its members to identify a specific vocation, perhaps for a specific period of time. For him this is the only way to change structures of (passive) membership into structures of mission.[12]

Some ministries, however, are more essential than others for the life of the Church and its mission. Within the Reformed tradition, the 'ministry of the Word' has been recognised as the core ministry of the Church.[13] This is not to deny that the Gospel should be embodied or that it must be expressed in deeds. However, the Church lives by the Gospel, and only under the guidance of the Word of God can it be constantly reformed. This is essential: if the Church is not continually experiencing the life-changing power of the Word, it cannot do mission. There are several ways to express this priority of the ministry of the Word. Reformed churches have expressed it, amongst other things, in the ordered offices: special ministries without which a church cannot function properly.

The ministry of the Word does not need to be confined to one single person. On the contrary, in Ephesians 4:11-12 five instances of this 'office' are mentioned: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. In the Reformed tradition these dimensions have been concentrated in the office of the minister of the Word, the pastor-teacher. But already Calvin was quite clear about the fact that for him this was a matter of listening to the times (*necessitas temporum*) and acting accordingly. The centrality of the ministry of the Word is a Reformed doctrine; the solo pastor is not. It is important to underline this. For more than one reason the ministry of the Word in today's missionary Church should be embodied in a *team*, a fellowship of faithful men and women,[14] with shared responsibilities.[15]

Anyhow, from Ephesians 4 it appears clearly what the function of this ministry is: 'to equip the saints for the work of ministry' (v. 12). This means that all the formally structured offices of the Church (i.e., those who have been appointed to the ministry of the Word) as a mission community are defined in terms of that mission. The offices must be functional to the Church's mission and they can be reorganised if the mission of the Church requires this. However, regardless of its organisation, the ministry of the Word always has these five dimensions: it is apostolic, prophetic, evangelising, pastoral and instructive. All five dimensions are needed to equip the Church for mission.

3. What is a missionary ministry?

So what is a 'missionary ministry'? As far as I can see, this word can mean two things:

1. In a general sense, it may mean every special vocation in the area of mission. Although every Christian is called to be a witness, some Christians may have specific missionary gifts and responsibilities. Of course, we can think of missionaries and evangelists, but we do not need to stop there. For example, the church may recognise that some of her members who work in education, health care, the government, the army, business or the arts need special training and spiritual guidance in order to make the most of their witness in these circumstances. Sadly enough, many churches fail badly in this area.
2. In a specific sense, 'missionary ministry' is the ministry of the Word as it functions in its apostolic, prophetic, evangelistic, pastoral and instructive dimensions, to equip the people of God for mission. At the risk of stating the obvious, this is what makes this ministry 'tick'. There is no such thing as a 'de-missionary' ministry of the Word. Whoever uses this ministry to equip the saints for something different than mission is not ministering the Word of God. And whoever thinks that 'mission' is an optional 'extra', not intrinsically connected with the ministry of the Divine Word, is mistaken.

The above may sound a bit overdone. Surely, there is more than 'mission'? So many church leaders focus almost exclusively on the needs and interests of believers, especially in the 'religious department' of their lives. So many sermons hardly (if ever) encounter the questions of unbelievers. So very few ministers of the Word are actively involved in evangelism or any other mission the church is called to do. So many church councils limit their pastors severely with respect to the time they are allowed to spend 'on the street', searching for lost sheep. Would I suggest that all these honourable people fulfil their office in a dysfunctional way?

As a matter of fact, yes. Even if this is the default mode of our theology and practice of the offices, and although I would never blame individual ministers for this inadequate fulfilment of their task (systemic errors must not be blamed on individuals), nevertheless we must state that this is a very harmful distortion of the ministry of the Word. Here we wrestle with the heritage of centuries of Christendom. Mission was something that happened far away, 'out there'. It was an optional 'extra', something for special occasions. In Europe everybody was a Christian, even if he or she needed further instruction and formation. Church leadership was conceived in terms of the pastoral care of existing congregations but not as a missionary way of being.[16] Today we see this inward focus of church ministry revealed in the tendency of denominations to concentrate ministerial resources by merging congregations and deploying ministers in places where there are still enough Christians available to support them. This not only accelerates the decline, it is also the opposite of a missionary strategy, which would send ministers where they are most needed – where Christian presence is weakest.[17] In the words of Lesslie Newbigin:

> Ministerial leadership for a missionary congregation will require that the minister is directly engaged in the warfare of the kingdom against the powers that usurp the kingship.[18]

I am very happy that today we can see some good models of this fulfilment of the ministry of the Word. To mention a few examples I have seen in the Netherlands:

- More and more ministers, following the lead of men like Tim Keller, embark on the adventure of preaching missionally. They really want to minister the Word in such a way that unbelievers, seekers and young Christians are challenged, built up and instructed (cf. 1 Corinthians 14).
- More and more ministers want to be involved in evangelistic work and require substantial time from their elders for this. They refuse to be completely swallowed by the pastoral needs of church members.
- I know of ministers who deliberately join secular clubs (sports, arts, business) or remain involved in secular professions (tent making, bi-vocational pastors) as part of their missionary ministry. They do not want to lock themselves away within the safety of the church walls.
- More and more ministers dedicate themselves to instructing, encouraging and coaching small groups of young Christians to help them find their way in God's kingdom.
- More and more ministers apply themselves to the task of revitalising or replanting congregations that have withered away.
- Church planting is increasingly becoming

a respected occupation for Reformed pastors. An assessment for future church planters in the Netherlands (February 2011) was attended by twelve young theologians, some of them already working in the ministry, others still looking forward to it.

Humanly speaking, Christians will only be involved in mission when their ministers lead the way. They must be challenged, encouraged, supported, instructed to answer God's call to love their neighbour and to take care of his creation. This must be done, first and foremost, by ministering the Word of God to them, communally and individually, by gifted people who have experienced the grace of God's mission in their own lives.

How do we educate such ministers in Europe today? That is the main question in the remainder of this article. I will first spend some words on Europe, our shared context.

4. Europe today

Europe is a mission field. As I have said above, there is nothing strange or unexpected in this statement. If God is a missionary God, if the Church is a missionary community, the whole world is and will remain a mission field until Jesus returns and the kings of the earth throw down their crowns before him. The current secularisation of large parts of Europe is only a reminder that there will never be such a thing as a fully 'missionised' society. In fact, the division of the world into 'mission fields' and 'mission bases' has become obsolete.[19]

However, Europe is a special mission field (and therefore a special mission base as well!). It has a long history of Christendom. Once church membership was a duty for citizens in most European countries. Long and bloody religious wars have been fought in Europe. Many of our institutions and laws carry the vestiges of our Christendom history. Even today the majority of the Europeans are formally church members and believe in 'God' (however defined). Europe is also a large and very diverse continent. In terms of religion it contains some of the most religious countries in the world (like Poland and Northern Ireland) but it is also home to the most irreligious countries on the face of the planet (like France and Sweden).

In this article I focus on what we might call the 'post-Christian' (or secular) parts of Europe.[20] It is here that traditional assumptions of church leadership are challenged most. Characteristic of a post-Christian society is on the one hand its determination by Christianity; on the other hand its resistance to it. C.S. Lewis once compared this to a divorce: a woman who has divorced her husband is not just an unmarried woman. She is in a very specific sense 'post-married', determined by marriage experiences, yet currently not married and very wary of future marriage.

Post-Christian European culture is the consequence of a long historical encounter between Christianity and modernity.[21] Out of this encounter new forms of Christianity and secularity have emerged, forms that we are all familiar with. Let us first look at modernity. I think we all have some idea what is meant by that word. Here I follow a list presented by the sociologist Yves Lambert.[22] He defines seven interrelated trends of modernity: 1) the primacy of reason, 2) the omnipresence of technology (representing control and power), 3) individualisation and freedom, 4) mass movement (mobility), 5) capitalism (market and consumption), 6) functional differentiation (autonomy of separate spheres of society) and 7) globalisation.

What about Christianity? Lambert and other social scientists mention four characteristic 'effects' of modernity on religion: 1) decline, 2) adaptation or reinterpretation, 3) conservation or resistance, and 4) innovation. In missiological terms we might say that options 2) to 4) represent different dimensions of *contextualisation*. For Christianity to contextualise in the current European culture it needs to adapt and to be reinterpreted in order to be understood. It needs to resist and conserve in order to keep its integrity. It needs to innovate and find new cultural forms in order to transform social life in the light of God's purposes. (Let me notice, in parenthesis, that most evangelical Christians in my observation are better in adaptation and resistance than in innovation. We tend to define adapted and conservative forms of religion as 'real' evangelical options, while we tend to be suspicious towards innovative forms of religion.)

5. Modern religious patterns in Europe

How does this work in practice? If we combine the seven trends of modernity with the four effects on / responses of religion, twenty-eight different religious and anti-religious pathways of modern Europeans emerge. Let me give two examples to illustrate this.

Take the 'primacy of reason'. Modernity has developed rational, evidence-based ways of speaking and arguing, science being the ultimate example. Revelation and religious authority have become unreliable sources of knowledge for modern people. This has resulted first of all in the *decline* of religion (Christianity) since many Europeans felt that reason and religion were opposed to each other. One of the most vigorous spokesmen of this position today is the Englishman Richard Dawkins.[23] Modern atheism is a consequence of this, although only a small minority of Europeans (around 5%) are forthright atheists.

But this was not the only effect. Christianity has also *adapted* itself to the age of reason. It developed ways to show the rationality of faith (apologetics). Protestants in particular resisted magic and mystery, they applied rational methods in the exegesis of the Bible, and so forth. Thirdly, Christians have *resisted* the rule of reason, for example in the Pietistic movements, in Pentecostalism, but also in the Roman Catholic emphasis on liturgy and sacraments. All this pertains to an underlining of the non-rational elements of faith or even to stressing that Christianity is per definition not a philosophy or theory (Kierkegaard). Finally, modernity has forced Christians to develop new forms of Christianity or it has invited Christians to find new, 'rational' expressions of their religion. Within Protestant Christianity (and Islam) we may think of creationism as a typical modern form of believing ('evidence-based' as it were). But Deism is another example. In a rational world, controlled by human power, it seems hard to believe in a personal God who is always close at hand and prepared to answer our prayers. Increasingly, Europeans believe in an impersonal God, 'something out there'. Both can be explained as forms of *innovation*: finding new ways to maintain a religious life view in a rational world.

A second example is 'individualisation and freedom'. Modern people emphasise their individuality to such an extent that they have said goodbye to collective arrangements, institutions and traditional authorities – religious or otherwise. Again, this has led to the *decline* of Christianity, because many people believed that they could only be free and responsible individuals if they broke with religion. It was a matter of human dignity to become an atheist or a secular humanist. But it is a well-known fact that Christianity has *adapted* itself, especially in its Protestant versions, to this new reality. Many analysts would even say that the Reformation was one of the first cultural expressions of this new individuality in the West. Protestant Christians have stressed personal piety and experience at the expense of liturgy and sacraments. They have elevated the priesthood of all believers and downplayed the importance of institutions and authorities. Then again, Christians have also tried to *resist* this trend. Especially in the most conservative parts of evangelical denominations there is great emphasis on obedience and collective arrangements, and a great suspicion of individuality. But the Roman Catholic Church too maintains its very critical stance towards individual religion. Finally, in terms of *innovation*, we may think of all those new religious practices today that show an increased sense of self-awareness and self-development. Denominational mobility, permanent 'seeking', do-it-yourself religion and certain forms of spirituality are among these new religious trends.

From cross-pressures like these the typical post-Christian European landscape emerges. This is the field where today's ministers of the Word have to equip the people of God for mission. Yves Lambert mentions six features of this landscape. Here I mention only three of them. New religious forms of modernity are characterised by:

1. This-worldliness: the dominance of technology, science and human control has led to a very strong immanent orientation of most Europeans. If religion is anything worthwhile, it has to prove itself in the arena of everyday life. This has affected Christianity as well. The importance given to other-worldly salvation has collapsed. Generally, Christians tend to be more world-affirming than world-rejecting. They emphasise the consequences of faith for this life and speak less and less about the afterlife. An important consequence of this-worldliness is the disassociation between sin and guilt and one's fate after death (desoteriologisation) which leads to the collapse of the concept of sin or to a more 'this-worldly' interpretation: sin distances one from God in the here and now and prevents one from benefiting from his grace, from being fully happy, from communicating with the deep inner self, from finding earthly peace and harmony, and so forth.
2. Self-spirituality: the desire for freedom and liberty combined with empiricism, in a pluralistic environment. In an unstable environment, surrounded by so many alternative options, the believing individual looks for firm evidence that they are right after all. This

supreme spiritual authority can be the inner self or some form of 'divine within'. Even if external beliefs, scriptures, norms or authorities are accepted, they must be legitimated through personal experience. This applies to morality, for example. One-half of the Europeans say that the churches offer answers to spiritual problems, while only one-third believe this to be true for moral, social and family problems.

3. Pluralism, relativism, probabilism, pragmatism: this is the consequence of modern trends such as the supremacy of science, the desire for freedom (personal religious choice), democracy and globalisation (confronting us with so many other worldviews). They encourage pluralistic, relativistic forms of faith, or in reaction, trends that reassert the certainties. With extreme demythologisation, this can end in complete 'liberalism' (symbolist faith: Jesus' resurrection is a necessary symbol but not a historic fact). Generally, modern believers have a 'seeker spirituality': even if they are devout Christians, they need space for exploration, experimentation and mobility.

When we reflect on this post-Christian culture, we may become aware of a major pitfall. Whenever theologians analyse modern culture they tend to oppose 'theology' (or the 'Gospel') to 'culture', as if it were possible to discuss these two separately. This problem is reinforced by the tendency of our seminaries and universities to do theology exclusively by books and lectures. We discuss our culture as if we are unaffected outsiders, representatives of a pre-modern past, looking at this foreign tribe of post-Christian Europeans. Consequently, we develop a missiology out of our a-cultural convictions and 'drop' this missiology into our culture, as if from a Platonic world of Ideas.

However, we need to see that all our answers are contextualised answers. They are negotiations with modernity. All our theological or missiological approaches of post-Christian Europe are examples of adaptation, conservation or innovation. Regardless of whether we are aware of this, we present our analyses and answers as late-modern Europeans. Even if we claim that our answers must be exactly the same as those of our ancestors, we say different things because we live in completely different circumstances. For instance, speaking of the 'covenant' sounds very different in an individualised society compared with a much more traditional and collective society some centuries ago. This is true, even (or especially) if we would say exactly the same things as our theological ancestors.

Thinking about 'missionary ministry' today, we must be aware of our own responses to modernity. We must be aware of the extent to which our own practice and belief is determined by this-worldliness, self-spirituality and relativity. We need to reflect on this and to ask ourselves what in our missiology is necessary adaptation, what is actually Christianised modernity, and what is healthy innovation. We need to know where to bend to modernity, where to resist it and where to design new Christian beliefs and practices, incorporating the true insights of modernity. The modern missionary movement was born out of strong convictions of the absolute truth of Christianity combined with belief in the absolute superiority of Western culture. It is very difficult for most modern Christians to maintain these convictions with the same force as previous generations. Consequently, some authors today speak of a 'post-missionary' age. We need to do mission within a changed world, as people who have changed.

With this in mind, let us finally turn to the issue of missionary education of ministers of the Word in Europe today.

6. Preparing for mission?

In what follows I concentrate on the formal theological training of pastors in a Reformed setting – the setting I know best. In my country this usually means the completion of a university degree after four to six years of study. Of course, there are many other ways to study theology: evening classes, Bible schools and Sunday schools, TEE and so forth. What I am about to say about theological education relates to these types of education as well, generically. However, my own experience lies with university training, professional and academic.[24]

Does this training prepare students for missionary ministry? The missiologist Wilbert Shenk recalls that in 1990 and 1991 he conducted a survey in several Western countries to determine 1) if there were programmes whose object was the training of missionaries to the peoples of modern Western culture; and, if so 2) what the curriculum comprised. His conclusion was: 'I never advanced beyond the first question.'[25] There were occasional courses on missiology or evangelism, to be sure, but nowhere was there any sign of a complete rethinking of the theological curriculum in terms of the missionary identity of the church.

Speaking for my own country, the Netherlands, there have been some improvements since then. In most theology departments, especially those connected to a church denomination, missionary competencies have been included in the profile of future ministers. It is recognised that a minister of the Word today is inevitably a kind of missionary in his own culture. This insight has to some extent been translated in the curricula of universities. The Protestant Theological University, for example, has included two or three missionary modules in the training of future pastors of the largest Protestant church in the Netherlands. And the Theological University in Kampen (Free Reformed) offers a full year (60 European Credits) of missiological training which may be included in the three year Master's study of future ministers of the Word as a year of specialisation.

But overall it is still possible to become a pastor in one of the Reformed (and most other) denominations in the Netherlands without much missiological training of any substance. Even now the curriculum reflects that mission is for those who are interested in it, for special people, 'practical' people – but not for 'real' theologians. Why is this still the case? Let us consider some causes:

1. Old habits die hard. A theological curriculum that has been developed in centuries of Christendom is not likely to change overnight. To quote Newbigin once again:

   > …it seems clear that ministerial training as currently conceived is still… far too little oriented toward the missionary calling to claim the whole of public life for Christ and his kingdom.[26]

   In other words, theology is something that is done within the Church, as far away from the world as possible. I sometimes wonder how many students take theology as their route, just to be in a safe, predictable environment. And how many professors do they meet who seem just to reflect this position? Wonderful, faithful and learned people, but 'hospitalised' to such an extent that they lack the competence to communicate with anyone outside the walls of their seminary, let alone with unbelievers.
2. A gap between mission and theology. Here is a serious difficulty in Western theology: it considers mission, and especially evangelism, as something that is indispensible in practice but not really interesting from a theological perspective.[27] The evangelistic tradition, on the other hand, has increasingly been hijacked by marketeers, sales managers and church growth gurus. There is a deep hidden covenant here between theologians and evangelists: they both know that theology and evangelism are not really interested in each other. We may confess that all good theology is born in mission, out of reflection on the Gospel crossing new borderlines, but this insight has hardly been processed in our theology. Whoever has studied Jonathan Edwards knows that mission experiences can produce very strong theology. Today the same applies in many non-Western contexts. But when our students are really interested in theology, they opt for systematics or biblical studies. Missiology or evangelism is for 'practitioners' – for the less intelligent perhaps?
3. A lack of exercise. This is partly due to the Christendom system. Most theology professors have been educated within this paradigm. This means that they have loads of experience in the field of preaching (for Christians, that is), pastoral work and church politics, but very little in social justice advocacy, leading Alpha courses and creative evangelism. As a consequence, they speak with confidence about matters that concern the inner life of the church and hesitantly, abstractly and without much inspirational force about mission. But the same applies to the students. Even if they have personal experience with mission, they lack the opportunity to reflect on these experiences in class. Their practice and their theology remain separated. The organisation of the curriculum reinforces this problem, since our theological education is focused on books and classroom work. Doing social research, being involved in, for example, leading a Christianity Explored course or doing volunteer work in the Red Light district of Amsterdam are not part of the curriculum. Thus, these practices will not become sources of theological reflection or help students to develop a missionary spirituality. They remain enclosed in a predominantly middle class, family-oriented, white, Christian environment, the cultural rules of which they have incorporated to such an extent that they

easily identify it with 'biblical' Christianity.

So there is a double challenge here. First, we must overcome a very strong tradition of inward-looking theological education. Second, we must find ways to understand and do mission in a post-Christian, post-missionary context, full of uncertainties. I believe this leads us to the following programme of theological education today.

7. Programme of theological education

In this last section I mention five programmatic fields in the theological education of pastors. Ministers of the Word in post-Christian Europe must be:

1. *Strangers again*. A missionary is a guest, not the owner of the house (cf. Luke 10:1-16). This is easier to accept when we are sent to foreign continents than in our own. 'We who are indigenous to this culture too easily accept the dubious assumption that we know it in its depths'.[28] I believe becoming a stranger has three different dimensions:
   - accepting our marginalisation without losing our love: our post-Christian situation may teach us that Christians are never truly at home in the world. The fact that Christian pastors have lost their status and respectful position may teach us something about the wisdom of the cross. Learning to become a stranger again begins with joyfully accepting our marginal position as a minority in secular Europe but without losing our love for God's world. We do not need to control our societies in order to love our neighbours and to pray for our governments;
   - developing curiosity for the unknown and rejecting rash judgements: especially those who are thrilled by everything new and those that are abhorred by it, tend to judge too quickly. If we learn to become strangers again in our own culture we will be more impressed by its complexity. We will accept that the only way to know it is to be involved in it, and that it will take years before we can understand it somewhat;
   - developing critical sense and resistance against the dominance of modernity: becoming a stranger again helps us not to be impressed too quickly by the modern attitude towards our religion. Western culture is powerful, all-pervasive and saturated with irony. This can be very discouraging for every missionary. We must learn to see through this mask of self-confidence. How? First and foremost through relationships with Christians from other parts of the world, especially those parts that suffer under Western power. Secondly, by forging relationships with the marginal people of our own society. For example, reflecting on the issue of trafficking and sex slavery has helped me to see the dark side of the city where I live, Amsterdam. This is a city that is determined by consumption. Everything seems negotiable, there seems to be no room at all for a firm conviction about anything. But at the same time this city takes in a lot of money by advertising its Red Light District. If we do not develop the attitude of committed strangers in our own culture, we will end up being absorbed by it or being so revolted by it that we become sectarians. Missionary consciousness entails that we realise that all cultures are human constructs, full of sin and grace. None, including the culture of Christendom, approximates the Kingdom of God.[29]
2. *Deeply rooted in the Scriptures*. Newbigin once said that every missionary must learn to speak two languages: his first language is the language of the Bible and his second language is that of the culture where he is sent. Some time ago I was deeply impressed when I met a group of Brazilian theology students. When a Dutch theology professor asked them what would be their 'theological' response to the Health & Wealth Gospel that currently pervades their country, I saw all of them immediately grasp their Bibles (so much for trained instincts!). When they opened them, I saw that all these Bibles were full of underlining and colour. It was obvious that their Bibles were their tools, not just sources of data. After this we had half an hour of discussion, that is to say: the students very gracefully exchanged Bible quotes (sometimes very unexpected ones but virtually always to the point), compared Scripture with Scripture, and made some astonishingly wise remarks. Everything showed that they were people highly trained in using the Bible, not just as a box full of texts that can be used in whatever

way we like (usually to manipulate others), but as a way of communal reading aimed at shared challenges. I must admit that my students rarely bring Bibles to their classes. Somehow we have learnt that quoting the Bible directly in a theological university is too simple, bordering on naivety. Of course, we believe the Bible and we do read it, individually, but we are so aware of hermeneutical difficulties, historical problems and the dangers of biblicism that one of the things our students may learn is never to use the Bible to solve practical problems in ministry. In recent times I am trying to change this. Whenever I discuss a theological issue in class (say, conversion or ecclesiology or secularisation) I ask my students to prepare this at home by looking up passages from the Bible that they feel to be relevant for this discussion. Then I set apart the first 30 or 45 minutes of every course to discuss these passages together. I believe it is important to be aware of hermeneutics and historical analysis, and sometimes I insert remarks on this into our discussions, but we must never forget that the Bible has been given us first to transform us and not to inform us.[30]

3. *Acquainted with practice*. As I said above, it is indispensible for theological education to immerse students in missionary practice. They are sources for theological reflection and invaluable opportunities to learn to become strangers again. They invite us to study the Bible together. They help us to be theologians of the Church. They give us credibility when we address others, Christians and non-Christians.
4. *People of paradox*. Every good book on leadership will tell us that paradox is an important ingredient of effective leaders. They must be capable of being close to people but without being swallowed up by them. This is called 'self-differentiation': a minister should not be dependent on the approval of people for his own identity, but neither should he be cold and indifferent to them. Intimacy without fear, that is the gracious quality of a Godly leader. However, I believe that this same quality also applies to us as cultural beings. Post-Christian culture is paradoxical at heart. Modern trends and religious responses to them are not uniform; they point in a wide variety of directions, often contradicting each other. Liberalism and fundamentalism are both *modern* religious positions, and we often find them in our own immediate environments – or even in our own soul. To do mission in this culture we must be so close to it that we feel the relativity and the pluralism in it, without losing our hope and desire for God's glory. We must be people of the paradox. We must accept that we will never completely understand our own culture and its effects on us. We must certainly accept that we will never control it. Especially for evangelicals this is a hard lesson to learn. We like consistency; we are good at building logical systems. We believe that everyone whose opinions on an issue are not cast in iron must automatically give way to relativism on other issues as well. But people of the paradox know how to 'muddle through': they like to think and work step by step. They seek consistency but they accept that this is often a futile search. Post-Christian missionaries will always look for the high ground but they know that we often have to wade through swamps to get there.
5. *Spiritual guides*. In a recent survey Dutch people were asked which associations they had with 'spirituality'. These associations were generally positive; many modern people are looking for more spirituality, for a sense of meaning and purpose. But when asked for persons and institutions they would go to in their search for spirituality, hardly anyone mentioned the church. Churches are not spiritual; they are moralistic places, dull, teaching doctrine instead of experience. Much can be said about this. I do not want to suggest that this judgement is correct but I believe that it is not very helpful to become defensive about this. The first Christians were considered as very peculiar and sometimes dangerous people but they were never seen as dull. If people look at the church as a place where spirituality is extinguished, we do have a problem. I believe that in our culture of 'seeker' spirituality we need to be on the road where people are. I wish that ministers of the Divine Word would be seen again as 'those strange guys outside the camp who seem to know how to knock on heaven's doors'. Spiritual formation needs to be included in our theological curricula, both in theory and in practice. Our students need to know how

to help people who ask questions like 'how can I pray?', 'what will happen if I become a Christian?', 'why can't I control my temper?', 'how can I find more balance between my work and my life?' and 'what does your faith have to say about family feuds?'. They need to become sensitive to the pathfinder spirituality of modern people and to find ways to be on the road with them. 'We do not want to lord over your faith', Paul writes, 'but we work with you for your joy' (2 Corinthians 1:24).

These five fields of attention are pivotal in the theological training of our ministers. I hope that they will inspire us to reform our ministerial training and to contribute to the formation of the next generation of servants of the Divine Word.

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Notes

1 Originally this article was a discussion paper for the European Conference of Reformed Churches (EuCRC) on 22 March 2011, Kampen (the Netherlands). I have only made minor adaptations.

2 To keep the discussion as simple as possible, I will not discuss the term 'evangelisation'. I take this more or less as an equivalent of 'mission' and thus as a wider concept than 'evangelism'.

3 James A. Scherer, *Gospel, Church & Kingdom: comparative studies in world mission theology* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1987) 35.

4 Cf. Paul Avis, *A ministry shaped by mission* (London: T&T Clark, 2005) 7.

5 Cf. J. Andrew Kirk, *What is mission? Theological explorations* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1999) 20-21.

6 Scherer, *Gospel*, 37.

7 Darrell L. Guder, *The continuing conversion of the church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000) ix.

8 See Stefan Paas, 'The making of a mission field: paradigms of evangelistic mission in Europe', *Exchange* 41 (2012) fc.

9 Avis, *Ministry*, 44ff.

10 Luther's emphasis on the 'ministry of all believers' may be mentioned here. I am not altogether sure how to explain this notion. It is derived, of course, from 1 Peter 2:9, where the Church as a whole is called a 'royal priesthood'. Here, the term does not seem to imply that every single believer is a priest (this is, in my opinion, not the issue of Peter's discourse) but that the Church has a mediating role in the world, representing the world to God and God to the world. Luther's phrase was aimed at the equality of all believers: we do not need human mediators (priests) between God and us. However, this does not exclude the presence of (special) ministries in the Church, and as far as I know Luther never took that approach either.

11 Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989) 229-231; cf. Michael Goheen, *'As the Father has sent me, I am sending you': J.E. Lesslie Newbigin's missionary ecclesiology* (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2000) 403-405.

12 Guder, *Conversion*, 176-180; cf. Newbigin, *Gospel*, 230-231.

13 Guder, *Conversion*, 161-164; Avis, *Ministry*, 49.

14 Here I do not intend to take a position as to the ordination of women. It is perfectly possible, in my opinion, to have ordained and non-ordained people in such a team. The ministry of the Word may include preaching in Sunday worship but also pastoring the elderly, evangelising on a camping site, leading a Sunday school class, conducting an Alpha Course and so forth.

15 Esp. Guder, *Conversion*, 164.

16 There have certainly been exceptions to this rule. In the tradition of the Reformation we may point at John Calvin's evangelistic practice in France or at the Dutch Reformed Church in the 16th century that applied a kind of 'missionary' membership structure. Nevertheless, these missionary attempts were seen as necessary temporary measures, aimed at a 'normalisation' of the situation, i.e. a Christian realm where one religion was dominant. They were not considered as permanent structures, connected with the very identity of the Church.

17 Newbigin, *Gospel*, 235-236.

18 Newbigin, *Gospel*, 240.

19 For more discussion, see Paas, 'Making'.

20 In my opinion 'post-Christian' is one of the dimensions of the multidimensional word 'secular'. I discuss this in 'Post-Christian, Post-Christendom, and Post-Modern Europe: towards the interaction of missiology and the social sciences', *Mission Studies* 28.1 (2011) fc.

21 Actually, this is too simple. What we call 'modernity' is – at least partly – a product of Christianity. But for the sake of analysis I will act as if 'Christianity' and 'modernity' are two separate streams in European history.

22 Yves Lambert, 'Religion in modernity as a new axial age: secularisation or new religious forms?', *Sociology of Religion* 60.3 (1999) 303-333.

23 See R. Dawkins, *The God delusion* (London: Bantam, 2006).

24 In the Netherlands there are two types of universities: vocational (cf. former polytechnics in the UK) and academic. Theologians who have been trained

in a vocational university receive four years (240 European Credits; BaTh) of education of which one year consists of specialisation in, for example, pastoral work or evangelism. However, Reformed churches in the Netherlands do not accept this type of training for their ministers. They hire these theologians as church workers: pastoral assistants, co-pastors, evangelists, youth workers and the like, but not as ministers of the Word. To become an ordained minister one needs six years of academic theological training (360 European Credits; MTh).

25 Wilbert R. Shenk, 'The Training of Missiologists for Western Culture' in J. Dudley Woodberry *et al.* (eds.), *Missiological education for the twenty-first century: the book, the circle, and the sandals* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1997) 120.

26 Newbigin, *Gospel*, 231.

27 Cf. William J. Abraham, *The logic of evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999).

28 Shenk, 'Training', 125.

29 Shenk, Training', 125.

30 Cf. Brian Brock, *Singing the ethos of God: on the place of Christian ethics in Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007).

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How Jewish thinkers come to terms with the Holocaust and why it matters for this generation: a selected survey and comment

Elizabeth Pinder-Ashenden

RÉSUMÉ

Six millions de Juifs, dont un million et demi d'enfants, ont été assassinés par le régime nazi au cours de la période la plus sombre de l'histoire de l'humanité, lors de ce que l'on nomme la *shoah*. Cet événement appelle une réflexion théologique difficile, mais une telle entreprise n'a été jusqu'ici menée que de manière très limitée. Pour dialoguer avec le peuple juif, pour comprendre Israël et avoir une juste appréciation de sa politique actuelle, il est nécessaire en notre génération de comprendre comment les penseurs juifs considèrent la *shoah*. Le présent article résume brièvement plusieurs positions : la théologie de la protestation d'Élie Wiesel, *le hester panîm*, « Dieu cachant sa face », de Eliezer Berkovits. L'article explore aussi la nouvelle conception de Dieu proposée par la théologienne féministe juive Melissa Raphael dans son ouvrage « la face féminine de Dieu à Auschwitz ». L'auteur encourage Chrétiens et Juifs à cheminer ensemble pour révéler un Dieu d'espérance et une guérison du monde, *tikkûn ᶜolam*.

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SUMMARY

Six million Jewish men and women, including one and a half million children, were murdered by the German Nazi regime in humanity's darkest period known as the Holocaust or Shoah. Few issues present more challenging theological deliberations, but more recent attempts at post-holocaust discussion have been limited. To dialogue with Jewish people, to better appreciate Israel and her political stance today, we must seek afresh in this generation to understand how Jewish thinkers come to terms with the Shoah. This quite personal article briefly summarizes some positions, from Elie Wiesel's early theology of protest to Eliezer Berkovits' exposition of '*hester panim*', the hiding of God's face. Jewish feminist theologian Melissa Raphael's new reconfiguration of God in her 'female face of God in Auschwitz' is also explored, with fresh encouragement for Christians and Jews to journey together to reveal a God of hope, a healing of the world – *tikkun olam*.

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Sechs Millionen jüdische Männer und Frauen, einschliesslich eineinhalb Millionen Kinder, wurden vom deutschen Naziregime ums Leben gebracht. Dies geschah in einer der dunkelsten Zeiten der Menschheit, Holocaust oder Shoah genannt. Es gibt kaum Anliegen, die größere theologische Diskussionen hervorrufen, aber doch waren die jüngeren Bemühungen in der Post-Holocaust Diskussion nicht ausreichend. Wir müssen in dieser Generation aufs neue zu verstehen trachten, wie jüdische Denker mit der Shoah umgehen, damit wir mit dem jüdischen Volk in den Dialog treten, Israel besser wertschätzen und seine gegenwärtige politische Position besser einschätzen können. Dieser recht persönliche Artikel fasst kurz einige Standpunkte zusammen, beginnend mit Elie Wiesels früher Theologie des Protestes bis hin zu Eliezer Berkovits Studie zu *hester panim*, dem Verbergen von Gottes Angesicht. Ebenfalls erörtert wird eine Art „Neuschöpfung" Gottes durch die jüdische feministische Theologin Melissa Raphael in ihrem Werk „Das weibliche Angesicht Gottes in Auschwitz", mit einer neuen Ermutigung an Christen und Juden, sich gemeinsam auf die Reise zu begeben, um einen Gott der Hoffnung und eine Heilung der Welt bekannt zu machen – *tikkun olam*.

* * * * * * * *

Introduction

> … Never shall I forget that smoke… the little faces of the children, whose bodies I saw turned into wreaths of smoke… those flames which consumed my faith forever… murdered my God, my soul and turned my dreams to dust…[1]

Six million Jewish men and women, including one and a half million children, were murdered by the German Nazi regime in the darkest, unimaginably terrifying period in history commonly called the Holocaust. Jewish people normally use the term Shoah (Hebrew HaShoah, 'the calamity').[2] Few historical events have attracted more attention or discussion. Borowitz states that tracking this debate 'is more than technically difficult; it is humanly daunting. Most thinkers involved admit that the Holocaust overwhelms them'.[3] As Katz observes, Auschwitz has become a 'datum point' in history not only for the Jewish people but indeed for all humanity.[4]

I preface this article with some caveats, chastened by responsibility, recognising that its heart is *not* some abstract theological thesis or philosophical debate but the inconceivable suffering and destruction of individuals with names, faces and families. I offer apologies if anything seems trite, inadequate or simply incorrect.

I am a Christian: some would declare that I do not qualify to discuss the Holocaust. Eliezer Berkovits' heartfelt total rejection of any Christian doing so, given Christian complicity in the whole enterprise, still impacts: 'All we want of Christians is to keep their hands off us and our children.'[5] However, my Czechoslovak family was scarred by the Nazi regime and my most vivid memories from age five concern all I was instructed about these horrors in regard to family and friends, including Jewish people. Before I was able to read or write, I was instructed 'to hear, see, learn, witness and never forget'.[6] So I bring and expose to this article all these 'pre-conditions', keen to briefly but respectfully elucidate how some Jewish thinkers came to terms – or not – with the Holocaust.

The Shoah challenges all who accept the concept of a loving, providential God – and those who do not. Norman Lamm identifies two pivotal points for Jewish people: the first concerns the problem of *zaddik ve-ra lo*, 'the righteous whom evil befalls', and the second is the 'national theological' concern. This latter is an umbrella for issues of the covenant (the bond of the Jewish people with God), their identity as God's chosen people and the significance of the creation of the State of Israel to their theology.

This article can only engage briefly with a few selected Jewish thinkers. Struck at the paucity of female voices (precisely those who presented me with their painful stories, thoughts about God and charge not to forget), I will present one feminist Jewish theologian's response which in my view makes a challenging but valuable contribution towards at least one Hebraic understanding of the mending and healing of the world – *tikkun olam*.[7]

Initial responses

In severe persecution, Jewish people could affirm their faith through *Kiddush ha-Shem*, the sanctification of God's name,[8] and acts by which God is glorified, martyrdom being the highest of these. People like Rabbi Yerucham Hanushtate and Elchanan Wasserman went to their death in the Holocaust calmly, with the words of the Shᵉma on their lips,[9] convinced that their deaths were vicarious sacrifices, bringing redemption for Israel and – for some – the Messiah's arrival.[10]

Throughout the Shoah and subsequently, some Orthodox responses concorded with traditional, biblical reactions to previous calamities. People argued that these were punishment for Israel's sins, *mi-penei hata'einu*. Rabbi Joel Teitelbaum, leader of the Satmar Hasidim and a Bergen-Belsen survivor, identified Israel's sin as that of the Zionists attempting to exercise God's prerogative in initiating Israel's return from exile.[11] Ironically, others like Menechem Harton saw it conversely as punishment for exactly the opposite reason – that many Jewish people had become assimilated all too willingly into the 'lands of evil'.[12] Almost all Jewish people now view both of these responses as completely insupportable, although in reality a few support the same contention but for different reasons.

In the Holocaust's immediate aftermath, not surprisingly, there was 'one of the great silences of Jewish history'[13] – a fitting testimonial response – and also one of overwhelming exhaustion, shock and grief. 'We were all depressed, desolate, destroyed spiritually.'[14] Energy was poured into helping survivors and attesting to the atrocities. Some argue that latent guilt from lack of involvement of, for example, American Jews, contributed to the hiatus.[15] Poetic stories, as seen in Elie Wiesel's three potent narratives *Night, Dawn* and *Day*, offered initial attempts to come to terms with the

Shoah. Wiesel typified many, originally faithful to the belief in the omnipotent, benevolent God of the Torah, but who, deeply shaken by the degree of the suffering, 'sympathised with Job… and did not deny God's existence but…doubted His absolute justice'.[16] Wiesel offered no explanations for the Shoah transcended history: it could not be understood.[17] He witnessed, imperfect though that was, and protested, in traditional rabbinic style, to God.

Questions abounded. Jewish people considered God omnipotent, omniscient, all-benevolent. They considered themselves as God's own chosen people, bonded to him by a covenant. The age-old dilemma of evil in the world despite God's existence, always haunting the faithful, was thrown into sharper relief because of the near extinction (some two-thirds) of the Jewish people. How does one reconcile an all-loving, all-powerful God with this massacre? If he cannot prevent the evil, he is not all-powerful; if he can but does not, then surely he is not all-loving. If he is not all-loving, all-powerful and all-knowing, what is the point of worshipping him? Is there a God at all?

Protest

A recent form of protest theology is David Blumenthal's *Facing the Abusing God: A Theology of Protest*, in which God, having been absent from his people, is seen as complicit in the Holocaust's proceedings. 'God is abusive… God…caused the holocaust, or allowed it to happen….'[18] Blumenthal, like Wiesel, does not deny God's existence but he protests – strongly. Like Berkovits, he believes God must still be loved, but unlike the God of the Torah he is capable of sinning. God needs to repent from the Holocaust's heinousness.

Of course, one way to come to terms with the Shoah is simply to reject God: it was too 'obscene to accept' Hitler as God's instrument, too impossible to believe that the God of the Torah could exist after witnessing Auschwitz. Richard Rubenstein was forced to reconfigure the divine as *Holy Nothingness*.[19] His controversial book *After Auschwitz* announced this conclusion, declaring that we lived in the time of the death-of-God.[20] He argued that the Shoah required the Jewish people to give up any notion that they were still a chosen people.[21]

Most other thinkers could not give up on God, however. For example, Rabbi Irving Greenberg gives a modern, orthodox perspective.[22] Zev Garber argues that Greenberg, more influenced by rabbinic *midrash* than by *halacha*,[23] affirms the covenant between God and Israel at Sinai, whose fulfilment should have assured Israel's protection. But as Israel defaulted, God gradually withdrew until he left them bereft in the Shoah. The failed covenant must now be re-envisaged. Jewish survival is now the focus, not the fulfilment of the Jewish law. Garber comments that this 'maverick' theology is at complete odds with the orthodoxy of the Torah and Mosaic Law.[24]

Eliezer Berkovits

Many thinkers kept faith, finding other ways to justify God's apparent inactivity. Eliezer Berkovits, also an Orthodox rabbi, believed in biblical and Talmud tradition, and that God *was* in the camps, as evidenced by many who felt enabled by him to bear their sufferings. Berkovits acknowledges God's silence, using a biblical concept called *hester panim* – the hiding of God's face, citing Psalm 44 in which God mysteriously hides his face from the innocent in the presence of evil. *Hester panim* is also well known to rabbinic Judaism.[25]

Whilst Lamm views *hester panim* both as punishment and challenge,[26] Berkowitz considers it partly as a result of God allowing human beings to have a free will:

> Because of the necessity of His absence, there is the hiding of the face and the suffering of the innocent, because of the necessity of this presence, evil will not ultimately triumph.[27]

Dan Cohn-Sherbok aptly points out that Berkovits' argument that God was 'present in his absence' was not the reality for those who had only 'void and darkness' and lost faith.[28] He also asks, and I agree: Could God not have revealed himself to his people whilst still maintaining humanity's free will? The thesis of the feminist Jewish theologian Melissa Raphael, which we shall explore later, may offer some 'solutions'. What matters here is that God is not absent; he is just hidden.

Arthur Cohen

That the necessity of free will exercised by humans allows for evil acts like the Holocaust *is* another option to resolve the theodicy dilemma. Like Berkovits, Arthur Cohen believes that God does exist. He also does not hold God responsible for Holocaust injustice exactly because God cannot interfere to counteract the human free will. Yet because the Holocaust is a unique event, and it is incomprehensible that a loving God could allow it, Cohen conjectures that it is a mysterious *tremendum* without precedent.[29] Cohn-Sherbok is convinced that Cohen's attitude is closer to deism than to Jewish theology.[30] While Cohen's explanation might excuse God of Auschwitz' worst abuses, it should not have prevented him from intervening to stop the Nazis. The questions return. Since God didn't help, is he not all-loving? If he is all-loving but did not prevent it, is he not powerful enough?

In my view, Cohn-Sherbok's argument does not really get to grips with the foundation of Cohen's thinking here, as the point is that God *cannot interfere because* of free-will. Cohn-Sherbok also contends that the Holocaust was like other calamities that befell the Jewish people: destruction of temples, Jews degraded and killed. He adds, 'As the most recent link in the chain of Jewish persecution, it confirms the Jewish people in their role as God's suffering servant.'[31]

Emil Fackenheim

The problem, as one of the most prominent thinkers, Emil Fackenheim, saw it, was the need to hold two ropes in tension: whilst it was unique, the Holocaust did not deny God's existence and, whilst it was without meaning, God was heard speaking in a commanding voice. Fackenheim argues that God gave Israel another commandment, the 614th commandment.[32] Although it seems impossible to believe in God after the Holocaust, he commanded the Jewish people not to despair of him or of humanity, or to become cynical, lest Judaism would die. God commanded them to survive as *Jews*, to remember the victims, so that their memory would not die – and so not give Hitler a posthumous victory. In a further move Fackenheim argues that 'the heart of every authentic response to the Holocaust… is a commitment to the autonomy and security of the State of Israel.'[33] In response, Michael Wyshogrod highlights the difficulty of a positive command arising from a negative experience, concurrently rejecting the Holocaust's uniqueness. Regardless, the 614th commandment does not seem overly convincing.[34]

After the world experienced this rupture of vast proportions, Fackenheim's suggestion to redeem the future is the process of *tikkkun olam* – meaning completion, healing or mending of the world.[35] The concept of *tikkkun olam* is seen more in the Kabbalah than in rabbinic Judaism but it *is* a positive way forward. Fackenheim propounds what Marc Ellis calls a theology of 'ordinary decency',[36] contending that this mending of the world was already in place during the Holocaust. It took place by deliberately willed acts of decency, whether partisan resistance, determination to die with dignity, women refusing to abort or any other small act of kindness.[37] These things all contributed to *tikkun*, as divine presence is mediated through history and human beings. For Fackenheim, however, the greatest component of *tikkun* is the State of Israel.[38]

Without doubt, for many thinkers the birth and growth of the State of Israel were pivotal in coming to terms with the Holocaust. For many, the State is in some measure a compensation and also evidence that God still *is* the God of Israel and the Covenant.[39] Others however, like Norman Lamm, believe that this argument merely 'deserves utter contempt'.[40] Liberationist theologian Ellis argues that, unfortunately, Fackenheim's *tikkun* with the state of Israel at its heart does not take into account the rupture with the Palestinians, a cogent point that is hard to ignore. Melissa Raphael also argues that Fackenheim does not give credit to the rupture in the 'fabric of Jewish life… to the abuses of female religious agency legislated by Orthodox Judaism itself'.[41] However, the concept of *tikkun olam* surely resonates strongly with devastated souls yearning for healing and redemption, and Raphael herself also builds on this notion of 'mending the world'.

Ignaz Maybaum

Perhaps God uses the bad for good? For Ignaz Maybaum, the Holocaust was the result of God's providence, *hashgahah peratit*, a *churban*. It was a terrible destruction, the third in a line of similar acts[42] yet by its nature the Holocaust heralds change for the better, not just for the Jewish people but for all humanity. Because of God's special covenantal relationship with her, God used Israel to enlighten the rest of humanity, to draw gentiles to him. For this purpose, 'Jews suffered vicarious death for the sins of mankind', a sacrifice chosen by God, exemplified by Isaiah's suffering servant. The 'Golgotha of modern mankind is Auschwitz'.[43] As a result human progress could be realised by the westernization of Judaism and the complete removal of the old eastern Europe *shtetls*.[44] Within the *shtetls* religious authoritarianism, persecution and theocratic oppression were possible, and Nazism was a manifestation of these evils.[45] Maybaum sees Hitler as God's 'servant', just as Jeremiah saw Nebuchadnezzar in that same role.[46]

The criticism of Maybaum's thesis is voluminous. Raphael bluntly states that it is 'indefensible on almost every front', epitomising the worst of masculine theology which must justify God's sovereignty.[47] Katz vociferously declares it 'an inversion of all sanity, morality, theology'.[48] All critics agree that the Holocaust did *not* bring about Judaism's transformation as Maybaum had hoped. Cohn-Sherbok argues that losing traditional Judaism lost the richness of traditions; Raphael thinks that the ultra-orthodox community has proved quite capable of continuing 'medievalism' regardless.[49]

From my point of view as a Christian it is important that Cohn-Sherbok[50] and Katz[51] quite legitimately criticise the fact that Maybaum regards the Holocaust as similar to the crucifixion of Jesus. Maybaum totally misunderstands the human cause of the death of Jesus Christ for the sins of the world. At the cross no monstrous crime of cruelty was involved. Jesus Christ, believed to be God, took on the sins *himself*, *willingly*, thus demonstrating divine love, mercy and grace. Very different indeed to the Shoah.

Melissa Raphael

Raphael uses the failure of Maybaum's thesis to expose why most patriarchal thinking in post-holocaust theology is doomed to prove unsatisfactory, pivoting as it does around power, divine and human, still centred on the 'domination of history by violence'.[52] Powerfully, in my estimation, Raphael challenges the very concept of the kind of God postulated by Maybaum and others. The patriarchal theology of male Jewish thinkers forces them either to reject God or to challenge his apparent silence and passivity. This approach inevitably leads to suggestions of divine powerlessness (Rubinstein), callousness (for example, Berkovits) or cruelty (Blumenthal, Maybaum, Fackenheim). Instead Raphael suggests that one should not ask *where* God was in Auschwitz but *who* he was. She envisages a God of presence who *is* present as Shekinah[53] in the Holocaust – loving, powerful, the female face of God. Drawing on midrash, on the mystical Kabbalah of Isaac Luria and on testimonies of female survivors from the death camps, Raphael sees God's presence as suffering with those who suffered. He is a covenantal God who still reveals himself and redeems through small yet heroic acts of care, compassion, nurturing and sacrifice:

> Restorative acts bespeak the presence of a healing and mending God in spite of conditions which, although they cannot destroy God, appear to destroy the conditions by which the divine might be manifest.[54]

Like Fackenheim, Raphael searches for *tikkun olam*, the mending of the world, and finds it in human deeds. As the world's communal fabric was ripped apart, human love was anticipating its renewal.[55] Resistance to Nazi assaults on the Jewish body, the family and others caring relationships – these are places where God's presence was revealed in the midst of desolation and degradation.

When I was young, seated at the feet of Anna F., my young boyfriend's Jewish grandmother, survivor with only one of her sons from two concentration camps, I felt overwhelmed by her eyewitness accounts, and even more by her faith and extraordinary forgiveness and love. Living in Prague with her husband, a university teacher, with their young family, they avoided capture and deportation until betrayed by their closest friends. She told me of the squalor, the fear during the cattle-truck journeys, the stench; of having to paint pretty pictures on dinner-menus for camp hierarchy while family and friends, stripped naked, were herded into gas chambers. Then, surrounded by her sculptures and paintings, she, and these, told of another side, of tenderness, embracing love, mother and child images, holding arms, gentle touches and smiles to another, born in that traumatic time. She encouraged me to see, through the privileged sharing of her experiences, that God was in these encounters, a God who speaks love and healing and suffers with us in life's despicable calamities. When I read Raphael's thesis about a different sort of God than perhaps traditionally envisaged by many Jewish thinkers, I instinctively knew that this resonated with what I had heard and seen with Anna.

Space does not permit a full exploration of Raphael's complex thesis, much of which is alien to Christianity as it is to traditional Judaism. Raphael herself admits that 'much of the kabbalistic scheme is too gnostic, esoteric and dualistically inclined'[56] but she still puts forward some concepts and statements that might be prone to misinterpretation. This could be seen in her statement that women did not call on *God* in Auschwitz, so much as on *each other*.[57] I believe that she is absolutely distinct in her understanding that within their healing acts to one another, women were demonstrating

God's *hesed* (covenant love) in the camps. This idea does not carry any gnostic implications.[58] However, Raphael has clearly 'refigured' the God of the Torah. Not surprisingly, the number of male Jewish thinkers, and indeed Christian theologians, who have engaged with her thesis is limited. This is regrettable as there is much to explore. I suggest tentatively that her 'new configured' God, revealing him/herself in loving acts of kindness, powerful in powerlessness, coming alongside and into the suffering of humans, has important similarities to the God who revealed himself in the incarnation of Jesus Christ.

Messianic Jews

The Messianic Jew Arthur Katz still sees the Holocaust as a judgement against Israel for her sins, and the founding of the State of Israel as a mark of resurrection.[59] Yet two other Messianic theologians are attempting to make connections with the God who is revealed in a new way. One of them is Tsavi Sadan, who first roots the Holocaust in the exemplar of the suffering Job and then draws parallels between Christ's suffering and that of the Jewish people who unknowingly lived through this.[60] The other is Barry Leventhal, who also finds that it is only the suffering of an incarnated God that could even begin to relate to that of those who lived and died in the Shoah.[61]

In lieu of a conclusion

The Holocaust decimated the Jewish people physically, psychologically and theologically. The emergence of the State of Israel had huge implications on post-holocaust thinking, intensified after the 1967 Six Day War with Israel's Arab neighbours, but today Jewish thinking is as deeply divergent as ever. The same questions abound but with potent new ones added. Where was God in the Shoah? Why do the innocent suffer? What does the State of Israel mean within the covenant between God and the Jewish people?

In many ways, I feel unentitled to draw any conclusions. Perhaps I should simply summarise Jewish thinking and leave it at that. Yet since childhood, I have been weighed down by all I have read, seen and contemplated. I am potently aware, too, that many Christians at the time stood on the *side* of the abyss, not in it like the Jewish people. Dare I say that exactly as a Christian, sharing the same God, I care about engaging with my Jewish friends about their faith and mine in the light of the Shoah? To dialogue with Jewish people, to better understand them, Israel and her political stance, we must first seek to understand how they come to terms with 'the weeping of Rachel for her children who are never coming back from the land of the enemy'.[62]

In 1963, Karl Barth visited the United States to dialogue with Jewish thinkers, including Fackenheim, with the plan that each would leave aside 'their hermeneutical armature' to 'fraternally reread the Bible'. The mission was a failure; the Holocaust and Israel were never even mentioned. Many years later Fackenheim ruminated that it was too much back then, and even in the 1990s, to hope that a post-holocaust theological sharing might be possible.[62] But there are moves to do so now, and this article urges once again that Christian theologians of the present generation re-engage with the theology of that darkest period of humanity, the Shoah, and particularly with Jewish theologians. I even contemplate that there are indeed precious threads and themes that God's peoples, sons and daughters, Jews and Christians, might share and weave to help reveal the God of hope and a healing of the world, *tikkun olam. Shalom*.

Elizabeth Pinder-Ashenden, originally an anthropologist, trained for the Baptist ministry in the UK

Notes

1 Elie Wiesel, *Night*, trans. Stella Rodway (New York: Avon Books, 1960) 44, 74-76.

2 Some prefer the term *Shoah* to Holocaust, as they are uncomfortable with the sacrificial connotations connected to the latter (Greek holókaustos: hólos 'whole' and kaustós 'burnt' as in sacrificial offering to the gods). The word *Shoah* was chosen to describe the Holocaust by the Israeli Knesset on April 12, 1951, when it established Yom HaShoah VeMered HaGetaot, a national day of remembrance. Cf. Zev Garber, *The Shoah: A Paradigmatic Genocide* (Studies in the Shoah: Lanham, New York & London: University Press of America, 1994) 4-6, for a brief resume of the terms and their issues.

3 Eugene B. Borowitz, 'Confronting the Holocaust' in Jacob Neusner (ed.), *Faith Renewed: The Judaic Affirmation Beyond the Holocaust: Volume 1* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1994) 175.

4 Steven T. Katz, *Post-Holocaust Dialogues: Critical Studies in Modern Jewish Thought* (New York: University Press, 1983) 142.

5 Quoted in Neusner (ed.), *Faith Renewed*, 190.

6 My mother's family is Czechoslovak; their home had been a 'safe house'. Those who died and sur-

vived the concentration camps, both Gentile family and Jewish friends, and the total destruction of Lidice, gave me a special type of inheritance.

[7] Tikkun is a Hebrew term used in both classic rabbinic and kabbalistic Judaism, meaning the redemptive, healing restoration of the world. Tikkun also used in Ecclesiastes (1:5; 7:13; 12:9) denoting a mending. Cf. Emil Fackenheim who brought this concept to post-holocaust theology in *To Mend the World: Foundations of Future Jewish Thought* (New York: Schocken Books, 1982).

[8] Eliezer Berkovits, *Faith after the Holocaust* (New York: Ktav, 1973) 82-85.

[9] Shema Yisrael, 'Hear, (O) Israel', are the first words of the section of the Torah that is a centrepiece of the morning and evening Jewish prayer services.

[10] Dan Cohn-Sherbok, *Holocaust Theology* (London: Marshall Morgan and Scott, 1989) 125.

[11] Norman Lamm, 'The Face of God: Thoughts on the Holocaust' in Bernard Rosenberg and Fred Heuman (eds.), *Theological and Halakhic Reflections on the Holocaust* (New York: Ktav, 1992) 121.

[12] Jonathan Sacks, *Faith in the Future* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1995) 239.

[13] Sacks, *Faith in the Future*, 36.

[14] Haskel Lookstein, *This Week and Last Week: Reflections on the Fortieth Yom ha-Azma'ut*, in Rosenberg and Heuman, *Reflections on the Holocaust*, 243.

[15] Borowitz, 'Confronting the Holocaust'.

[16] Wiesel, *Night*, 55-56.

[17] Borowitz, 'Confronting the Holocaust', 178.

[18] David Blumenthal, *Facing the Abusing God: A Theology of Protest* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993) 247.

[19] Cf. for a brief description and critique of Rubenstein's Holy Nothingness: Klaus Rohmann, 'Radical Theology in the Making: Richard L. Rubenstein Reshaped Jewish Theology from Its beginnings', in Betty Rubenstein and M. Berenbaum (eds.), *What Kind of God? Essays in Honour of Richard L. Rubenstein* (Studies in the Shoah; Lanham, New York and London: University Press of America, 1995) 17-21. Rubenstein developed a more mystical concept of the divine.

[20] Richard Rubenstein, *After Auschwitz: Radical Theology and Contemporary Judaism* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1966) 49.

[21] Rubenstein, *After Auschwitz*, 47.

[22] Irving Greenberg, 'Cloud of Smoke, Pillar of Fire: Judaism, Christianity, and Modernity after the Holocaust' in Eva Fleischner (ed.), *Auschwitz: Beginning of a New Era? Reflections on the Holocaust* (New York: Ktav, 1977) 7-55.

[23] Garber, *Shoah: Paradigmatic Genocide*, 45.

[24] Garber, *Shoah: Paradigmatic Genocide*, 46.

[25] Melissa Raphael, *The Female Face of God in Auschwitz: A Jewish feminist theology of the Holocaust* (London & New York: Routledge, 2003) 45.

[26] Lamm, 'The Face of God'.

[27] Borowitz, 'Confronting the Shoah'.

[28] Cohn-Sherbok, *Holocaust Theology*, 66-67.

[29] Arthur Cohen, *The Tremendum: a Theological Interpretation of the Holocaust* (New York: Crossroad, 1981) *passim*; *tremendum* is a term originally used by Rudolf Otto, equated with a mysterious holy wrath of God and used about the Holocaust by Cohen (78) as an 'event that annihilates the past of hope…and confronts us as abyss'.

[30] Cohn-Sherbok, *Holocaust Theology*, 78.

[31] Cohn-Sherbok, *Holocaust Theology*, 79.

[32] Emil Fackenheim, *God's Presence in History: Jewish Affirmations and Philosophical Reflection* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972) 84-95.

[33] Fackenheim, *Mending the World*, 302-305.

[34] Michael Wyschogrod, 'Faith and the Holocaust: A Review Essay of Emil Fackenheim's *God's Presence in History*', *Judaism* 20 (1971) 286-294.

[35] Fackenheim, *Mending the World, passim*.

[36] Marc H. Ellis, *Oh Jerusalem! The Contested Future of the Jewish Covenant* (Minneapolis, Augsburg /Fortress, 1999) 81.

[37] Fackenheim, *Mending the World*, 300.

[38] Fackenheim, *Mending the World*, 312. Note that he still ends up rejecting the traditional view of God and Judaism.

[39] Raphael, *Female Face of God in Auschwitz*, 31.

[40] Lamm, 'The Face of God'.

[41] Raphael, *Female Face of God in Auschwitz*, 137.

[42] Beginning with the destruction of Solomon's temple by Nebuchadnezzar which started the Jews a diaspora; the second was the destruction of Herod's temple which gave birth to the era of the synagogue without animals sacrifices; Cf. Ignaz Maybaum, *The Face of God After Auschwitz* (Amsterdam: Polak & van Gennep, 1965) 72.

[43] Ignaz Maybaum quoted in Cohn-Sherbok, *Holocaust Theology*, 36.

[44] Shtetl: Yiddish for small Eastern European townships, largely speaking Yiddish, seen as pious communities following Orthodox Judaism that disappeared largely post-holocaust; see www.jewish-guide.pl/shtetl/24.

[45] Maybaum, *Face of God After Auschwitz*, 66-68.

[46] Maybaum, *Face of God After Auschwitz*, 67.

[47] Raphael, *Female Face of God in Auschwitz*, 34.

[48] Katz, *Post-Holocaust Dialogues*, 252.

[49] Raphael, *Female Face of God in Auschwitz*, 34.

[50] Cohn-Sherbok, *Holocaust Theology*, 40.

[51] Katz, *Post-Holocaust Dialogues*, 252.

[52] Raphael, *Female Face of God in Auschwitz*, 35-42.

[53] Shekinah: the indwelling presence of God, traditionally figured as female; an 'abiding, dwelling or habitation' of the physical manifestations of God described in Ex 24:16; 40:35, Num 9:16-18; also used to describe the mystical 'shekinah' presence in the tabernacle; cf. www.jewishencyclopedia.com/

view.jsp?artid=588&letter=S.

54 Raphael, *Female Face of God in Auschwitz*, 12.

55 Raphael, *Female Face of God in Auschwitz*, 142.

56 Melissa Raphael, 'When God Behold God: Notes towards a Jewish Feminist Theology of the Holocaust' in *Feminist Theology* 21 (1999) 53-78.

57 Raphael, *Female Face of God in Auschwitz*, 44.

58 Raphael, *Female Face of God in Auschwitz*, 100.

59 See www.hearnow.org/ezek37.html.

60 Cited in Richard Harvey, *Mapping Messianic Jewish Theology: A Constructive Approach* (Milton Keynes, Colorado Springs & Hyderabad: Paternoster, 2009) 93.

61 Barry R. Leventhal, 'Holocaust Apologetics: Towards a Case for the Existence of God' in *Christian Apologetics Journal* 1.1 (1998) 1-11; available at http://scott-juris.blogspot.com/Holocaust%20Apologetics.pdf.

62 Jeremiah 31:15.

63 Emil Fackenheim, *The Jewish Bible after the Holocaust: A Re-Reading* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990) 71-73.

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God the Father in the Old Testament

Svetlana Knobnya

SUMMARY

While the idea of God being the Father dominates New Testament studies in relation to Jesus and the followers of Jesus, the Father-God motif rooted in the Old Testament and prominent in the second temple period has received insufficient attention. The concept of God the Father is a broad category but in the Old Testament it is closely related to Israel. When God redeems Israel out of Egypt, he becomes like a Father to it and Israel becomes his son (Exodus 4:22). Thus, for Israel the fatherhood of God is linked to its redemption by God. This relationship began through God's initiative and with the purpose that they will serve and obey God – yet Israel is often unfaithful to him. God is also seen as the Father of the human kings of Israel.

* * * *

RÉSUMÉ

Le thème de la paternité divine – à la fois Dieu comme Père de Jésus et comme Père des disciples de Jésus – occupe une place importante dans les études théologiques du Nouveau Testament. En revanche, on s'est trop peu intéressé au motif du Dieu Père qui trouve ses racines dans l'Ancien Testament et a connu des développements importants à l'époque du second temple. Le concept de Dieu comme Père est une catégorie susceptible de recouvrir un large champ mais, dans l'Ancien Testament, il intervient en rapport étroit avec Israël. Lorsque Dieu libère Israël de l'esclavage en Égypte, il devient comme un père pour ce peuple et Israël devient son fils (Ex 4.22). Ainsi, la paternité divine est liée pour Israël à sa rédemption par Dieu. Cette relation a été instaurée à l'initiative divine et dans le but que les Israélites rendent un culte à Dieu et lui obéissent – et néanmoins Israël lui a souvent été infidèle. Dieu est aussi considéré comme le Père du roi humain d'Israël.

* * * *

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Während die Vorstellung von Gott als Vater die neutestamentlichen Studien über Jesus und seine Nachfolger dominiert, hat das Vatermotiv Gottes, welches im Alten Testament verwurzelt ist und in der Epoche des zweiten Tempels vorherrscht, noch nicht genügend Aufmerksamkeit gefunden. Das Konzept von Gott als Vater stellt eine weit gefasste Kategorie dar, doch im Alten Testament ist diese Vorstellung eng mit Israel verknüpft. Als Gott Israel aus Ägypten herausrettet, wird er quasi zum Vater für das Volk, und Israel wird sein Sohn (Exodus 4:22). Somit verbindet sich für Israel die Vaterschaft Gottes mit der Befreiung des Volkes durch ihn. Gott hat diese Beziehung durch seine Initiative ins Lebens gerufen mit dem Zweck, dass Israel Gott dient und ihm gehorcht, doch oft sind sie ihm untreu. Ebenso wird Gott als der Vater der Könige Israels angesehen.

* * * *

1. Introduction

Emphasizing the significance of the idea of the fatherhood of God in the Old Testament, David Tasker writes:

> Although theologians have written about God the Father for centuries, the endeavour has been largely Christological, rather than a focus on the Father-God motif. Therefore there has been little apparent progress in understanding the concept.[1]

There are sixteen instances in which God is designated as Father in the Old Testament:

Deuteronomy 32:5
2 Samuel 7:14
1 Chronicles 17:13; 22:10; 28:6; 29:10
Psalm 68:5; 89:26; 103:13
Proverbs 3:12
Jeremiah 3:4-5, 7-8; 31:9
Isaiah 63:16 [twice]; 64:8

Maleachi 1:6; 2:10.[2]

However, the number of references alone can obscure the prominence of the idea in the Old Testament: It can be present without the word father being used. Some further passages consider the relationship between God and Israel as a Father-son relationship in which God acts as a loving Father (Ex 4:22; Deut 14:1; Isa 45:11; Jer 31:9; Hos 11:1). The idea of God being the Father also emerges in the personal names of the Israelites (e.g. 1 Sam 8:2; 2 Sam 8:16).[3] When God calls Israel out of slavery he becomes like a Father to it and Israel becomes his son (Ex 4:22). God liberates and stands for his people Israel, rescuing them from their woes, thus being their Father and Redeemer (Isa 63:16).[4] As far as Israel is concerned, the fatherhood of God is linked to its redemption. This paper examines the Old Testament with a specific question in mind: How is the idea God the Father related to God's redemptive purposes?

2. Father as Redeemer of the whole nation of Israel

Chris Wright notes that the concept of God being the Father of his people Israel is 'far from lacking in their theological repertoire'.[5] God is described as the Father of the whole nation of Israel. In Exodus 4 God calls Israel his son with the intention to redeem Israel out of their slavery in Egypt. In his instruction to Moses God says,

> Then say to Pharaoh, 'This is what the Lord says: Israel is my firstborn son, so I said to you, 'Let My son go that he may serve Me" (Ex 4:22-23).

This implicit reference to God the Father occurs in the context of the particular historical event of the exodus, the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. John Durham vividly says that in God's request to let his son go to worship his divine Father there is a 'glimmer of the exodus itself'.[6] Although the whole earth belongs to God (Ex 19:5) he has chosen Israel for a special relationship with himself; Israel belongs to God as his son whom he rescues from slavery. This distinctive relationship between God and Israel, based on God's redeeming them out of Egypt, remains an important subject throughout the Book of Exodus (Ex 6:5-6; 15:12-13; 19:4; 20:2; 33:1). The relationship between Israel and God is sealed by the covenant into which God enters with Israel as his children (chapters 19-24).

The same idea appears in Deuteronomy where God is also depicted as the Father who redeems his son Israel and carries him in the wilderness 'as a father carries his son' (Deut 1:31). The exodus motif is certainly present in Deuteronomy 32 where Moses describes God as a Father who finds his people in the desert (verse 10) and leads them out (verse 12).[7] Psalm 68 pictures God's fatherhood in terms of provision for and defence of the needy; as McCann recognises, the language of exodus is used for the description (verses 4-6).[8] The Psalm also mentions wilderness, the Sinai and the possession of the land, and it uses the word 'heritage' to designate the land or the people (verses 7-9; cf. Deut 32:10). The needy ones here are Israelites and the provision God made for his people is his care for them in the wilderness. Thus, the idea of God being the Father is once again connected with the exodus motif.

Prior to the exodus, the Israelites cried out to God because of their slavery (Ex 2:23). The word used here for service or slavery is the same as the word for service and worship of God (*abad*).[9] When God liberates Israel, he points out that their destiny is to be free from slavery for the purpose of serving him who is implicitly their Father. God redeems Israel and calls his people to worship and serve himself (Deut 10:20). They are to be devoted to their God for they are redeemed ones of God (cf. Lev 25:38, 42-43, 55; Ps 107:2; Isa 62:12). Accordingly, this redemption implies more than just the redemption of slaves from Egypt. The redemption is 'emancipation and restoration of the enslaved to wholeness in relation to God'[10] who is implicitly the Father of Israel. Before the exodus they were slaves or aliens in Egypt (Deut 10:18-19) – now they are God's son or God's sons (Deut 14:1-2; Isa 1:2) with the intention that they serve him. In something like 'a formula of adoption'[11] Israel becomes the firstborn son of God; no longer a slave. God's redemption of Israel sets the parameters for Israel's identity in relationship to God who becomes their Father.

God's redemption of his son Israel is also linked to creation language. In Deuteronomy Moses reminds Israel that God has redeemed them but that they have acted wickedly toward him although they were his children: 'Is he not your Father, who created you, who made you and established you?' (Deut 32:5-6; cf. Mal 2:10). Israel belongs to God the Father because God created and established it. The language of creating and establishing Israel is not meant to be taken in any physical or natural sense. God is not the progenitor but the establisher of Israel as a nation and at the same time their liberator.[12] This concept is grounded in divine election. God calls his people out, making them his own, adopting them for the purpose of serving the LORD. He alone is the initiator of the relationship with them.

A similar idea is present in Isaiah 64:7-8: Israel is the work of God's hands. As their Father, Redeemer (cf. Isa 63:16) and potter (the same root as God forming Adam in Gen 2:7)[13] God has the right and is able to shape Israel's destiny and not to remember their sins. We see that the creation language broadens the scope of God's fatherhood and his redeeming activity. Tasker believes that both the legitimacy and the possibility of God's fatherhood arise from his being Creator.[14] One can conclude that God's redeeming activity is both creative in nature and founded upon the fact that he created Israel.

When God redeems Israel, he calls it his firstborn son (Ex 4:22; Jer 31:9). Regardless of whether this means that other nations are also God's sons,[15] the emphasis is on Israel being the firstborn son when God redeems them. Israel has a clear family relationship with God who takes care of them and leads them out of slavery. Moreover, their identity as the firstborn son is also connected with the idea that Israel is God's heir or God's inheritance. Israel as God's inheritance and his special portion is affirmed in Deuteronomy:

> You are children of the LORD your God… you are a people holy to the LORD your God; it is you the LORD has chosen out of all the peoples on earth to be his people, his treasured possession. (Deut 14:1-2; cf. 32:9)

In both Exodus and Deuteronomy the fact that Israel is God's inheritance is expressed in contrast to the other nations, underscoring the prerogatives which God grants to Israel and which he promised to their forefathers even before the exodus (Deut 7:7-9; 9:5; cf. Ex 19:5-6).

The author of Deuteronomy further expands the idea of God's affection for Israel and his call of them. It is not because of Israel's righteousness but because of God's righteousness and faithfulness to Israel and because of the wickedness of other nations that God called them:

> It is not because of your righteousness or your integrity that you are going in to take possession of their land; but on account of the wickedness of these nations, the LORD your God will drive them out before you, to accomplish what he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. (Deut 9:5; cf. 7:9)

The land that is in view is of course the land of Canaan (Deut 1:38; 4:21; 4:38; 12:10; 16:20; 25:19-26:1). The land is also the goal of the exodus. God now wants to accomplish what he had already promised to the patriarchs.

But although Israel holds possession of the land, it is only an alien or tenant in it (Lev 25:23; Jer 2:7; Hos 9:3; cf. Gen 17:8). The prophets warn that Israel's unfaithfulness to God would lead to exile and the loss of the land (e.g. Jer 7:1-15; Amos 3:11; 7:11). The land continues to be the LORD's and he can take it back if people become faithless. It is not the land itself but its theological meaning as God's promise and as an expression of the continuing relationship between God the Father and his people which has the greater significance for this discussion.[16] This explains why the tribe of Levi has no share in the land, for their inheritance is the LORD himself (Deut 10:9; 12:12; Num 18:20-24). It also explains the Israelite custom to reflect their status as redeemed before God in the consecration of the firstborn males of every womb to God (Ex 21:29-30).[17]

The relationship between God and Israel as that between Father and son came into being through God's initiative and for God's purpose. That purpose is that they will serve and obey God. The important issue of this relationship is Israel's obedience to God as part of their belonging to God (Ex 19:4-6). God's chosen son is entrusted with the responsibilities of proper response and obedience to him. Israel's obedience and following of God's commandments are part of their covenant responsibility to him (Ex 19:4-6). Obedience is the major element of the covenant between God and his people in Deuteronomy. The author of Deuteronomy also refers to the true obedience to God as circumcision of their hearts (Deut 10:16); in the words of Peter Craigie, this metaphor describes the requirement that they would show 'a wholehearted commitment in love, from which all other proper behaviour stemmed'.[18]

Israel is also to manifest God's steadfast love to those who respond properly to God by loving him and obeying his commandments (Ex 20:6; cf. Deut 5:10). The Book of Exodus combines the imperative of how Israel must behave with the promise of what Israel will be among the rest of the nations.[19] God reminds them to follow his ways, all of his commandments, in order to extend the experience of his redeeming activity towards aliens and strangers. After all, they themselves were once aliens and strangers (Deut 10:19; 24:19-22; cf. Lev 19:34). God's desire is that his name will be proclaimed in all the earth (Ex 9:16). In Deuteronomy God says that he wants Israel to be a model for the other nations so that they may see the greatness and nearness of God in them (Deut 4:6-8; cf. Gen 12:1-3). In Isaiah too God's faithfulness to Israel is a demonstration of his redeeming plans in sight of all the nations:

> The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. (Isa 52:10; cf. Isa 19:24-25; 51:4-5)

Isaiah recalls that God's intention in making Israel his chosen son was not for the sake of Israel only. Israel is to be 'the light of the nations' (42:6). The role given to Israel has universal implications.

If they do not obey or if they act corruptly toward God, they are not his children (Deut 32:5-6). But God is still their Father; Israel's unfaithfulness cannot eliminate God's faithfulness (cf. Deut 32:35-42). Psalm 103:9-13 declares,

> He will not always accuse… great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed.

The psalm knows the compassion of God which is like that of a father and the unwillingness of God to remain forever angry at his people who committed sins. God is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in love (Ps 103:8), which recalls Exodus 34:6-7.[20] The psalm depicts a loving and forgiving God who takes care of his people through an allusion to the exodus when God carried Israel like a father (cf. Deut 1:31). In spite of Israel's transgressions (cf. Ex 32-34) God continually shows his steadfast love and righteousness (Ps 103:6, 17). God's fatherly compassion or mercy[21] in forgiving sins is mentioned, though, in connection with those who fear him or those who are obedient to him (Ps 103:18; 30:5; allusions to Deut 1:31; Num 11:11-12). The psalm presents the tension between God's instruction to be righteous and just on the one hand and on the other hand the fact that he is committed to a relationship with his people, loves them like a loving father and like a compassionate mother (cf. Isa 49:15). He especially loves those who obey him. How exactly God stays faithful to Israel in spite of its faithlessness and how he would bring them back to obedience are questions for further consideration below.

3. Father of the king and his offspring

While the major event of the exodus established God's fatherhood and redemption of Israel as a nation, God as Father also continues to relate to certain individuals within the nation of Israel, especially to king David and his offspring (2 Sam 7:14; 1 Chr 17:13; 22:10; 28:6; Ps 2; 89:26-27; Prov 3:11-12). The relationship between God and the king is described as the relationship between Father and son. In 2 Samuel 7:14-15 the LORD declares with reference to king David's offspring, 'I will be his father, and he will be my son… my faithful love will never be taken away from him.' In 1 Chronicles 17:10-14 the idea of 2 Samuel 7 is recapitulated with the divine purpose for David and his offspring. Solomon stands alongside David as elected by God (1 Chr 22:8-10). In Psalm 89:26-27 God is as a Father to the king and his descendants; they cry to God: 'You are my Father.' It is plausible that in this passage David's designation as God's son and firstborn (2 Sam 7:14; cf. Ps 2:6-7; 89:27) legitimises him as Israel's representative, as the embodiment of God's covenant people, who is also called his 'son' and 'firstborn' (Ex 4:22). When Israel becomes a monarchy out of the sinful desire to be like the other nations, God appoints them a king (1 Sam 8:5) but this king is supposed to exercise a different sort of kingship from that of the surrounding nations. Their king is 'limited by the character of God as revealed in his law'.[22] So when the king disobeys the commandments of God, God rejects him from his role as king (1 Sam 13:13-14). A. Coppedge aptly writes, 'From God's perspective a king in Israel is the representative of God and not his replacement.'[23]

The king and the people under him must follow the LORD their God (1 Sam 12:14-15) and be obedient to him (1 Chr 28:21). The king is to represent God's lordship (1 Chr 28:5) and to carry out his commands (1 Chr 28:7). Both the king and the entire nation have the responsibility to obey God. In this regard Chris Wright argues that the king of Israel is not 'a *super-Israelite*' but 'a *model Israelite*' who sets the example of what it means to be an obedient son of God.[24] Both the king and the whole nation under his dominion must serve God with the implication that they will be a 'visible model to other nations' (cf. Deut 4:6-8).[25] The same idea appears in Psalm 2 where God has a Father-son relationship with the king, defeats his enemies, makes him a great king in the world, and thus makes him a witness to God's purposes. John Goldingay also sees here a form of fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham that is expressed in blessings for Abraham and 'all people who covet such blessings and in curses for who would belittle him' (cf. Gen 12:1-2).[26] Thus, although the application of the word 'son' to the king seems to shift the focus from God as the Father of all Israel to God as the Father of one individual, the corporate element of God's fatherhood remains, insofar as the king serves as the head and representative of the people.[27] Thus, God remains the Father of Israel who redeems them and who takes care of his children, because he continues to have a covenant relationship with the whole of Israel even through their king (Ps 89:3-4).

Although Saul was the first king, God adopts and marks out not him but king David as his son (2 Sam 7:14), his special agent and a shepherd of God's people:

> I have given help to one who is mighty; I have exalted one chosen from the people. I have found David my servant; with my sacred oil I have anointed him. (Ps 89:19-20; cf. Ezek 34:1-10)

God may chastise his son David but he will never cast him off as he did with Saul (2 Sam 7:14-15; cf. Prov 3:11-12). In Psalm 2:7 the king is addressed as 'my son' and the text refers to God's 'begetting' the king. The language of 'begetting' is the same as in the case of the whole nation (Deut 32:6). God adopts the king and enters into a family relationship with him so that God can continuously work with him and through him with the whole nation. Perhaps the emphasis on the significance of the Davidic kings as God's chosen ones was aimed 'at those circles which may have questioned the dynastic succession as well as the legitimacy of the house of David'.[28] Nathan's oracle that the Davidic kingdom would endure forever before God (2 Sam 7:15-16) retains its relevance for future generations.[29] Jeremiah says that God will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land (Jer 23:5-6). Thus the Davidic dynasty has a particular significance in God's relationship with his people.

In reality, however, the monarchy failed to accomplish its purpose. This might lead us to assume that God's plan with the king failed. Why then does he promise an everlasting dynasty extending from David to secure a future of promise to Israel (2 Sam 7:5-16; 1 Chr 17:13)? The language of the Old Testament, especially in the Psalms, clearly expresses God's faithfulness, love and covenant which will never fail. Thus the idea of God's continuous work through the royal dynasty and his promise to the patriarchs, and thereby the concept of the monarchy, are affirmed.[30] For example, Psalm 89 celebrates the promise given to David, his sonship and his responsibilities as son (89:26-37). The emphasis in this psalm is on the eternity of God's promise (Ps 89:28-29; 36-37). The psalm explicitly mentions God's promise as a covenant (Ps 89:3, 28, 34, 39). It mentions God's steadfast love which also occurs in 2 Samuel 7 and his faithfulness (which is Deuteronomic language) to the Davidic dynasty. This underlines God's enduring rule through this line.[31] In Psalm 2 God affirms his ongoing relationship with the king with the implication that he will have dominion over the nations (verses 8-9). At the same time, Psalm 89 pictures the destruction of the kingdom, the exile of people and the end of the Davidic line:

> But you have rejected, you have spurned, you have been very angry with your anointed one. You have renounced the covenant with your servant and have defiled his crown in the dust. (verses 38-39)

This language reflects the experience of exile and its aftermath. McCann, analysing the psalm, points out that it probably reflects 'the process of re-evaluation that led to an eschatological understanding of God's reign… and the expectations of an anointed one (messiah)'.[32] Even within the Old Testament, Psalm 89 and Psalm 2, according to Chris Wright, may have had messianic overtones pointing to the one like the son of David who would fulfil the expectations of reigning in justice and peace not only over Israel but over the other nations.[33] In this way God will continue to act through his son, the king (cf. Jer 23:5). Goldingay doubts the eschatological understanding of Psalm 89. However, outside the Psalter he does see affirmations of God's commitment to the Davidic line in Jeremiah 23:5-6 and Isaiah 55:3-5.[34] In any case, both psalms and these two prophetic passages point to God's commitment to the Davidic dynasty, to Israel and to God's reigning in the world. The impression is that God the Father will provide the glorious future through the descendant of David. The prophetic writings may bring further insight into the idea of God the Father and his redeeming purpose.

4. God as a faithful Father in renewal

So far we have seen that the idea of God being the Father of Israel and of the Davidic kings is very important in the Old Testament. The idea that God redeems the king does not appear but the language of God electing and adopting the king and keeping a covenant relationship with him is present. Through the king as representative of Israel God relates to the whole people (Ps 2 and 89). God, the Father who redeems Israel, continues to take care of his people by appointing a king who has to lead Israel in obedience to him. But how will God as Father continue to lead Israel in spite of their unfaithfulness? And how is he going to remain committed to the king and through the king? These are questions that still need our attention.

In the prophetic writings Isaiah explicitly connects the idea of God 'our Father' with 'our Redeemer' (Isa 63:16). Earlier, in Isaiah 51:10, the prophet mentions that Israel has been delivered from Egypt. Although there the prophet does not explicitly speak in terms of a Father-son relationship, he still uses the language of begetting and possession of Israel, saying,

> But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. (Isa 43:1; cf. Deut 32:6)

In chapter 63 the prophet lists God's actions in the past history of Israel. The precise events are not specified but, as J. Watts recognises, they can be both the exodus and the events of Sinai.[35] God dealt with Israel with greatness, compassion and with covenant loyalty (Isa 63:7). Isaiah uses the language of redemption to describe that God by his love and pity redeemed, lifted and carried Israel (63:9), that he became their Saviour (63:8) and that he led them in the wilderness (64:13-14). He also implies God's fatherhood when he calls them God's children and his people (63:8, 11). Finally, in 63:16 Isaiah summarises who God is for Israel: he is the Father and Redeemer. The importance of these words is that if Isaiah has in mind God's action in more than just the exodus event, then the idea of God being the Father who also redeems is affirmed across the intervening centuries.

Like Isaiah, Jeremiah recalls the time when God delivered Israel out of Egypt, when he cared for them (31:1-6). Jeremiah implies that the appeal for mercy to God the Father reflects Israel's tradition and their history that constantly illustrates God's election and the redemption of Israel out of Egypt (Jer 31). Hosea also remembers the exodus: when God brought Israel out of Egypt he treated it like a child (11:1). Hosea uses the beautiful metaphor of a 'father' treating his 'child' with love to represent the relationship of God and Israel (11:1-3).[36]

The Old Testament refers to God the Father who redeemed Israel and to Israel as God's son who disobeyed their Father. The disobedience of Israel is a major theme in Deuteronomy. Moses accuses Israel of having forgotten the fact that God is faithful and cares for his children (Deut 32:4-5). He is their Father who created or formed them (Deut 32:6) – which recalls the language of God becoming their Father and Redeemer. Yet they behave so corruptly that they can no longer be called his children (Deut 32:5). Likewise Jeremiah declares that in spite of the fact that Israel was elected and placed among the sons of God, given an inheritance and patrimony among the nations, and came to call God 'Father', these privileged sons committed apostasy and became faithless (Jer 3:3, 19-20). Instead of addressing God the Father who redeemed them out of Egypt (cf. Deut 32), they mischievously call objects their father and worship Canaanite idols:[37]

> They say to wood, 'You are my father,' and to stone, 'You gave me birth.' They have turned their backs to me and not their faces; yet when they are in trouble, they say, 'Come and save us!' Where then are the gods you made for yourselves? Let them come if they can save you when you are in trouble! For you have as many gods as you have towns, O Judah. Why do you bring charges against me? (Jer 2:27-29)

In similar vein in Malachi God is presented as a Father who merits honour, obedience and ongoing response but does not receive them:

> A son honours his father, and servants their master. If then I am a father, where is the honour due me? And if I am a master, where is the respect due me? (Mal 1:6)

Malachi's narrative discusses Israel's unfaithfulness to God, reminding them that God establishes Israel:

> Have we not all one father? Has not one God created us? Why then are we faithless to one another, profaning the covenant of our ancestors? (Mal 2:10; cf. Deut 32:6; Isa 64:8)

In his narrative Malachi condemns the Israelites' marriages with foreign women who do not have the same father/creator.[38] This is a breakdown of the mutuality within the community that inevitably leads to idolatry. Malachi interprets being faithless towards one another in terms of being faithless to God the Father who formed them. The thought that Israel has become unfaithful to God is also emphasised in Hosea (11:2; 13:13).

In spite of the theme of Israel's disobedience there is a certain hope for restoration and new life if people return to God their Father. Deuteronomy brings assurance of God's care for Israel and of Israel's triumph among the nations (Deut 32:36-38). Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel all attest to a future beyond the end of Israel's disobedience and punishment. Isaiah understands the release from the Babylonian captivity as a new exodus and he uses the concept of God the Redeemer to describe it (for example Isa 41:14; 43:14; 44:6, 24; 48:20-21; 49:7; 59:20). The exiles call upon God as Father in their present distress and they hope for a new redemption and a return to the land (Isa 63:16). Isaiah conveys the idea that redemption has to do with restoring the relationship between God and Israel (Isa 43:1-7). He connects God's redeeming action in the return from exile with the forgiveness of Israel's sin and the removal of the effects of its sinfulness (Isa 43:25; 40:1-11). On the basis of God being their Father (Isa 64:8) his people ask God not to remember their sins (Isa 64:9). The Father who created them[39] is taking care of them. They call upon God's mercy and upon the forgiveness of the Father. Like Jeremiah, Isaiah pictures Israel's rescue from punishment with the image of a father's forgiving love (Isa 64; cf. Jer 31:8-9). John Oswalt points out that in Isaiah God is not only 'our Father' but that his name, his reputation is inseparably tied to him being 'our Redeemer' from ancient times. This is the God who has been known to Israel.[40] For this reason God cannot afford to let his son go unredeemed or be held in the bondage of their own sin and unrighteousness. Isaiah's hope for the future restoration of Israel may not be for the whole of Israel, but for the remnant of the righteous within Israel; the survivors of the house of Jacob will be saved (Isa 10:20-22; cf. 1 Kgs 19:10-18; Jer 31:7). God's faithfulness toward Israel in Isaiah is a demonstration of his redeeming plans in view of all the nations: 'The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God' (Isa 52:10; cf. 19:24-25; 51:4-5).

Isaiah also recalls that God's purpose in making Israel his chosen son was not the interest of Israel only. Israel is to be 'the light of the nations' (Isa 42:6). Moreover, the idea of God gathering others who are not his is clearly in the writer's mind (Isa 56:1-8; cf. Deut 32:21; Mal 1:11). Isaiah also says that God will bless other nations (Isa 19:25). In 65:1 Isaiah reinforces the same idea when he says that God will reveal himself to those who did not seek him or call on his name before. The overall context though, suggests that God actively offered himself to his people but they constantly disobeyed him. Thus their problems are not the result of God's failure to listen to them but of their rebellion.[41] The prophet shows God's initiative in calling his people and his continuous concern and expectation for his people to come back to him who is the Father (Isa 65:1-8). He concludes that God will be revealed to the nations through his redeemed people (Isa 66:18-24). So we see that in Isaiah God's fatherhood and his role as Redeemer are implicitly linked with the history of Israel, starting with his saving them out of Egypt and then out of Babylon, their disobedience and God's persistent calling to repentance. Other connected ideas are that of the remnant and of Israel being a light to other nations, and, finally, God's revelation to the nations through his redeemed people.

While in Jeremiah 3:19 the prophet laments the people's idolatry in the name of God and expresses God's disappointment about his children's unfaithfulness, he also describes God's desire to restore the people in the intimate relationship with himself. This relationship is suggested by the familiar image of a father and a son:

> I thought how I would set you among my children, and give you a pleasant land, the most beautiful heritage of all the nations. And I thought you would call me, My Father, and would not turn from following me.

Jeremiah develops the theme of God's restoration as another glorious exodus in a way which is similar to Isaiah's new exodus motif (Isa 35; 40:3-5; 41:18-20; 42:16). Jeremiah expects the new covenant and he describes Israel's restoration as an act of God as Father that transcends the exodus from Egypt in every way. As Thompson notices, Jeremiah's words are reminiscent of the second part of Isaiah, in which the return from captivity in Babylon is depicted:[42]

> They will pray as I bring them back. I will lead them beside streams of water on a level path where they will not stumble, because I am Israel's father, and Ephraim is my firstborn son. (Jer 31:9; cf. Ex 4:22-23)

The idea of Israel as firstborn son and God as their Father is very important here and it evokes God's leading of Israel, his son, in the time of exodus. Now he will renew with Israel 'the same fatherly love he displayed in centuries past'.[43]

A similar theme can be found in Hosea. Although this prophet does not explicitly speak of God as Father, he does speak of Israel as God's child who, in spite of all God's compassion, love and mercy, refuses to obey God (Hos 11:1-8). Hosea continues to articulate the mercifulness of God, the Father of Israel, who redeemed them out of slavery (11:1) and protected them in the wilderness (9:10; 11:3-4). Hosea especially claims that God will renew his relationship with his people. He writes that God would make his own people those who were not his own before,

> I will show my love to the one I called 'Not my loved one.' I will say to those called 'Not my people', 'You are my people'; and they will say, 'You are my God.' (Hos 2:23; cf. Isa 65:1)

The Deuteronomic language of God's special relationship to Israel ('they will be mine' and 'my special possession') reappears in Hosea (1:10; 2:23) where it applies to the Israelites who are scattered around in the world of pagan religions and being influenced by them.[44] Hosea condemns the people's idolatry, proclaiming God's covenantal love for Israel and summoning the people to repentance and return to God (2:8, 18-19). He brings the message of hope that God will renew the covenant that was broken by Israel's infidelity. They will again become children of the living God (1:7,10).

Eschatological expectations in Malachi also reflect later prophetic ideas:

> They shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, my special possession on the day when I act, and I will spare them as parents spare their children who serve them. Then once again you shall see the difference between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve. (Mal 3:17-18)

The Deuteronomic language here operates on a different level. The words 'They will be mine' and 'my special possession' are not applied to all Israel but only to the righteous part that continues to serve God (cf. Mic 7:18; Isa 10:20-22; Hos 2:23). They will be his special possession. (Note the language of inheritance that is applied to the whole Israel in Deut 14:1-2; 32:9.) God will renew his promise to those who fear him and who value his name.[45]

5. Conclusions

The idea of God the Father is developed with reference to his redeeming activity in the deliverance of Israel from Egypt when he elected and lifted Israel to the status of 'son' (Ex 4:22). Thus he is the Father and Redeemer of Israel in the exodus and during the intervening centuries (Isa 63:16). This relationship is sealed by the covenant into which God has entered with Israel as his children (Ex 19-24). The Father's redeeming activity is also creative in nature and grounded in the fact that he formed Israel as a nation (Isa 64:7-8, Deut 32:6-7, Mal 2:19). However, God's purpose for Israel, to make it a special, holy nation, as his son, is far-reaching: his 'son' Israel is to be obedient to God, to serve him, to be the light to the nations and to proclaim his name in all the earth (Ex 9:16). God as Father and Redeemer is understood in terms of his own righteousness (Deut 32:4). God's special relation to Israel and his promise is given not because of Israel's righteousness but because of his righteousness (Deut 9).

God is described not only as the father of the entire nation of Israel but also of king David and his offspring. Although the idea of God as a Father who redeems the king does not appear, the language of God's electing and adopting the king and keeping a covenant relationship with him and through him – as a representative of Israel – with the whole people is retained. The important fact is that God the Father who redeems Israel continues to take care of his people by appointing a king who has to lead Israel in obedience to him.

Israel's history as recorded in the Old Testament remains, however, a 'sorry litany of unfaithfulness and rebellion'.[46] When the prophets speak of the utter faithfulness of God, they also point to the fact that his son Israel is not obedient to his will, does not live in uprightness and righteousness before him, and does not serve as light to the other nations. As the disobedience continues, the writers of the Old Testament express the hope for a future fulfilment of the promised restoration and they address God as Father in their prayers for deliverance (e.g. Isa 63:16; 64:8). God as Father will have mercy and bring his son Israel home from exile. He will renew his relationship with the people (Isa 64; cf. Jer 31:8-9; Ps 103:6-14). The Psalms and the prophets connect God's redemption from exile with his forgiveness of Israel's sins and the effects of its sinfulness. Some texts emphasise that God as Father will renew his promise to those who fear him and who value his name (Mic 7:18; Isa 10:20-22; Hos 2:23). Other texts point out that God as Father will continue acting through his son, the Davidic king, raising the new king, his anointed one (Ps 2, 89; Jer 23:5-6; Isa 55:3-5). The Old Testament upholds the idea that God's faithfulness toward Israel is a demonstration of his redeeming plans in front of all the nations (Ps 2, 103) to whom Israel is supposed to be the light (Isa 42:6). The writers of the New Testament argue that these promises find their fulfilment and realisation in Jesus Christ.

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Notes

1 D.R. Tasker, *Ancient Near Eastern Literature and the Hebrew Scriptures about the Fatherhood of God* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004) 4.

2 Tasker recognises eighteen references, *Ancient Near Eastern Literature*, 6.

3 C.J.H. Wright, *Knowing God the Father through the Old Testament* (Oxford: Monarch Books, 2007) 24-25.

4 The Hebrew word גּאל is the heart of the exodus motif, the heart of the covenantal relationship, a description of God's intent to be Israel's protector, to help and rescue those who have fallen in need, to be faithful to their election. M.A. Grisanti, 'גּאל' in W.A. Van Gemeren (ed.), *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* 1 (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1997) 882-884.

5 Wright, *Knowing God the Father*, 77.

6 J.I. Durham, *Exodus* (WBC 3; Waco: World Books, 1987) 56.

7 Tasker, *Ancient Near Eastern Literature*, 83, 86.

8 C. McCann, Jr., 'The Book of Psalms: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections' in *New Interpreter's Bible* 4 (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996) 945; see also A.A. Anderson, *The Book of Psalms* (NCB; London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1972) 485.

9 C.J.H. Wright, *The Mission of God: unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Nottingham: IVP, 2006) 270.

10 J.B. Green, *Salvation* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2003) 69.

11 W. Brueggemann, 'The Book of Exodus' in *New Interpreter's Bible* 1 (Nashville: Abington, 1994) 717.

12 Tasker, *Ancient Near Eastern Literature*, 83. Also, Peter A. Verhoef, *Haggai and Malachi* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 266.

13 Tasker, *Ancient Near Eastern Literature*, 150.

14 Tasker, *Ancient Near Eastern Literature*, 87, 205.

15 C.C. Caragounis allows this implication. See 'בֵּן' in Van Gemeren (ed.), *Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis* 1, 676.

16 Although the following examples are from different areas, they both emphasise the importance of the continuing relationship between Israel and their God who is by implication their Father who redeems.

17 Leon Morris, *The Atonement: its Meaning and Significance* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1983) 115.

18 Peter C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971) 206.

19 Wright, *The Mission of God*, 224.

20 McCann, 'The Book of Psalms', 1092.

21 Hebrew roots suggest motherly compassion that God has revealed and treated his people with, see McCann, 'The Book of Psalms', 778, 1092.

22 Allan Coppedge, *Portraits of God: a Biblical Theology of Holiness* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2001) 101.

23 Coppedge, *Portraits of God*, 102.

24 Wright, *Knowing God the Father*, 92.

25 Wright, *Knowing God the Father*, 93.

26 J. Goldingay, *Psalms* in Tremper Longman III (ed.), *Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms* 1 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006) 95.

27 Also M.M. Thompson, *The Promise of the Father: Jesus and God in the New Testament* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000) 47.

28 A.A. Anderson, *2 Samuel* (WBC 11; Dallas: Word Books, 1989) 123.

29 Anderson, *2 Samuel*, 123.

30 McCann, 'The Book of Psalms', 1037.

31 McCann, 'The Book of Psalms', 1036.

32 McCann, 'The Book of Psalms', 1034.

33 Wright, *Knowing God the Father*, 95.

34 Goldingay, *Psalms*, 691-692.

35 John W. Watts, *Isaiah 34-66* (WBC 25; Dallas: Word Books, 1987) 332.

36 In Hosea 11:4 God 'bent down to them and fed them', which is a function performed by the mother. This links with Deut 1:31; 8:5, Num 11:11-12, Is. 49:15; 66:10-13 that designate God as mother. Hosea also uses other images such as lover, husband and parent to show God's faithfulness and care for Israel.

37 J.A. Thompson, *The Book of Jeremiah* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 180.

38 Verhoef, *Haggai*, 265ff. This is also the connection with the creation language. See above.

39 Isaiah 64:7-8 uses the metaphor of Israel being the clay, the work of his hands, presumably in a sense of historical reminiscence of when he calls them out, gives his covenant and leads them out of slavery to the promised land. The emphasis is on God's saving character. See also John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 629.

40 Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah*, 613.

41 Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah*, 636-637.

42 Thompson, *The Book of Jeremiah*, 569.

43 Thompson, *The Book of Jeremiah*, 569.

44 Macinthosh notices that Hosea's message is concerned with the Northern kingdom and maybe with those exiled from it. However, already in 2:1 the vision of the author is transferred to the covenant people and 'becomes proleptically a paradigm of blessings'; A.A. Macintosh, *Hosea* (ICC; Edinburg: T&T Clark, 1997) 28, 37. Yee observes that although Hosea is a northern prophet, v. 1 gives priority to the southern kings of Judah, whose reign extended beyond the kings mentioned in v. 1. His word may be to his later Judean audience as well. Hoses 3:1 emphasises especially the eventual unity of God's people; Gale A. Yee, 'The Book of Hosea' in *New Interpreter's Bible 7* (Nashville: Abington Press, 1996) 217.

45 The difference between the righteous and the wicked only occurs here in Malachi; however, the contrast between these two groups is a major motif in the Psalms (1; 37), Proverbs (10) and the prophets (Hab 1:4). See Ralph L. Smith, *Micah-Malachi* (WBC 32; Waco: Word Books, 1984) 339.

46 Stephen Westerholm, *Understanding Paul: the Early Christian Worldview of the Letter to the Romans*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1997, 2nd ed. 2004) 117.

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Beauty as the Point of Connection between Theology and Ethics

Stephen M. Garrett

SUMMARY

What role, if any, does God play in understanding a modern western society, particularly that of human flourishing, creativity and civic activeness? Are we to agree with Karl Marx that religion is nothing more than 'the opiate of the people' designed to console humanity's miserable lives? Or even with the American philosopher, William James, that our notions of God are a function of our choices such that God is created in accordance with our own tastes to suit our desires?

Both approaches lead to a loss of wonder and to despair. What, then, might inspire hope? From a Christian perspective the twentieth century Swiss Catholic theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar points us to the One who bridges the heavenly and the earthly, namely Jesus Christ, who reinvigorates that childlike wonder and curiosity that draws us away from ourselves toward God and our fellow human beings. In doing so, God's beauty shapes and forms our imaginations, enabling human beings to flourish within society in creative ways for the common good of humanity.

* * * *

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Welche Rolle spielt Gott – wenn überhaupt – beim Verständnis einer modernen westlichen Gesellschaft, insbesondere jener, bei der es um menschliche Entfaltung, Kreativität und gesellschaftliche Aktivität geht? Sollen wir Karl Marx in seiner Behauptung zustimmen, dass Religion nichts anderes ist als ‚Opium für das Volk' mit dem Zweck, über das elende Leben der Menschheit hinwegzutrösten? Oder sollen wir gar dem amerikanischen Philosophen William James darin beipflichten, dass unsere Gottesvorstellungen durch unsere Neigungen dahingehend bedingt sind, dass wir uns einen Gott je nach Geschmack erschaffen, der unseren Wünschen entspricht?

Beide Ansätze führen dazu, dass Staunen verloren geht und Verzweiflung sich einstellt. Was kann dann noch Hoffnung beflügeln? Von einer christlichen Perspektive ausgehend, weist Hans Urs von Balthasar, ein Schweizer katholischer Theologie aus dem 20. Jahrhundert, auf den Einen hin, der die Brücke zwischen Himmel und Erde schlägt: Jesus Christus, der dieses kindliche Staunen und diese Neugier wieder belebt, die uns weg von uns selbst und hin zu Gott und unseren Mitmenschen zieht. Dabei gestaltet und prägt die Schönheit Gottes unsere Vorstellungskraft und befähigt Menschen dazu, sich in der Gesellschaft auf kreative Weise zu entfalten und dies zum gemeinschaftlichen Nutzen aller.

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RÉSUMÉ

Quel rôle peut-on attribuer à Dieu pour comprendre une société occidentale moderne, caractérisée en particulier par la productivité des hommes, leur créativité et leur implication dans la vie de la cité ? Devons-nous suivre Karl Marx qui considérait la religion comme l'opium des peuples destiné à consoler les humains d'une vie misérable ? Ou faut-il, avec le philosophe américain William James, considérer notre notion de Dieu comme une fonction de nos choix de telle sorte que nous nous forgeons un dieu qui s'accorde avec nos propres goûts et désirs ?

Ces deux approches aboutissent à une perte du sens du merveilleux et au désespoir. Car alors, qu'est-ce qui peut nous donner une espérance ? D'un point de vue chrétien, le théologien catholique suisse Hans Urs von Balthasar nous a orientés au XX^e siècle vers celui qui relie le céleste au terrestre, vers Jésus-Christ. C'est Christ qui ranime ce sens du merveilleux caractéristique de l'enfant et cette curiosité qui nous détournent de nous-mêmes pour nous tourner vers Dieu et vers notre prochain. La beauté de Dieu façonne notre imagination et rend des êtres humains capables d'une créativité utile au sein de la société pour le bien commun de l'humanité.

* * * *

Introduction

In their recent book *God is Back: How the Global Revival of Faith is Changing the World*, the journalists John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge attempt to ascertain what they believe to be a global phenomenon occurring in religion. Although they evade various complexities and inappropriately frame the discussion in a dualistic manner, Micklethwait and Wooldridge surmise that two primary models for relating religion and modernity have emerged since the Enlightenment – a European and American model.

The European model, in general, has 'assumed that modernity would marginalize religion' while the American model has 'assumed that the two things can thrive together'.[1] Drawing their conclusions from numerous anecdotal stories from around the globe and research statistics that document the rise of religion, particularly Christianity, in Asia and the global South, they reason that God is back, in large part, because the American model has 'put modernity, or at least choice and competition, back into God'.[2]

Though both of these models are inherently flawed, I believe they beg a common question: 'What role, if any, does God play in our understanding of a modern society, particularly our understanding of human flourishing, creativity and civic activeness?'[3]

A loss of wonder leading to despair?

Micklethwait and Wooldridge argue that, in the American model, God is not at odds with modernisation because of the ideals found in free market capitalism. Applying this American capitalist model, they deduce that 'the surge of religion is being driven by the same two things that have driven the success of market capitalism: competition and choice'.[4] This sociological and economic interpretation concludes that the so-called global revival of faith is more about a multiplicity of religious options than an authentic religious encounter. Thus, religions of all types are free to market themselves as they compete for converts.

If we take this American model to its logical end, though, God becomes a commodity to be consumed since choice and competition become a part of his being. Thus, if I do not like the way a particular religion tastes or if a god expects too much of me, I can simply choose another variety that suits me. Such notions are predicated, in part, on pragmatism, that uniquely American philosophy espoused by William James. In *The Will to Believe* James asserts truth as a function of one's choice whereby 'truth *happens* to an idea. It *becomes* true, and is *made* true by events'.[5] Consequently, conceptions of God are constructed by human hands, leading to the creation of false realities and living 'quiet lives of desperation'.[6] This god of our own making fails to satisfy our deep inner longing for meaning and purpose, leaving many disillusioned when their choice of religion never seems to work for them.

With regard to the European model, Micklethwait and Wooldridge argue that God is at odds with modernisation and is unnecessary for human flourishing. Humanity possesses a superior human reason and it must throw off the shackles of religion because religion inhibits and constrains human flourishing. After all, it was Immanuel Kant who 'dared [us] to know'.[7] Thus, with the onset of the Enlightenment and the earth shattering effects brought about by Charles Darwin and the rise of modern science in the mid-nineteenth century, religion became the bane of human existence.

When we examine the European model a bit closer, three key thinkers among others push these antagonistic views of religion forward toward the establishment of a secularist state, namely Ludwig Feuerbach, Karl Marx and Friedrich Nietzsche.[8] Feuerbach, in his *The Essence of Christianity*, argues for the elimination of God-talk since our understanding of God is nothing more than the projection of our human conceptions constructed to console our miserable human lives.[9] Marx builds upon Feuerbach's critique of religion with his notions of dialectical materialism and alienation, offering a teleological view of history that culminates in communism.[10] God is no longer needed in the formation of a society or a personal ethic since, as the madman declares in Nietzsche's *Gay Science*, 'God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him.'[11] Perhaps, to fill this 'God-shaped hole', this is why many modern Europeans have turned to secular faith in science, culture, the nation-state and socialism.[12]

Both models, though they diverge in their understanding of the relationship between God and society, seem to have a common ending – *a loss of wonder that leads to despair*. But why do these two divergent views end at the same place? The Swiss Roman Catholic theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905-1988) surmised that when 'Being becomes identical with the necessity to be, and when this identity has been taken up by reason, then there is *no longer any space for wonder* at the fact that there is something rather than nothing.'[13]

Defunct views of reality

Balthasar attributed this lack of wonder about the mystery of being to the cosmological and the anthropological reductions. The *cosmological reduction* comes about at the hands of a metaphysical shift away from the supernatural (not necessarily a Christian understanding of it) to a natural one, reducing reality to merely the material. The *anthropological reduction* makes human beings the measure of all things whereby they give the world its structure and are able to transcend the world via human reason.[14] Following Balthasar's insights, we see that the so-called American model fails since humanity becomes the measure of God while the so-called European model reduces reality to merely the material. Is there perhaps, though, another way to construe the relationship between God and society without importing free market capitalism into God or eliminating him altogether from our discourse?

Elaine Scarry suggests an approach in *On Beauty and Being Just*. In part one of that work she tries 'to set forth the view that beauty really is allied with truth'. The 'two are not identical' such that beauty 'ignites the desire for truth by giving us… the experience of conviction and the experience, as well, of error'.[15] Yet, beauty's association with error in that it 'brings us into contact with our own capacity for making errors' has led many to disassociate beauty and truth. This is perhaps why many have exiled beauty from the field of humanities.[16] Nevertheless, Scarry attempts to redeem beauty, in part two of her book, by refuting the political complaints which insist that beauty distracts us from social injustices and even leads us to prolonged stares and gazes that are 'destructive to the object'. In the end, our experience of beauty 'radically decenters' us: it turns our attention to correcting injustices and so leads to a fair and just society.[17]

Nicholas Wolterstorff, in an essay entitled 'Beauty and Justice', critiques Scarry's notion of beauty and how she relates it to justice.[18] He rightly surmises that Scarry's conception of beauty as 'unity, equality and symmetry' echoes the Romantic ideals of a bygone era that championed the 'inherent salvific power' of art to reshape society. Such notions, Wolterstorff contends, 'are patently false' because of the numerous instances of those who may very well be enamoured with beauty but have little regard for justice, not unlike 'the Germans who supervised the concentration camps during the day [and] attended concerts during the evening and expanded their art collections with paintings plundered from the occupied countries'.[19]

The way of beauty

Scarry may very well be on to something, though, in that she has brought beauty into the conversation. She argues forcefully that it is somehow bound up with truth and justice. Wolterstorff seems to concur, although he does not accept the analogies that Scarry sees between beauty and justice. Instead, beauty and justice are 'two modes of acknowledging worth, two modes of acknowledging excellence'.[20] Both authors seem to recognise some version of objective realism in which beauty and justice are connected. Both seem to recognise an ontological distinction within the created order that does not collapse into an egocentric subjectivity, thereby rendering value and worth to the other. But how do these insights enable us to answer our question regarding God and our understanding of a modern society?

In his *Notebooks, 1914-1916* Ludwig Wittgenstein makes a perceptive observation regarding the relationship between art and ethics that seems to show a possible way forward: 'The work of art is the object seen *sub specie aeternitatis*; and the good life is the world seen *sub specie aeternitatis*. This is the connection between art and ethics.'[21] In other words, Wittgenstein connects aesthetics and ethics through the lens of eternity, similar to Scarry's tacit acknowledgement when she says that 'what is beautiful is in league with what is true because truth abides in the immortal sphere'.[22] Herein lie the rudiments for addressing how to understand the relationship between God and society, between theology and ethics, namely *sub specie aeternitatis*.[23] Where, then, is this nexus for articulating the relationship between theology and ethics?

From a Christian perspective Jesus Christ, who brings together the heavenly and the earthly, illumines the way between theology and ethics, namely God's beauty, because as Karl Barth remarks, 'he takes up a place, and a very specific place at that, and makes himself the object of human contemplation, human experience, human thought, and human speech'.[24] *How* God reveals himself, then, is as important as *what* God reveals about himself.

Thus, if we are to understand anything regarding the identity of God, we must privilege his self-revelation – God's revealing of himself through himself, which presumes that God speaks (i.e., divine triune discourse) – amidst the polyphonic voices of the biblical authors. If God has freely revealed himself in a particular manner to communicate a particular message, what does God have to say about his beauty?

Christ as *Herrlichkeit* and *Übergestalt*

Balthasar provides us with two important theological concepts for explicating the essence of God's beauty important to human flourishing. Both of these presuppose Christ's singularity, God's divine freedom and trinitarian nature, and the inherent connections between creation and redemption. First, he identifies Christ as *Herrlichkeit* or the Lord of Glory.[25] This christological designation acknowledges that God 'is the infinitely free agent who, in his freedom, invents a world and, also in his freedom, creates that world'.[26] As Lord of the world, God is wholly other than his creation. Such an understanding underscores the utter dissimilarity between God and his creation (i.e., the Creator – creature distinction) such that our existence is to be understood as a gift. We owe our existence to someone other than ourselves. This christological designation also emphasises the fact that God's glory shines in and through the form of creation such that it can be seen by his creatures. The beauty of creation, then, is *not* God but points to God's glory. It anticipates and foreshadows the manifestation of God's glory in the incarnation when the Word of God comes in the form of a human being (Phil 2:6).

Second, Balthasar identifies Jesus Christ as *Übergestalt* or the form above all forms such that Christ is his own measure. Christ, says Balthasar, is the 'reality which lends the form its total coherence and comprehensibility' and the form 'to which all particular aspects have to be referred if they are to be understood'.[27] In other words, God's communication of himself is clearest in Jesus Christ, attested to in Scripture and the Church, whereby Christ is the centre (*Mitte*) of the form of revelation. This does not mean that there are other things needed to complete this form as if more could be added to Christ. Rather, the reality of human being, for example, has no meaning or purpose in isolation as if we could understand what it means to be human or what it means for a society to flourish apart from God.[28]

When we critically appropriate, via the Scriptures, Balthasar's christological terms they become two important christological loci for discerning, in part, the essence of God's beauty.[29] Jesus Christ as *Herrlichkeit* and *Übergestalt* – the distinct speaking and doing form of God's beauty – is the magnificent form of divine communicative action that radiates God's triune love for us. Such actions require a response, as Balthasar insists:

> For God's revelation is not simply an object to be looked at: it is his action in and upon the world, and the world can only respond, and hence 'understand', through action on *its* part.[30]

Yet, action on our part requires understanding such that we know whom we serve and what part we are to perform. Through the eyes of faith, then, 'death turns into life' so that we are 'drawn into the action [and] can look toward the centre in which all things are transformed' for 'we have been appointed to play our part' in God's drama of redemption.[31] Where, then, in the life of Christ do we see his glory most prominently revealed – in his miracles, in his teachings, in creation?

God's beauty-in-act

The author of Hebrews indicates that Christ's glory is revealed in his death and suffering when he was 'crowned with glory and honour' and by implication in his resurrection and ascension (Heb 2:9; cf. Rom 6:4; 1 Pet 1:21). That being the case, Christ's death and resurrection become necessary for discerning God's beauty because it is fitting (*prepō*) that God, in bringing his people to glory, should perfect (*teleioō*) the author of their salvation through suffering (Heb 2:10).

The Gospels, particularly the Gospel of John (John 12:27-28; 17), recall Christ's instructions to his disciples shortly after Peter's confession that Jesus is the Son of the living God. Christ admonishes them *not* to make his divinity known (Matt 16:20; cf. 17:9). Why? The time had not yet come for the Son of God to be glorified. Although throughout Christ's life and ministry we see glimpses of his glory through his miracles, when is the appropriate, fitting or right time (*hōra*) for God to reveal his glory? Jesus says in his high priestly prayer, 'Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son so that he may glorify you.' And, 'Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory that I had with you before the beginning of the world' (John 17:2, 5). That hour (*hōra*) is none other than the appointed hour of his death and resurrection (John 13:1).[32]

What is it, though, about the nature of God that he should bring about peace through pain? What is so beautiful about that? Is God sadistic because he accomplishes his purposes in this manner? Augustine provides us with some helpful insight:

> What is it we love in Christ – his crucified limbs, his pierced side or his love? When we hear that He suffered for us, what do we love? Love is loved. He loved us, that we might in turn love Him; and that we might return His love He has given us His Spirit.[33]

Three things are evident in Augustine's response: 1) The beauty of the cross is not the suffering, brutality or cruelty but the *act* of self-giving love revealed through suffering; 2) Christ's suffering is for our benefit; and 3) Such beauty perceived in and through the cross by faith is understood only in light of the whole of God's drama of redemption. This is the counterintuitive nature of the Gospel – *of God's suffering glory* – such that God's beauty-in-act radiates in weakness (2 Cor 12:9).[34]

I contend, then, that God's beauty-in-act is *the attunement or fittingness of the incarnate Son's actions in the Spirit to the Father's will that radiates the splendour of God's triune love*. In other words, it is fitting for the Father to glorify the Son because the Son does all that the Father plans for him to do. He leaves nothing undone. The Son's obedience to the Father is not one of duty or compulsion but one of love, self-giving love that takes him to the point of death (Phil 2:8), for the Son does not desire to do his own will but the will of the Father (Matt 26:39; John 4:34; 6:38). The Father delights in the Son because of his perfect obedience which illuminates the beauty of God's holiness and wisdom.[35]

Moreover, the Spirit glorifies Christ by disclosing the 'words and deeds of Jesus that the disciples experienced, but which only now are disclosed to them in their inner depth', says Balthasar. This process of the glorification of Christ through the Spirit 'is nothing other than the bringing to light of the love that lies in obedience'.[36] Therefore, there is an attunement, concordance or fittingness between both Christ's and the Spirit's mission and their existence where the Son is the *expression* of while the Spirit is the *impression* of God's beauty.[37]

The way of incarnate beauty between theology and ethics

Many contemporary Protestants note the perils of incorporating God's beauty into theological discourse because of its common association with human eros and its troubled history with the iconoclastic controversies. Upon closer inspection of the Protestant tradition, though, we find several important historical links which help us to articulate a theology of beauty.

Although he was adamantly opposed to the 'dead images' that were typical of the iconoclastic debates, John Calvin does point us to 'living images of God' that we see when we hear the Word of God. His theology attended to God's beauty in that 'we need the truth of God to be able to discern the beauty of God in God's works'. Yet God's beauty is also needed to allure and invite us to the Father 'so that we might be ravished with admiration for the beauty of God's goodness, and seek God from the innermost affection of our hearts', as Randall Zachman notes.[38] Jonathan Edwards often spoke of God's beauty, identifying God as 'the foundation and fountain of all being and beauty'[39] while Karl Barth recognised that 'the beauty of Jesus Christ is not just any beauty. It is the beauty of God. Or more concretely, it is the beauty of what God is and does in Him'.[40] If, then, 'all truth is God's truth', as Reformed theology so often remarks, echoing John Calvin, *is not all beauty God's beauty?*[41]

It seems that beauty has a role to play between theology and ethics as Graham Ward suggests when he reasons for 'the inseparability of a Christian aesthetics from a Christian epistemology, and both from a theological ethics'.[42] To ignore the beauty of God in his triunity is to '... have a God without radiance and without joy (and without humour!)', as Barth fittingly remarks.[43]

The contemporary reticence among Protestants toward beauty is unwarranted so long as we understand our inclination to fashion God's beauty into golden images and avoid sentimental, nostalgic and hedonistic motifs. Failing to do so inhibits beauty from conveying meaning beyond the realm of personal taste; it relegates beauty to the ornamental and innocuous pleasant. Any notion of God's beauty apt for theological discourse must privilege, then, God's divine triune discourse which is attested to in the polyphonic voices of Holy Scripture. That being the case, what are the implications of God's beauty for human flourishing, creativity and civic activeness?

At the outset of this essay, we saw how the so-called American and European models for relating God and society led to a loss of wonder and the deterioration of human flourishing. If we advocate, though, a communicative relationship between God and the world, as I suggested previously, then the living God of the universe has something to say about human flourishing. In other words, since God communicates himself to human beings most clearly in his Son, Jesus Christ, we come to understand our existence as a gift such that we owe our very being to someone other than ourselves. Moreover, God's self-giving love, and hence hope and faith, become the essential social values for a society. Hope and faith become essential for understanding how human beings can prosper within a society.

This leads us to ponder the metaphysical question of why there is something rather than nothing. The beauty within the created order heightens our awareness of this distinction. Beauty points us to something, better said, someone other than ourselves – Jesus Christ as *Herrlichkeit* and *Übergestalt*, who is Incarnate Beauty. God's beauty in its peculiarity and particularity reinvigorates the childlike wonder and curiosity that attracts us, persuades us, convinces us and draws us away from ourselves toward God and our fellow human beings. This contemplation, though, is not merely introspection or reflection; rather it 'is a stimulus to something further' and 'is always measured by whether it bears fruit in an existence that is an appropriately active response to that revelation' such that 'contemplation flows into action'.[44] How does such contemplation flow into action? In other words, how does our passive reception of God's communication of himself move us to performance, namely to ethics?

Beauty and the ethical imagination

Instrumental to such movement is the unique human cognitive ability called the imagination, what the nineteenth century Scottish literary giant George MacDonald understood as that 'which gives form to thought'.[45] And what the venerable nineteenth century Catholic Cardinal John Henry Newman identified as 'an intellectual act… [which] has the means… of stimulating those powers of the mind from which action proceeds'.[46] Newman continues noting that 'what the imagination does for us is to find a means of stimulating those motive powers; and it does so by providing a supply of objects strong enough to stimulate them'. In this sense, 'the imagination may be said… to be of a practical nature, inasmuch as it leads to practice indirectly by the action of its object upon the affections'.[47] The imagination, then, is a 'holistic faculty… that relates specifically to the thinking or feeling or willing faculties'. It seems to possess a 'heuristic power [that] enables the imagination to see the end from the beginning and to anticipate what it will be like to arrive at our destination'.[48]

By privileging objective reality as that which educates, forms, shapes or develops our imaginations, God's beauty transforms our imaginations in such a way that, as America's eighteenth century theologian Jonathan Edwards remarked, 'it is as if a new world opens to its view' such that 'when a person has this sense knowledge given him, he will view nothing as he did before'.[49] Christ, as the Lord of Glory, has taken away the veil that shrouds our imaginations, for he is 'the ideal, the "Pattern", [which] quickens the imagination and directs the will to imitation and obedience in renewed ethical passion'.[50] Such an encounter with God's beauty captivates our imaginations with the authentic life of faith in Christ lived in the Spirit. Thus, as we behold (*katoptrizō*) God's beauty, we are transformed (*metamorphoō*) by the Holy Spirit into Christ's likeness with an ever-increasing beauty (2 Cor 3:18) such that an artful renewal of the imagination ensues.[51]

Conclusions

Human imagining can lead to human flourishing as human beings employ their imaginations to envision the numerous possibilities for cultivating the common good of a society, which should ultimately lead to action. As MacDonald exhorts, 'a wise imagination… is the best guide that man or woman can have, for it is not the things we see the most clearly that influence us the most powerfully'.[52] Similarly, the imagination enables the church to envision her part in society, witnessing to the glory of God through her worship and the manifestation of God's wisdom as she participates fittingly in God's drama of redemption.

Therefore, if we are to promote the common good of a society and the human flourishing of its citizens, it seems that beauty, more specifically God's beauty-in-act, has an important role to play. God's beauty leads us to wonder. It leads away from despair so that we do not give up hope. More importantly, it forms our imaginations to envision how to live fittingly in an unjust world, giving us purpose along the way. Such conclusions and suggestions for relating God and society are no small matter. They should challenge and inspire us to speak with boldness and to act courageously in society, in the face of injustices, such that we promote human flourishing and perform our part for the common good of all humanity and the glory of God.[53]

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Notes

1 J. Micklethwait and A. Wooldridge, *God is Back: How the Global Revival of Faith is Changing the World* (New York: Penguin Press, 2009) 9.

2 Micklethwait and Wooldridge, *God is Back*, 25 and 356.

3 I presented a shorter version of this essay at an international conference hosted by the Social Communications Institute of Vilnius Pedagogical University in Vilnius, Lithuania entitled 'Challenges for Academic Youth in the 21st Century: Courage to Speak, Freedom to Live'. It was sponsored by the student organization called 'Drauge Kelyje', which means 'friends together along the way'. As I thought about what their motto means in light of the conference topic, I found myself asking several questions: Where are these students and colleagues going? What might they see along the way? Why is it important to move together and not alone? Many of the conference papers spoke of the social ills facing Lithuania, yet each seemed to assume several fundamental questions like: Which values or virtues are important to any society in order for its citizens to flourish? What is truth and how can we know it? What does it mean to be human?, etc. Yet the fundamental question I sought to raise and address with this paper was, 'What role, if any, does God play in our understanding of a modern society, particularly our understanding of human flourishing, creativity and civic activeness?'

4 Micklethwait and Wooldridge, *God is Back*, 21.

5 W. James, *Pragmatism: The Works of William James* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975) 97; see also W. James, *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy* (New York: Longman, Green, and Co., 1896) 1-31.

6 H.D. Thoreau, *Walden, Or Life in the Woods* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004) 7.

7 I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (trans. M. Weigelt; London: Penguin Classics, 2007).

8 I am aware of secularism's contested meaning as well as its nuanced connotations dependent in large part on the socio-political and economic context in which it occurs. Secularism in France, for example, may have familial resemblances to secularism in the Czech Republic but by no means are they identical nor are they manifested for the same reasons. For further reading see D. Martin, *On Secularization: Towards a Revised General Theory* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

9 L. Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity* (trans. G. Eliot; New York: Harper & Row, 1957) 38.

10 K. Marx, *Economic & Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* (trans. M. Mulligan; Progress Publisher: Moscow, 1959) and *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (trans. N.I. Stone; Chicago: Charles H. Kerr and Company, 1904).

11 F. Nietzsche, *The Gay Science* (trans. G. Colli and M. Montinari; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 120. The madman's proclamation of the death of God is not to indicate that God is literally dead but that the Christian idea of God is now 'unbelievable', that the metaphysical basis for explaining the world is no longer viable. Although this notion was only beginning to dawn upon Europe at the time, according to Nietzsche, it has grave consequences when people fully recognise such events, particularly for European morality.

12 Micklethwait and Wooldridge, *God is Back*, 40, 44-47.

13 H.U. von Balthasar, *The Realm of Metaphysics in the Modern Age*, trans. O. Davies, A. Louth, J. Saward, and M. Simon, vol. 5 of *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, ed. J. Fessio and J. Riches (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1991) 613. Subsequent references to *The Glory of the Lord* will be abbreviated as *GL*.

14 H.U. von Balthasar, *Love Alone Is Credible* (trans. D.C. Schindler; San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004) 15-30, 31-50. Balthasar rooted the reduction of being in the *esse univocum* of Duns Scotus (being as a concept) and Meister Eckhart (being as God). Duns Scotus's notion of *esse univocum*, according to Balthasar, turned being into a concept whereby all reality rests on 'an undifferentiated and neutral sphere of "existence"', laying the groundwork for modern science (*GL* V, 18). Meister Eckhart's notion of *esse univocum*, according to Balthasar, subsumed all of being into God such that 'the absolute point of identity with the divine' was found within 'the subject' (*GL* V, 46). These roots bear fruit as this reductionism takes shape in the thought of René Descartes and Immanuel Kant when 'the turning from Being to mental concepts, from things (and

God) existing in themselves to things conceived as existing "for me" and "from me". From now on, the subject can regard itself as legislative reason' (*GL* V, 28).

15 E. Scarry, *On Beauty and Being Just* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999) 52.

16 Scarry, *On Beauty and Being Just*, 31, 52-57.

17 Scarry, *On Beauty and Being Just*, 58, 109-124.

18 N. Wolterstorff, 'Beauty and Justice', lecture at The National Lilly Fellows Conference, Seattle, WA, October 10-12, 2008. I am grateful to Joice Pang for providing Kevin Vanhoozer with a copy of this lecture who graciously forwarded it to me.

19 Wolterstorff, 'Beauty and Justice', 6.

20 Wolterstorff, 'Beauty and Justice', 19.

21 L. Wittgenstein, *Notebooks, 1914-1916* (ed. G.H. von Wright, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, 2nd ed., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984) 82.

22 Scarry, *On Beauty and Being Just*, 31. She maintains, though, that acquiescing to 'the existence of an immortal realm' is not necessary because beauty's enthralling self-showing 'incites in us the longing for truth' as it 'brings us into contact with our own capacity for making errors' (31).

23 Wittgenstein appropriated the phrase *sub specie aeternitatis* – under the form of eternity – from Baruch Spinoza who understood human reason as the ability to ascertain not only that something is but also how and why something exists. In doing so, human reason produces 'adequate ideas' by determining the causal linkages to other objects, particularly to God's attributes: 'It is in the nature of reason to regard things, not as contingent, but as necessary. Reason perceives this necessity of things truly, that is, as it is in itself. But this necessity of things is the very necessity of the eternal nature of God; therefore, it is in the nature of reason to regard things under this form of eternity' (B. Spinoza, *Ethics*, trans. R. H. M. Elwes in *Wadsworth Philosophy Source 3.0*, CD-ROM, ed. Daniel Kolak; New York: Wadsworth Publishing, II.44).

24 K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, ed. G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance, vol. I/1, *The Word of God*, trans. T.H.L Parker, W.B. Johnston, H. Knight, and J.L.M. Haire (New York: T & T Clark, 1956; New York: T & T Clark, 2004) 315-316.

25 *Herrlichkeit* means splendour, glory or magnificence, yet Balthasar intends here two different plays on words. The first occurs with the German *Herr* meaning lord or master and *Herrsein* meaning lordliness, rendering the term, what English translators of his *magnum opus* attempt to capture as 'The Glory of the Lord'. The second play on words is with *Hehrsein* meaning sublimeness, identifying God's glory with the sublime; see Balthasar, *GL* I, 116 and his *Theology: The Old Covenant* (trans. E. Leiva-Merikakis and B. McNeil, vol. 6 of *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, ed. J. Fessio and John Riches; San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1991) 10.

26 Balthasar, *GL* I, 429.

27 Balthasar, *GL* I, 463.

28 Balthasar, in light of this particular understanding of Christ, argues that Christ is also the Lord of history in that all history is salvation history in the sense that history only has meaning in relation to Jesus Christ, the concrete universal; see *A Theology of History* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1963) 79-107. There is thus no attempt on Balthasar's part to divide the Christ of history from the Christ of faith (*GL* I, 466-467). He endeavours to combine the two, often chastising historic critics who dissect and distort the *Gestalt Christi* with their methodology, which renders them blind to perceiving the *Gestalt* of revelation (*GL* I, 466).

29 My critical appropriation of Balthasar begins with his doctrine of sin and prevenient grace that seems to undermine the efficacy of God's glory he espouses in *Herrlichkeit* and *Übergestalt*. Balthasar understands sin to be disruptive and corruptive rather than destructive such that humanity's faculties posses the *real possibility* of knowing God although the *telos* for those faculties remains a *moral impossibility*. How are we to overcome this moral impossibility in order to know God in the deepest recesses of his being? Balthasar presumes that sin has brought humanity spiritual sickness rather than death (Eph 2:1) such that humanity has the ability to cooperate with God (synergism) or to resist him, for 'prevenient grace certainly is not lacking to man even in a single moment of his life'; see H.U. von Balthasar, *The Theology of Karl Barth: Exposition and Interpretation* (trans. E.T. Oakes; San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1992) 323; referred to henceforth as *KB*. Balthasar is correct in noting that the Fall does not erase or remove the image of God in human beings, for it is the *imago Dei* that gives worth and value to all human beings. Natural acts of morality are possible but as a consequence of the Fall, they remain off the mark (i.e. in an Augustinian sense) because the depravity of humanity inhibits such actions from reaching their supernatural end, namely the glory of God (Gen 6:5; Ecc 9:3; John 8:34; Rom 1:24; 2 Cor 4:4). That being the case, if prevenient grace operates in the manner Balthasar suggests, allowing humanity a kind of autonomous freedom to say yes or no to the light of God's divine revelation, why do some reject God and others do not? Is God's glory not efficacious to transform the deformed heart of humanity such that humanity responds in faith (Eph 2:8-10; Heb 11)? The crux of the matter, for Balthasar, hinges on humanity not on God, for God has done his part and humanity has failed to do its part. Consequently, Balthasar's views of sin and grace seem to debase the efficacy and supremacy of God's beauty intimated in the christological terms

he espouses, namely *Herrlichkeit* and *Übergestalt*.

30 H.U. von Balthasar, *Prolegomena* (trans. G. Harrison, vol. 1 of *Theo-Drama: Theological Dramatic Theory*; San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1990) 15.

31 Balthasar, *Theo-Drama* I, 16.

32 It is important to note that underneath the suffering of Christ and his resurrection is the Old Testament thematic pattern of the Suffering Servant, which is important for fleshing out God's beauty-in-act. Space constraints prevent us from doing so here.

33 Augustine, *Expositions of the Psalms*, quoted in C. Harrison, *Beauty and Revelation in the Thought of St. Augustine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992) 235.

34 There is an important connection between God's glory and his beauty that necessitates further explanation. In brief, we see in 2 Pet 1:16-21 that 'from the Excellent Glory' a voice says 'This is my beloved Son in whom I delight (*eudokeō*). Listen to him!' (Matt 17:5). Sublime Glory speaks! As such, a communicative relationship between God and the world emerges such that 'God's glory is His overflowing self-communicating joy' that 'speaks and conquers, persuades and convinces' (K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, ed. G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance, vol. II/1, *The Doctrine of God*, trans. T.H.L Parker, W.B. Johnston, H. Knight, and J.L.M. Haire; New York: T & T Clark, 1956; New York: T & T Clark, 2004) 653. As such, God's sublime glory is not formless but finds its beautiful expression in the Son in whom the Father delights. God's beauty, then, is the form of his sublime glory that attracts us, persuades us, convinces us and draws us unto himself, demanding a response.

35 Jonathan Edwards speaks aptly of the beauty of God's holiness in his work, *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections*, vol. 2 of *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, ed. J.E. Smith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959) 258-259. Yet, by linking the spiritual beauty of Christ's holiness to the human soul as the most proper image of Christ's beauty, I wonder if, by implication, he renders to us a docetic Christ. More, though, would need to be said to substantiate this claim.

36 By emphasizing the coming of the Spirit by the Father at the behest of the Son, I do not intend to imply that the Spirit was not operative prior to this moment as if he only now appears on the stage of God's drama of redemption. Rather, the Spirit of God was operative throughout the Old Testament: in creation (Gen 1:2), the construction of the tabernacle (Ex 31:3) and prophetic tradition (Num 11:29 etc.). He was also at work in the life and ministry of Christ: his birth (Luke 1:14-17), baptism (Luke 2:39-53) and ministry (Luke 4:14-19). Christ is the 'Bearer of the Spirit' as well as the 'Bestower of the Spirit' as Graham Cole aptly notes in *He Who Gives Life: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2007) 149-208.

37 H.U. von Balthasar, *Studies in Theological Style: Clerical Styles* (trans. A. Louth, F. McDonagh and B. McNeil, vol. 2 of *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, ed. John Riches; San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1984) 348.

38 R. Zachman, *Word and Image in the Theology of John Calvin* (South Bend, IN: Notre Dame Press, 2007) 3, 7-9.

39 J. Edwards, *Religious Affections,* 15; cf. J. Edwards, *The Nature of True Virtue* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960) 15.

40 Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 665.

41 John Calvin remarks: 'If we regard the Spirit of God as the sole fountain of truth, we shall neither reject the truth itself, nor despise it wherever it shall appear, unless we wish to dishonor the Spirit of God' (*The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. F.L. Battles; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960) II.2.15.

42 G. Ward, 'The Beauty of God' in *Theological Perspectives on Beauty* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2003) 64.

43 Barth, *CD* II/1, 661.

44 B. Quash, 'The Theo-drama' in *The Cambridge Companion to Hans Urs von Balthasar* (ed. D. Moss and E. Oakes; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 143-144.

45 G. MacDonald, 'The Imagination: Its Function and Its Culture' in *A Dish of Orts* (London: Edwin Dalton, 1908; repr. BiblioBazaar Reproductions, 2007) 12. For an introductory survey of the imagination see T. Hart, 'Imagination' in *Dictionary for the Theological Interpretation of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005). For a historical survey see R. Kearney, *The Wake of the Imagination* (London: Routledge, 1998) and F.B. Brown, *Religious Imagination* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989) 29-124.

46 J.H. Newman, *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent* (South Bend, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 2006) 86. J. Bronowski,, *The Origins of Knowledge and Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978) 109-112, speaks of a similar notion when describing the imagination as that innate ability to detect the hidden likeness in things that connects various parts together, producing a new likeness.

47 Newman, *Aid of a Grammar of Assent*, 82.

48 P. Avis, *God and the Creative Imagination: Metaphor, Symbol and Myth in Religion and Theology* (London: Routledge, 1999) 79. Similarly, Mary Warnock identifies the imagination as that which '*brings* ideas together, and which is at work to create the forms of things which seem to speak to us of the universal, and which at the same time necessarily cause in us feelings of love and awe'; see M. Warnock, *Imagination* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976) 83-84.

49 Edwards, *Religious Affections*, 275.

50 D.J. Gouwens, 'Kierkegaard on the Ethical Imagination' in *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 10 (1982) 217.

51 Balthasar redefines *Einbildungskraft* in terms of *Ausbildungskraft*. With his redefinition of *Einbildungskraft*, he seems to counter the Kantian notion of *Einbildungskraft* that emphasises the subjective human power of making images but not entirely; see Warnock, *Imagination*, 26 for a summary of Kant's use of *Einbildungskraft*. Balthasar does think that Kant's description of the creative power of the imagination is appropriate so long as it is prepared by the Spirit in its obedient orientation to Christ, for 'in the Gospel, the strength of the disciples' belief is wholly borne and affected by the person of Jesus. Here we no longer detect the slightest trace of a creative, myth-projecting capacity on the part of man. The discoverability of the objective, synthetic point is reduced to nil, while Jesus' non-inventability, his overwhelming originality has become infinite and of itself demands assent and effects submission' (*GL* I, 177). Thus, Balthasar does not negate the power of imagination but argues for its fulfilment in Christ (cf. *GL* I, 179), for 'the theological imagination (*Einbildungskraft* = "power to shape an image") lies with Christ, who is at once the image (*Bild*) and the power (*Kraft*) of God' (*GL* I, 490). In my estimation, it seems apropos to combine these notions such that God's self-presentation of his beauty in Christ possesses the *Ausbildungskraft* to transform our *Einbildungskraft* through the *Gestaltungskraft* of the Holy Spirit.

52 MacDonald, *A Dish of Orts*, 32-33, 38.

53 Many thanks to the reviewer who provided helpful criticisms that sharpened my rhetoric and argumentation. Any errors in judgment or mischaracterizations, though, are solely my own.

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Book Reviews – Recensions – Buchbesprechungen

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Commentaries on Romans and 1-2 Corinthians

Ancient Christian Texts

Ambrosiaster, translated and edited by Gerald L. Bray

Downers Grove: IVP, 2009, xxiii + 270pp., $60.00, hb, ISBN 978-0-8308-2903-3

SUMMARY

In his translation of Ambrosiaster's *Commentaries on Romans and 1-2 Corinthians*, Gerald Bray has provided an invaluable resource for interacting with an early interpretation of Paul's letters. Bray opens up the oldest extant Latin commentaries on Paul's letters to English readers for the first time and thus enables them to engage Ambrosiaster's insights by means of his excellent translation.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Mit seiner Übersetzung von Ambrosiasters *Commentaries on Romans and 1-2 Corinthians* [Kommentare zum Römerbrief und zum 1. und 2. Korintherbrief] hat Gerald Bray eine unschätzbare Quelle zur Verfügung gestellt, welche die Auseinandersetzung mit einer frühen Interpretation der Paulusbriefe ermöglicht. Bray öffnet den englischen Lesern zum ersten Mal den Zugang zu den ältesten, bestehenden lateinischen Kommentaren zu den Paulusbriefen. Durch seine ausgezeichnete Übersetzung ermöglicht er es ihnen, sich mit Ambrosiasters Erkenntnissen auseinanderzusetzen.

RÉSUMÉ

Avec son excellente traduction des commentaires de l'Ambrosiaste (sur les épîtres aux Romains et aux Corinthiens), Gerald Bray nous fournit une source inestimable permettant de prendre en considération une interprétation ancienne des lettres de Paul. Il fait ainsi découvrir à ses lecteurs anglophones le plus ancien des commentaires latins des lettres de Paul en notre possession avec toute sa richesse.

* * * *

In his translation of Ambrosiaster's *Commentaries on Romans and 1-2 Corinthians*, Gerald Bray has provided an invaluable resource for interacting with early interpretations of Paul's letters. This serves as the first English translation of the oldest extant Latin commentaries on Paul's letters. They were probably written in the 370s (AD 366-384) by an anonymous author later nicknamed Ambrosiaster. These commentaries importantly coincide with the flowering of pro-Nicene theology in the West and also give witness to a pre-Vulgate Latin tradition.

This is the first of a two-volume set, the second of which covers Galatians through Philemon. These volumes are the initial offerings of a new series by IVP, Ancient Christian Texts (ACT), and this new series stands as a companion of their popular Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture (ACCS). Whereas ACCS provides comments in a catena format which whets our appetite, ACT focuses upon commentaries and sermons that cover large portions of text. Thus, this series and Bray's volume in particular are a welcome addition since we can better grasp the emphases of individual interpreters. ACT's publication is timely because interest in patristic interpretation of scripture is growing. Within patristic studies there has been a resurgence in the appreciation of the role interpretation of scripture played in theological practice and debate. At the same time, biblical scholars are beginning to interact with non-modern interpreters in order to re-appropriate insights from previously neglected voices. Along with academic researchers, the church is looking back to the fountains of tradition embodied in patristic study of the Bible. Accordingly, these new avenues of interaction with these texts are most welcome.

As the first volume in the new series, Bray's model is excellent. He first gives an eight-page introduction to the three commentaries, in which he discusses the identity of the author, the text and its translation, the social and theological context, Ambrosiaster's legacy and recommendations for further reading. This introduction addresses most of the key issues which will interest readers. Since this is a commentary, I expected a little more discussion of Ambrosiaster's exegetical practices. Also, when I turned to the commentaries themselves, I was disappointed that Bray did not include any further introduction for each letter. Something short, on the order of 2-3 pages, sketching how Ambrosiaster treats key themes in the letters would have been helpful to the reader, particularly since this series is targeted at a non-specialist audience. We must note, however, that a little of this discussion appears in Bray's treatment of the social and theological context in the introduction.

These points are minor because the heart of the work is the translation itself. As with all good translations, I easily found myself engaged in the subject matter of the text because of Bray's clear and flowing language. The verses are bolded and numbered so readers can easily access different passages. Most footnotes are for scriptural references made by Ambrosiaster and, where necessary, Bray adds additional footnotes to clarify issues with the textual tradition or the translation of a particular word or phrase.

It is perhaps an overstatement that 'Ambrosiaster must be regarded as one of the greatest of the ancient biblical commentators' (xix), but this work should not be underestimated. These commentaries are filled with insightful perspectives on Paul's letters and they will repay dividends to all who explore them. Opening up this text to English readers for the first time, Bray has enabled us to engage Ambrosiaster's insights by means of his excellent translation.

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The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul

Douglas A. Campbell

Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009, xxx + 1218 pp.,
£40.99, hb, ISBN 978-0-8028-3126-2

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Douglas Campbells *The Deliverance of God* [Die Befreiung Gottes] ist ein ehrgeiziger Versuch, die paulinische Interpretation von dem offensichtlichen Würgegriff zu befreien, in dem klassische (zumeist protestantische) Auslegungen die Lehre des Apostels über Rechtfertigung gefangen gehalten haben. Nachdem Campbell die hauptsächlichen philosophischen, theologischen und kulturellen Faktoren behandelt, die scheinbar für die klassische Lesart verantwortlich sind, legt er sein eigenes Argument dar, indem er vor allem zwei antithetische Linien im Römerbrief identifiziert: 1. eine „Rechtfertigungstheorie“, der sich Paulus widersetzt (Hauptteil von Rö. 1,18 – 3,20) und die ein rechtlich-vertragsmäßiges, vergeltendes und individualistisches Verständnis von Erlösung beinhaltet sowie 2. des Paulus eigenes Evangelium, das auf Beziehung, Teilhabe und Befreiung angelegt ist (besonders in Rö. 5 – 8).

SUMMARY

Douglas Campbell's *The Deliverance of God* is an ambitious attempt to break Pauline interpretation out of the perceived stranglehold that classic (mostly Protestant) interpretations have placed on the apostle's teaching on justification. After setting out the main strands of philosophical, theological and cultural factors that are supposedly responsible for the classic reading, Campbell puts his own argument forward primarily by isolating two antithetical strands in Romans: a 'justification theory' that Paul opposes (the bulk of Rom. 1:18-3:20) which consists of a legal-contractual, retributive and individualistic understanding of salvation, and Paul's own relational, participationist and liberative gospel (found especially in Rom. 5-8).

RÉSUMÉ

Dans cet ouvrage ambitieux, *The Deliverance of God*, Douglas Campbell se donne pour but de libérer l'interprétation des épîtres pauliniennes de la forteresse érigée par les interprétations classiques (essentiellement protestantes) de l'enseignement de l'apôtre sur la justification. Après avoir décrit les principaux courants philosophiques, théologiques et culturels qui sont censés être responsables de la lecture classique, Campbell avance sa propre argumentation en isolant principalement deux courants antithétiques dans l'Epître aux Romains : le premier « une théorie de la justification » que Paul critique (la plus grande partie de Rom 1.18-3.20), et qui propose une compréhension juridique, rétributive et individuelle du salut ; le second, la conception paulinienne qui souligne les aspects relationnel, participatif et libérateur de l'Evangile (particulièrement évident dans Rom 5-8).

* * * *

The Deliverance of God is a bold book. Convinced that standard discussions of justification in the church and academy (pre-critical, critical and conservative) are wrong, Campbell's alternative proposal is a blast of the trumpet against the monstrous regime of 'Lutheran' and 'modern, Western Christian' (especially Protestant) readings of Paul. While biblical scholars have chipped away at elements of traditional Protestant teaching on justification for over a century, even these revisionist readings (e.g. Wrede, Schweitzer, Stendahl, Sanders, Dunn) have failed to do more than simply identify problems and hint at solutions to conundrums faced by classic interpretations. Campbell's book is far more ambitious: he isolates what he sees as at least fifty major problems, inconsistencies and contradictions in 'traditional' interpretations, as well as providing a comprehensive solution that is free from any such errors (935).

In order to show how one should proceed to make sense of justification in Paul, Campbell believes it is necessary to provide an extensive discussion of how justification has been dealt with previously, both among 'traditional' interpreters and 'revisionists'. This comprises parts one through three. In part one (chapters 1-6) Campbell lays out what he takes to be the traditional reading, including extensive analysis of what he sees as its major difficulties. The over-arching problem with traditional accounts can be reduced to their 'individualist' understanding of justification (3). From this flawed starting point, a flood of additional problems emerge. The first of these is the notion that salvation involves a conditional and contractual arrangement between sinful individuals and a just and wrathful God. Implied within such a schematisation is the additionally problematic focus on 'rational decision', where salvation depends on the individual becoming aware of his or her spiritual conundrum (through mental self-examination) and thus seeking out a solution to the problem of personal violations of God's law. This initial mental clarity, however, does not lead (as expected) to salvation, but instead to a 'loop of despair', as the individual becomes stuck in a cycle of self-righteousness, or a 'loop of foolishness', as the individual lives hypocritically in judgment of others. Inevitably, then, a concomitant, timeless, de-historicised emphasis on personal conversion develops alongside the individualist, contractual interpretation of justification.

Campbell finds a huge number of 'intrinsic and systematic' difficulties in the conventional reading. Some of the most important include attributing to Paul an overly optimistic ability to understand the human predicament outside of union with Christ, its reading of faith in individualistic terms, the conflict between the soteriology of justification through atonement/imputation in Rom. 1-4 and salvation through participation in Christ in Rom. 5-8, its inability to treat ethics as something more than an optional extra of the Christian life, its misreading of first-century Judaism and Paul's response to it, and its failure to set Paul's theology in its apocalyptic context. In sum, 'justification theory' (the traditional reading) 'causes serious problems for the interpretation of Paul if it is included in any broader description of his thinking' (221).

Part two (chapters 7-9) attends particularly to the historical, cultural and hermeneutical influences thought to lie behind 'justification theory'. Part three (chapters 10-12) returns to the conventional reading in order to treat the Pauline texts normally used to defend a traditional view of justification, specifically Rom. 1-4, which Campbell labels the 'textual "citadel"' for justification classically conceived. Campbell sees the traditional reading as advocating a basic move from plight to solution, from human despair, through to faith and thus on to justification. He believes that the texts used by traditional interpreters simply do not say what proponents *need* them to say to defend justification in the classic sense. Campbell helpfully summarises the bulk of the problems with the traditional reading on 397-411.

His own proposal (parts four and five, chapters 13-21) begins with the claim that Rom. 1:18-3:20 is primarily the discourse of Paul's (Jewish-Christian) opponent (with Paul's corrections interspersed throughout), one that puts forward a contractual, individualistic and retributive gospel; see the summary of Campbell's argument on 590-593. Paul's own ironic presentation of his opponent has been so successful that two millennia of Christian readers have missed the joke and thus mistakenly attributed the entire theology of Rom. 1:18-3:20 to Paul himself. In contrast, as developed in the remainder of Romans and other key Pauline passages, the heart of justification is liberation from the dominion of sin, accomplished by Christ's 'martyriological' death on the cross. These two conceptions of God and the gospel are absolutely antithetical. Thus, Paul's gospel must be radically re-conceptualised.

In appreciation, Campbell's book is not the work of an ivory-tower biblical scholar: he clearly believes that his participative, libratory, non-contractual reading of justification is not only true, but vitally so, both for the church and the academy. It is refreshing to see a biblical scholar who actually cares passionately about the subject matter he discusses. Perhaps other scholarly interpretations of justification have been less than persuasive precisely because they have not engaged in the same scrutiny of their real-world implications in the way Campbell has done.

Furthermore, Campbell rightly recognises that any attempt to explicate Paul's teaching on justification must methodically attend to the historical, philosophical, exegetical and theological backgrounds to both Paul's doctrine and its reception by subsequent interpreters. While Campbell may at points overreach in his pronouncements on various subjects, he is surely correct to highlight the variety of discourses lying behind what is often naively portrayed as a simple question of exegesis.

Nonetheless, there are some quite significant problems with this book. Perhaps the most problematic is Campbell's analysis of the 'traditional' reading of justification. Despite his interaction with various interpreters (ancient and modern), he does not present the reader with the 'traditional reading'. Instead, he offers a quite strange and complex hybrid of portions of the interpretations of such diverse figures as Martin Luther, John Calvin, René Descartes, John Locke, Rudolf Bultmann and Billy Graham (to name just a few). It is hardly surprising that Campbell finds as many as fifty-five problems and contradictions in this 'traditional reading'. One might find that a rather low number considering the vast conglomerate of disparate voices Campbell merges into the 'conventional reading'. Related to this, Campbell shows little awareness of current, mainstream scholarship on many of the representatives of the so-called traditional interpretation. For example, his treatment of Calvin (and the Reformed tradition after Calvin), is completely uninformed by the work of scholars such as Richard Muller and relies heavily on out-dated, widely disputed historical scholarship.

Considering how dependent the success of Campbell's book is on highlighting problems with the 'traditional reading', failures like this are quite significant. If Campbell has constructed a non-existent opponent out of a mishmash of everything he finds wrong in (mostly Protestant) understandings of justification, one begins to wonder how pressing the need is for answers to these problems.

The Deliverance of God has quickly created a stir in the field of Pauline studies and is important reading for scholars grappling with Paul's teaching on justification. Nonetheless, it remains to be seen whether Campbell's idiosyncratic interpretation will convince many.

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My Brother's Keeper: Essays in Honor of Ellis R. Brotzman

Thomas J. Marinello and H. H. Drake Williams III, eds.

Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock, 2010, xi + 287 pp., $33.00, pb, ISBN 978-1-60608-779-4

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

My Brother's Keeper [Meines Bruders Hüter] ist eine Sammlung von Aufsätzen, die zu Ehren des Missionars und Hebraisten Ellis R. Brotzman anlässlich seiner Pensionierung entstanden ist und von seinen Kollegen Marinello

und Williams herausgegeben wurde. Die fünfzehn Artikel stammen von Autoren, die mit Tyndale Theological Seminary (Niederlande) verbunden sind, und die Sammlung weist eine Dreiteilung auf: biblische Studien, theologische Studien und pastoral-interkulturelle Studien. Auf diese Weise ist ein weites Spektrum theologischer Forschung abgedeckt. Mit dieser Vielfalt zielt das Buch erfolgreich gleichermaßen auf Wissenschaftler, Gemeindeleiter und Missionare mit transkulturellem Einsatz ab.

SUMMARY

My Brother's Keeper is a collection of essays in honour of missionary and Hebrew scholar Ellis Brotzman upon his retirement, edited by two colleagues. The fifteen articles are by authors affiliated with Tyndale Theological Seminary (Netherlands) and are divided into three parts: biblical studies, theological studies and pastoral/intercultural studies, thus covering a broad range of theological research. With this variety, the book successfully aims in equal measure at theological scholars, church leaders and cross-cultural missionaries.

RÉSUMÉ

My Brother's Keeper est une collection d'essais en l'honneur du missionnaire et hébraïsant Ellis Brotzman à l'occasion de son départ à la retraite, éditée par deux de ses collègues. Les quinze articles proviennent d'auteurs affiliés au Tyndale Theological Seminary (Pays-Bas) et sont divisés en trois parties : études bibliques, études théologiques et études pastorales/interculturelles, recouvrant ainsi une large étendue de la recherche théologique. Dans sa diversité, l'ouvrage sera également utile aux théologiens, aux responsables d'Eglise et aux missionnaires qui ont à penser la contextualisation.

* * * *

My Brother's Keeper is a collection of essays in honour of Ellis R. Brotzman upon his retirement, edited by his colleagues Marinello and Williams. Brotzman served for the past twenty years as senior professor for Old Testament Language and Literature, as well as the chairman of the division of Biblical and Exegetical studies at Tyndale Theological Seminary, Badhoevedorp, Netherlands. The title of the book, *My Brother's Keeper*, is at first glance misleading as one is immediately reminded of Cain's impertinent answer to God: 'Am I my brother's keeper?' With the chosen title, however, the editors wish to express that Brotzman actually *was* his brother's keeper in showing exemplary responsibility for missionaries, students and fellow members of the faculty throughout his career.

The essays' authors are mainly recruited from the Tyndale faculty as well as from the academic members of the Board of Trustees. The ethos of the seminary, in good Tyndalian tradition, is in making the Scriptures accessible and comprehensible for everyone (ix), which is reflected by the content of the book at hand. The useful fifteen articles are throughout well-written, clearly structured and coherent. They are divided into three main parts, dealing with biblical studies, theological studies (largest part) and pastoral and intercultural studies. The advantage of this collection is certainly the broad range of interesting topics presented therein. Ranging from linguistic and textual analyses to theological discussions and essays with an almost devotional flavour, the compilation succeeds in presenting a variety of up-to-date research from the theological sphere in general. The downside is, obviously, that a certain *leitmotif* is difficult to establish – it might have been an even more exciting undertaking if the essays had presented a major theological theme from different perspectives.

The essays are too many for an individual detailed review but a few deserve further attention. Marlowe, examining *emet* in several psalms, reminds us that the common translation with 'truth' (being in concord with reality) has to be dismissed in favour of terms like 'reliable', 'faithful', 'trustworthy' or 'authentic'. Parris offers an elaborate evangelical critique of Troeltsch's principles of the critical-historical method and on this ground successfully defends the trustworthiness of the biblical portrait of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Vunderink walks us through the history of interpretation of 'Christ's Suffering, Death, and Resurrection'; a very helpful reminder in face of the present day discussion about atonement theologies. In 'Resting in a Fast-Food World', Kellough makes a refreshing case for the validity and benefits of the Sabbath principle in a busy world. Noteworthy is also Stalnaker's biblically grounded and logically exhaustive rejection of post-mortem evangelism (PME).

Although Tyndale is a Europe-based seminary, most of the faculty members have a North American background, which has an obvious bearing on the book as a whole. One might have expected a closer interaction with European themes and scholars – especially when its cover reads, '*My Brother's Keeper* is a collection of essays penned by people interested in educating primarily European church leaders, theological educators, and missionaries…' By way of exception, Gottschalk-Stuckrath's essay examines the relationship between Arminius and Gomarus in Leiden, while Lamport recollects personal experiences from trips through Europe through the eyes of an American tourist. However, a stronger 'European flavour' (perhaps achieved by tying the essays more strongly to the continent's history and theology) would have been beneficial. Brotzman's synoptic study of 2 Kings 18-20, Isaiah 36-39 and 2 Chronicles 29-32, for instance, would have greatly benefited from the inclusion of a study conducted by Dutch colleagues Van Peursen and Talstra, who performed a computer-assisted study of the same Scripture passages with similar results as Brotzman's ('Computer-Assisted Analysis of Parallel Texts in the Bible. The Case of 2 Kings xviii-xix and its Parallels in Isaiah and Chronicles', *Vetus Testamentum* 57 [2007] 45-72).

Taken together, the clear advantage of the book is its broad range of topics, from Old Testament research over church history, systematic theology to practical theology.

That makes it highly useful for the curious theologian, church leader or missionary who wants to look beyond the rim of his own teacup.

Michael Bräutigam,
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Systematic Theology Volume 1: Grounded in Holy Scripture and understood in the light of the Church – The God who is: The Holy Trinity

Douglas F. Kelly

Fearn, UK: Mentor, 2008, 640 pp., £22.99, hb, ISBN 9781845503864

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Der erste Band von Douglas Kellys neuer Systematischer Theologie stellt eine willkommene Bereicherung der theologischen Literatur da. Es handelt sich dabei um eine Einführung in die Lehre von der Offenbarung. Es geht um den Gott, der sich in der Welt und in der Schrift offenbart und auch innerhalb der Glaubensgemeinschaft, die auf Gottes Bund mit den Menschen gegründet ist. Das Buch enthält erfrischende Diskussionen über Bibelabschnitte sowie eine anregende Reflektion über und Auseinandersetzung mit Theologen quer durch die Kirchengeschichte. Es ist der erste Band in einer geplanten Serie und stammt von einem der heute führenden, reformierten Theologen.

SUMMARY

The first volume of Douglas Kelly's new Systematic Theology is a welcome addition to theological literature. It is an introduction to the doctrine of revelation, to the God who reveals himself in the world, in Scripture and within the community of faith grounded in God's covenant with humans. It contains refreshing discussions of Bible passages as well as stimulating reflection on and engagement with theologians throughout the history of the church. It is the first volume in a projected series and comes from one of the leading Reformed theologians in the world today

RÉSUMÉ

On peut saluer ici la parution bienvenue du premier volume d'une nouvelle théologie systématique par Douglas Kelly. Il contient une introduction à la doctrine de la révélation et du Dieu qui se révèle dans le monde, par l'Ecriture et au sein de la communauté de la foi établie dans l'alliance conclue par Dieu avec les humains. S'il contient des discussions rafraîchissantes de passages bibliques l'auteur n'hésite pas à entrer en débat avec des théologiens de différentes époques de l'histoire de l'Eglise. Il nous offre ainsi une réflexion riche et stimulante. Ce premier volume qui en annonce d'autres émane de l'un des meilleurs théologiens réformés contemporains.

* * * *

This eagerly anticipated first volume of Douglas F. Kelly's *Systematic Theology* is a treat. It is erudite, straddling the terrain with ease; it is thorough, engaging with different thinkers, past and present; and it does what it says on the cover: it grounds all its theological reflection in Scripture and is sensitive to the way in which the Church has considered the issues down through the centuries.

Douglas Kelly, who is currently Richard Jordan Professor of Theology at Reformed Theological Seminary, Charlotte, North Carolina, states in the preface that his theology has grown out of an inheritance that is at once 'Reformed and Catholic'. This twin perspective is evident throughout: Kelly is a faithful systematiser of biblical truth within the Reformed tradition; he is also a faithful churchman, one who recognises the breadth and scope of the Church of Jesus Christ.

This first volume incorporates questions of prolegomena into its fundamental theme of theology proper. It is a study of the doctrine of God and contains chapters on the God who reveals himself, the knowledge of God in creation and conscience, the Enlightenment's rejection of God's self-disclosure, the Trinity as One Lord, the kind of Sovereign God he is, the revelation of God in the Covenant of Grace, the one Lord as Three Persons, the Church's reflection on the doctrine of the Trinity and the Co-equality of the Persons. Each of these major loci of thought necessitates a series of appendices on subjects such as the theistic proofs, the biblical view of other world religions, the particular positions of Eastern Orthodoxy and feminist theology, the history of covenant theology and the *filioque*. Each appendix is a major section in its own right, characterised by fair, judicious, clear reasoning.

Kelly's fundamental position is that God reveals himself within personal relationship, in covenant. This, in turn, creates a community of faith; faith is the only appropriate response to the truth of revelation (17). Further, it is a scientific response; it is not irrational, emotional or non-cognitive. 'Faith in a sense restores our access to the cognitive first principles on which reason properly functions' (19). Such knowledge of God can only occur within the community of faith, which itself is a mirror of God as community. This is the prolegomenon to all our subsequent reflection on theology: There has been a church from the beginning of history, a line in which Christ has been borne and by which now the truth is manifest. Drawing on a range of patristic and Reformed sources, Kelly is careful to anchor his theology in the experience of the church.

Such an emphasis is important in the twenty-first century. Our calling is to proclaim this God into a context of hyper-individualism, which is the supreme characteristic of postmodernism. Kelly's argument, however, is that this is not new; the early Church too 'turned on calling sceptics and relativists to assent to absolute truth' (38). We can learn from the past not only what it is that must be preached; we can also learn lessons on how such preaching must be done. Nor can theology be divorced from piety. Kelly reminds us that 'the purpose of true theological knowledge is a vital relationship to God, characterized by continual prayer' (58). Without the language of dependence there is neither root nor fruit to our theological enquiry.

Kelly's approach to Systematic Theology is through the door of exegesis. Throughout, he devotes much needed space to the exposition of salient Bible passages. He also provides stimulating discussion on biblical themes – his sections on 'the Old Testament witness to the binding knowledge of God held by pagan nations' (149-152) and on the majesty of the Triune God (337-349) are particularly moving.

A major development in Kelly's work is the discussion of the covenant (chapter six) within the framework of how God makes himself known, rather than as a theme under soteriology. Kelly's premise is that we cannot know God outside of the community of faith that is constituted by the divine covenant. The strong emphasis on the federal element of revelation is welcome, especially as Kelly engages both with theological controversies over the relationship between law and grace, and with contemporary revisions of covenant theology in 'New Perspective' literature. Kelly's critique of the latter will be welcome for many; his endorsement of Michael Horton's distinction between 'promise covenant' and 'law covenant' may be problematic to some. The emphasis is nonetheless welcome; the covenant idea provides the background for the assertion that only within the Church may the Scriptures be known; any systematic theology worthy of the name must, therefore, engage with the history of the church itself, as well as with its manifold manifestation in different world cultures.

Kelly's work is not slow to make such engagement although it is surprising to see no reference to Bob Letham's works on The Holy Trinity or on Eastern Orthodoxy in bibliography or index. The result is a volume on theology that is a treat to read and a stimulus to further thought and reflection. There is much in this volume on God's self-disclosure as a Triune God that will repay careful consideration and everything in it whets the appetite for subsequent volumes in the series.

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Barth, Origen, and Universal Salvation: Restoring Particularity

Tom Greggs

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, xxiv + 242 pp.
$79.50, pb. ISBN 978 0 19 956048 6

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Greggs Werk stellt sowohl eine Interpretation von Barths und Origenes' Verständnis der ökonomischen Dynamik bei der zweiten und der dritten Person der Trinität dar als auch einen konstruktiven soteriologischen Ansatz. Die ersten Kapitel stecken voller Beschreibungen von Barth und Origenes. Dann stellt Greggs seine positiven Vorschläge in Form von gestellten Dialogen zwischen den beiden Theologen vor. Die grundsätzliche These des Buches zielt darauf ab, dass die besondere Person und das Werk des Sohnes eine objektive, universelle Erlösung bewirkt, während die Universalität des Heiligen Geistes das universelle Werk des Sohnes in der Gegenwart zur Anwendung bringt.

SUMMARY

Greggs' work is both an interpretation Barth's and Origen's understandings of the economic dynamics of the second and third person of the Trinity and a constructive soteriological proposal. Beginning with descriptive chapters on Barth and Origen, Greggs offers his positive proposals in the form of synthetic dialogues between the two theologians. The book's basic thesis is that the particular person and work of the Son effects an objective, universal salvation while the universality of the Holy Spirit particularises the universal work of the Son in the present.

RÉSUMÉ

Le travail de Greggs est à la fois, une interprétation de la compréhension que Barth et Origène ont de la dynamique économique des deuxième et troisième personnes de la Trinité, et une proposition sotériologique. Commençant par des chapitres descriptifs sur Barth et Origène, Greggs nous offre ses propositions positives sous la forme de dialogues synthétiques entre les deux théologiens. Selon la thèse de l'auteur, c'est la personne et l'œuvre du Fils d'accomplir un salut objectif et universel tandis que le Saint Esprit, de par sa vocation universelle, applique et individualise l'œuvre universelle du Fils dans le présent.

* * * *

Intended as a presentation of a distinctively Christian universalism, Greggs' work is both an interpretation of Barth's and Origen's understanding of the economic dynamics of the second and third person of the Trinity and a constructive soteriological proposal. Beginning with descriptive chapters on Barth and Origen, Greggs offers his positive proposals in the form of synthetic dialogues between the two theologians. The book's basic thesis is that the particular person and work of the Son effects an objective, universal salvation while the universality of the Holy Spirit particularises the universal work of the Son in the present. In this way, Greggs argues, Christian soteriology retains its Christian particularity while avoiding the binary classification of humans into categories of saved/damned which, in an age of violent fundamentalism, must be eliminated from religious (i.e. Christian and non-Christian) dogmatics.

Part One considers Barth's doctrine of election and Origen's doctrine of *apokatastasis*. For Barth, Jesus is both electing God and elected human in that he elects rejection for himself 'in order that the rejected (i.e. sinful humanity) may be elect in His election of rejection' (27). As this is a pre-temporal decision to elect precisely the rejected, the temporal history of sin cannot disqualify the sinner from salvation. In Greggs' reading of Barth, Jesus alone is the rejected. According to Origen's doctrine *apokatastasis*, the universal restoration of creation includes the restoration of rational humans to the participation in the eternal Logos which characterised preexistent souls. Thus, for Origen, universal salvation is ultimately the soteriological process of universal return. Bringing these two theologians together, Greggs argues that both present a *Christian* universalism because for both universal salvation is 'in Christ'. This particularity is stronger in Origen for whom rationality is the participatory link between the Logos and the *logika*, but for both (and for Greggs) the *particularity* of the Son establishes salvation *for all*.

Part Two argues that Barth and Origen agree that the universally effective work of the Son retains its temporal particularity as the Holy Spirit works to 'allow this objective reality to reach the community and the individual' in the present (124). Thus, for Barth, the economic and temporal remit of the Holy Spirit is the Church in the present. Consequently, the anthropological dividing line is not between redeemed and unredeemed, but between Christian and non-Christian – a difference that has more to do with epistemology (knowing one has been redeemed and being empowered to witness to that object fact) than with soteriology (whether or not one is redeemed).

Like Origen before him, Barth cited the activity of the Holy Spirit in establishing the recognition and confession of revelation, together with the transformative process of intensifying the anticipatory and representative correspondence between Christian and creator, as the defining characteristic of the Christian. For Origen, this transformation was a process enabled by the Holy Spirit who both brought the worthy to Jesus and cooperated with the Christian to produce growth toward God in the present. According to Greggs' synthetic reading, it is the economic activity of the Holy Spirit which creates space for Christian particularity and identity without requiring an exclusivist soteriology. The Church, and each Christian in the Church, relate to the world not as the saved to the damned, but as aware witnesses testifying to God's universal work of salvation in the Son. The conclusion to Part Two, as well as a conclusion proper, imagines some of the positive implications of redefining the church as a witness to this redefined gospel.

This book helpfully avoids the trendy act of locating universalism within pluralism by arguing for the universal significance of the saving work of the particular Son which is particularised in the present by the universal Spirit. In this sense, and to Greggs' credit, this is what the book intended to be: an account of *Christian* universalism. But precisely as such it is open to critique from within. Initial questions arise in relation to Greggs' somewhat cliché claim that separatist soteriologies depend on overly literal readings of the Bible's apocalyptic texts (would the non-literal 'meaning' be any less exclusivist?) and his rhetorically highhanded theodicy question about a loving God creating in full awareness of the eternal torture awaiting most of creation (Ivan's Karamazov's laments about the horrors of history require more than a 'happily ever after'). Yet this reviewer's fundamental critique is that of Greggs' own theological resource, Karl Barth. Divine grace is characteristically free. This, as Greggs rightly notes, prevents us from limiting the scope of God's grace; but it also prevents us from dogmatic assertions about the universal extent of that grace. Thus, in his nobly motivated and argumentatively rigorous attempt to extend the trajectories of two theological giants, Greggs ultimately transgresses the trajectories he transcends (at least in the case of Barth). With von Balthasar, Barth hoped 'that all might be saved'; but against Greggs' dogmatic universalism Barth's final word, which admittedly stands in some tension with (the implications of) the wider context of his theology, has to be ours as well, '*Apokatastasis Panton*? No...' (*God Here and Now*, 41-42).

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Newman and the Alexandrian Fathers: Shaping Doctrine in Nineteenth-Century England

Benjamin John King

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, xvii + 289 pp, £50, hb, ISBN 978-0-19-954813-2

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

King analysiert hier John Henry Newmans Schriften über die frühen Kirchenväter, besonders jene aus Alexandria, sowie die Art und Weise, wie Newmans Werk spätere patristische Theologen geprägt hat. Jeder, der theologisch belesen und wissbegierig ist, mehr über Newmans wechselnde Haltung gegenüber Origenes, Athanasius und anderen frühen Kirchenvätern zu erfahren, wird an diesem Beitrag zur laufenden Debatte über Newman interessiert sein. King zeigt ein umfassendes Verständnis seiner Thematik, und die relevanten Fragen werden gründlich und klar erforscht. Seine ausführlichen Argumente überzeugen. King fördert unser Verständnis Newmans, indem er klar und deutlich dessen Beitrag zu der Entwicklung der Dogmengeschichte aufzeigt.

SUMMARY

John Henry Newman's writings about the early church Fathers, especially those of Alexandria, and the way this work shaped later patristic scholarship, are ably analysed by King. This contribution to the on-going debate about Newman's scholarship is of interest to anyone who is theologically literate and curious about Newman's changing attitudes to Origen, Athanasius and other early Fathers. King has a comprehensive grasp of his subject and the issues are examined thoroughly and clearly. His arguments are detailed and convincing. King furthers our understanding of Newman, clearly demonstrating his contribution to the development of the history of doctrine.

RÉSUMÉ

Les écrits de John Henry Newman sur les Pères de l'Eglise primitive, surtout ceux d'Alexandrie, et la manière dont ce travail a forgé la recherche ultérieure, sont analysés avec compétence par King. Cette contribution au débat concernant les études de Newman est intéressante pour tous ceux qui sont théologiquement avertis et curieux de l'évolution de la pensée de Newman à l'égard d'Origène, d'Athanase et d'autres Pères de l'Eglise primitive. King possède une excellente maîtrise de son sujet et il examine chaque question en profondeur et avec clarté. Ses arguments sont détaillés et convaincants. King fait avancer notre connaissance de Newman, en démontrant avec précision sa contribution au développement de l'histoire de la doctrine.

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The writings of John Henry Newman (1801-1890) about the early church Fathers, especially those of Alexandria, and the ways in which this work shaped later patristic scholarship, are ably analysed here by King. This contribution to the on-going debate about Newman's scholarship is of interest to anyone who is theologically literate and curious about Newman's changing attitudes to Origen, Athanasius and other early Fathers. When thinking or writing on any subject, Newman's practice was to use the lens of the Fathers through which to consider the issues and to shed light on the contemporary situation. However, his understanding of the Fathers, as well as the beliefs he brought to that study, and the context within which he was working, changed over time. This book traces these developments.

King has a comprehensive grasp of his subject, ranging from a detailed knowledge of Newman's life and writings, through the theology of various early church Fathers and scholastics to that of Newman's contemporaries and beyond. The issues are examined thoroughly and clearly. His arguments are detailed and convincing. Whilst the breadth of this material and its related discussion may perhaps be slightly bewildering for a reader new to some aspects of the debate, this fascinating work nonetheless repays thoughtful consideration.

The book is divided into logical sections: following an introductory chapter, King outlines the chronological approach taken in the rest of the study, with an overview of three different periods of Newman's life and the approach to the church Fathers taken during each period. Subsequent chapters (which do not always correlate with these three stages) trace and explore in detail these developments in his understanding, the influences on his thinking, especially his engagement with Athanasius during the different stages of his life and thought. The relationship between the development of his own spiritual understanding and his reading both in patristics and later scholars, and the interactions between those different writings, is teased out. Useful introductions and conclusions to the chapters sum up the core aspects of each one.

In the early stages of his thinking, when writing *Arians of the Fourth Century* in the 1830s, Newman believed in a pre-Nicene 'golden age', and in a secret unwritten creed, the 'Rule of Faith', passed on by tradition, and following the direction of Scripture. However, he came to realise that this view was inaccurate. (His early view that the pre-Nicene church was purer than the post-Nicene chimes with many protestant groups who have (usually naively) used the early church as a model.) The second stage, where he developed his idea of doctrinal development, is located in the years 1840-1859, spanning the time of his conversion to Catholicism. (Newman was received into the Catholic church on 8 October 1845.) The post-Nicene Fathers became more significant for him and the inadequate understanding of some of the pre-Nicene Christology was recognised. In the final stage, located in the years 1860-1881, theology was understood as a science and his approach became less historical and more determined by his Catholic beliefs.

As always, there are interesting points of connection between contemporary discussions and the nineteenth century. So Newman sheds light on the inerrancy/inspiration debate following the publication of the liberal volume *Essays and Reviews* (1860) by commenting that the Fathers believed in inspiration but not inerrancy. And who could disagree with his early comment that 'to understand (the scriptures) we must feed upon them, and live in them, as if by little and little growing into their meaning'? The aim of the book, however, as King states in the conclusion is 'to challenge the view that in his patristic writings Newman was primarily an Athanasian scholar'. Whilst a lot of the work does deal with Athanasius, the discussion of contemporary influences and stages of development, and the discussion of other church Fathers such as Origen, does temper that focus, supporting King's claim. We are reminded by this study that no scholar works immune from the culture in which they also live and worship. King also suggests that the common view of the Antiochene and Alexandrian schools as mutually opposed (the former tending to heresy, especially Arianism, and the latter to orthodoxy embodied by Athanasius), is a flawed understanding. Indeed, he credits Newman with this development.

It is hard to do justice to King's subtle and complex arguments in this short review, but this reader was largely convinced by his analysis. However, although this study furthers our understanding of Newman, I would not advise it as a first stop for understanding him. Whilst it has a useful glossary, it does assume a certain knowledge of both Newman's life and the theology of the Alexandrian Fathers. Having said that, it clearly demonstrates Newman's contribution to the development of the history of doctrine and of our understanding of Origen and Athanasius, although tempered by the Catholic influence of his later years.

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Christianity and Contemporary Politics
Luke Bretherton

Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010, xv + 251 pp.,
£19.99, pb, ISBN 978-1-4051-9969-8

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In Anknüpfung an sein früheres Werk über Gastfreundschaft setzt Luke Breterton mit diesem Buch seine theologische Auseinandersetzung mit Kultur fort. Diesmal gilt seine Forschung dem Bereich der Politik. Anstatt der Frage nachzugehen, welche Bedeutung ihre Beziehung zu Staat und Wirtschaft für die Kirche hat, richtet sich das zentrale Augenmerk des Werkes darauf, welche Bedeutung für die Kirche ein aktives gemeinschaftliches Leben in Bezug zum Nationalstaat und zur kapitalistischen Wirtschaft einnimmt. Im Verlauf dieses hilfreichen Buches befasst sich Bretherton mit dem Anliegen eines glaubwürdigen christlichen Zeugnisses in Reaktion auf die Herrschaft von Christus, und dies unter wechselnden politischen Bedingungen in einem globalisierten westlichen Umfeld.

SUMMARY

Extending his earlier work on hospitality, this book continues Luke Bretherton's theological engagement with culture, this time moving the exploration into the realm of politics. Rather than answering what it means for the church to relate to the state and market, its central focus is what it means for the church to pursue a common life with others in relation to the nation-state and capitalist market. Throughout this helpful book, Bretherton explores issues of faithful Christian witness in response to Christ's lordship amidst changing political situations of globalised Western contexts.

RÉSUMÉ

Prolongeant son ouvrage sur l'hospitalité, Luke Bretherton poursuit son dialogue théologique avec la culture. Cette fois-ci il choisit d'explorer le domaine de la politique. Plutôt que de répondre à la question de savoir ce que cela veut dire pour l'Eglise d'entrer en relation avec l'Etat et le marché, il cherche avant tout de savoir ce que cela signifie pour l'Eglise de rechercher une vie commune avec les autres, dans l'environnement de l'état-nation et du marché capitaliste. Tout au long de ce livre très utile, Bretherton explore des questions relatives au témoignage chrétien fidèle à la seigneurie du Christ, alors que les circonstances politiques changent dans un monde occidental globalisé.

* * * *

Extending his previous work on hospitality (*Hospitality as Holiness: Christian Witness amid Moral Diversity* [Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006]), this book continues Luke Bretherton's theological engagement with culture. Bretherton, Senior Lecturer in Theology and Politics and Convener of the Faith and Public Policy Forum at King's College London, moves his engagement into the realm of politics.

In this book Bretherton does not engage politics directly, neither wishing to construct a political agenda for state nor church. While sympathising with a recent shift to theological politics, this book's subject is 'to discern ways in which, at a practical level, churches and individual Christians are responding faithfully to the questions about the limits of the state, the market, and the community' (2). Its central question does not answer what it means for the church to relate to the state and market, but 'what does it mean for the church qua church to negotiate a common life with various non-Christian others in relation to the state and the market' (17). It explores issues of faithful Christian witness for those seeking to 'improvise faithfully' in response to Christ's lordship in a variety of changing, postsecularist political contexts (15, 21).

Between the introduction and brilliant conclusion, the book's argumentation unfolds in four chapters richly laden with case studies. Chapter one argues that regardless of state incentives extended to the church, the church 'should be extremely wary about partnership given the current terms and conditions of cooperation on offer' (32). Potentially distracting issues include administrative accountability requirements and other routine tasks likely to cause the church to mimic the state's structure and practices. If not seriously checked, this may rob the church of its primary need to focus on spiritual goals.

Chapter two examines the church's mobilization at local community levels, continuing Bretherton's critique of the capitalist nation-state. A test case is Saul Alinsky whose creativity left a legacy of political *ascesis* (disciplined formation), educating and apprenticing people for friendship in public and common life (77). Accordingly, the church should identify and utilise common objects of love with strangers, maintaining missiology as central feature of ecclesiology (84, 86-87). Bretherton develops the concept of 'double listening' both to Scripture (hence, God) and one's neighbours. Listening becomes '*the* constitutive political act' of the church, being 'the primary form of faithful witness to the Christ-event within political life' (99-101), carrying implications for neighbourliness and worship.

National matters are considered in chapter three, particularly the issue of refugees, or 'bare life'. Bretherton emphasises the importance of locating 'the status and need' of refugees and asylum seekers in order to make sense of the debate about how best to help (129). Against utilitarians and deontologists, Bretherton argues the need of 'a stable arena of law and order' as the primary, defining need of refugees, in turn providing stable arenas of law and order, rendering human flourishing as a possibility. After reviewing limits of humanitarian care, application of the Lord's Prayer is explored with its inherent dynamic worship able to cultivate humility, thus preparing believers to encounter refugees as neighbours (142-145). The church 'hallows' bare life by responding to it theologically, recognising it as gift, judgment and promise (145-152). A practical illustration of methodology used to honour bare life includes the example of the US Sanctuary movement, including both difficulties and possibilities inherent to that kind of approach.

The fourth chapter considers possibilities for channelling consumerism unto political ends. In the globalised context, this includes things like Fair Trade with its reprioritisation of the 'social' and the 'place' dimensions (184-187). Living out the Christian witness, emphasising friendship, neighbourliness and hospitality in the context of everyday life is what Bretherton defines as 'ordinary politics', which is part of Christian witness and gospel proclamation in particular situations.

While the book's argument is beautifully established, some critical questions linger. Specifically, who shares personal responsibility in political frameworks, and what may and may not indicate criminal activity in Bretherton's view, e.g., in issues like that of refugees (ch. 3)? Is there also a place for corrective discipline in any circumstances? Is competition always rendered unjust, unpeaceable and unhealthy (221)? What place does Bretherton relegate to the reality of the church's suffering in the world? In carrying out the politics of hospitality, how might the church avoid false hopes of an over-realised eschatology? What also of opportunities for the gospel's (hence, church's) flourishing in politically desolate or corrupt situations, and how might these be accounted for in light of the gospel's eschatological hope?

These questions notwithstanding, this book's strengths abound. Exposing incoherent political systems with no teleological framework (134), Bretherton's account of politics coincides with the expectation of the transformation of the prevailing hegemony (191). He is fully familiar with early and contemporary Christian political engagement, and with situations in North America, the UK and wider European countries. This work should be a welcome textbook in any university course focused on thinking theologically about the church's responsibilities amidst the nation-state and capitalist market. Yet because of its well-written style, it should also serve laypeople, pastors and those in other disciplines. Bretherton is one of the most helpful voices engaging culture in a way that results in robust witness and faithful gospel proclamation. This book is enthusiastically recommended to all concerned with relevant Christian witness in ever changing Western political situations.

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Biblical Prophets and Contemporary Environmental Ethics

Hilary Marlow

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, xvi + 338, £65.00, hb, ISBN: 978-0-19-956905-2

SUMMARY

Hilary Marlow's book is a serious attempt to develop a theological response to current environmental concerns by using the lens of the Old Testament prophetic books Amos, Hosea and First Isaiah. The book, which is a reworking of the author's PhD dissertation, offers a review of Christian authorship on creation, careful exegetical insights that highlight the voice of the non-human creation and practical applications from someone uniquely suited to handle the topic. The heart of the book is not an argument about science, but about the relationship between God, man and the environment, and the responsibilities that arise from that interaction.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Hilary Marlows Buch ist ein ernsthaftes Unterfangen, eine theologische Antwort auf gegenwärtige Fragen zu Umweltschutz zu formulieren, die sie durch die Brille der alttestamentlichen Propheten Amos, Hosea und (erster) Jesaja betrachtet. Das Werk stellt eine Neubearbeitung der doktoralen Dissertation der Autorin dar und bietet einen Überblick über christliche Autoren zur Schöpfung. Es weist sorgfältige exegetische Einsichten auf, welche die Stimme der übrigen Schöpfung abgesehen vom Menschen hervorheben, und enthält praktische Anwendungsbeispiele von einer Person, die auf einzigartige Weise geeignet ist, das Thema zu bearbeiten. Das Herzstück des Buches liegt nicht in der Auseinandersetzung mit der Wissenschaft, sondern in der Beziehung zwischen Gott, Mensch und Umwelt sowie die Verantwortung, die sich aus diesem Zwischenspiel ergibt

RÉSUMÉ

Dans ce livre reprenant sa thèse de doctorat, Hilary Marlow s'efforce d'apporter une réponse théologique aux préoccupations actuelles pour l'environnement à travers le prisme des livres des prophètes Amos, Osée et le premier Ésaïe. Elle présente les écrits d'auteurs chrétiens sur le sujet de la création, puis se livre à une étude exégétique perspicace qui donne à entendre la voix de la création et dégage avec de grandes compétences des applications pratiques. Le livre n'est pas essentiellement une discussion de théories scientifiques ; il traite avant tout de la relation entre Dieu, l'homme et l'environnement, et des responsabilités qui en découlent.

* * * *

Hilary Marlow's book is a serious attempt to develop a theological response to current environmental concerns by using the lens of the Old Testament prophetic books Amos, Hosea and First Isaiah. As expected, this work assumes the reality of climate change and the severe effects that it will have on the world, and therefore, is not the place for a debate on global warming. In fact, the author's main point is found in the relationship between God, man and the environment, and the responsibilities that arise from that interaction.

Marlow is well suited to address such issues having worked at the Faraday Institute for Science and Religion (Cambridge), the charity A Rocha and as the director of the John Ray Initiative (Cheltenham, UK). This experience is evident throughout the work in both the level of scholarship and the breadth of the conversation between various areas of the environmental debate.

The book is a reworking of her PhD dissertation and bears the marks of that process. It begins with a brief introduction that discusses the reasons for the project and terminology. Following this, Marlow introduces the reader to the perceived problematic relationship between Christian theology and environmental thought, a problem made prominent by Lynn White Jr.'s 1966 paper, to which Marlow responds. Her discussion, however, is not a one-sided apologetic and because she refuses to 'let theology off the hook' (18), the chapter closes with a review of Christian exegesis of the natural world and creation from the time of Philo and the early church Fathers, to Aquinas, Luther and Calvin. Chapter 2 continues this review up to the middle of the twentieth century; Marlow argues that, based on works like von Rad and Eichrodt, Christian theology had minimised creation theology in favour of more anthropocentric readings (68). She shows that such developments were not readdressed until the second half of the twentieth century, chiefly by Westermann and Bernhard Anderson, which in turn led to the more recent works by Simkins, Hiebert and William Brown, all of whom Marlow reviews.

Chapter 3 is the fulcrum of the book, as Marlow enters into a conversation with other eco-theologies, most notably the Earth Bible Project, and lays out the methodology for the exegetical chapters that follow. Here she introduces the excellent 'ecological triangle' that shows the interrelationship and dependence between God, humanity and the non-human creation (110). She then asks three questions that form the background for the following exegesis: '1. What understanding of the non-human creation (whether cosmic or local) does the text present? 2. What assumptions are made about YHWH's relationship to the created world and how he acts within it? 3. What effects do the actions and choices of human beings have on the non-human creation and vice versa?' (111). These questions are all addressed with careful exegesis of the 8th century prophets, Amos, Hosea and Isaiah, along with appropriate references to Micah, as Marlow draws out the voice of the non-human creation in YHWH's care, judgment and restoration of the earth. A good example of this is seen in Amos 1:2, where Marlow argues that the earth's mourning indicates an active participation on the earth's behalf to respond to YHWH's actions, and thus takes part in his judgment against his people (134-136). She concludes her work with a summary section in which she lays out the implications of her study and methodological approach to the prophets – namely, the importance of the three-way relationship mentioned above, the value of the non-human creation and the social responsibilities for the global community.

There is much here to recommend and despite the always underlying danger that shifting science could steal some of the urgency from the book, Marlow's exegetical approach provides a reading of the text that goes beyond this and has lasting implications that must be taken seriously, particularly by the believing community. Some readers may find the terminology and debates from the inner-dialogue between eco-theologies difficult, for example when the author addresses the argument that trees in Amos 2 are inherently prideful toward YHWH (126), but in both cases Marlow does a good job of carefully bringing the reader along. Overall, this book is an excellent response to a world-wide problem – one that requires careful theological reflection. By offering a fresh exegetical reading of key prophetic texts, Marlow demonstrates how these ancient writings help provide answers to a current crisis.

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Die Selbsterschliessung des dreieinigen Gottes. Grundlage eines ökumenischen Offenbarungs-, Gottes- und Kirchenverständnisses

Matthias Haudel

FsöTh 110, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006; EUR 75,95; 640 Seiten

SUMMARY

Professor Haudel's 'Habilitationsschrift' is important because it addresses a central issue in Christian theology, viz. the self-revelation of the triune God and its authoritative implications for the doctrines of the Church, of revelation and of the Trinity. The lengthy study covers the broad range of Christian confessions and is very well researched and thought through. It discusses both the progress and the deficits of doctrine of the Trinity from the Early Church via the Scholastics to the Reformation and the 19th and 20th centuries, with due attention to the special accents set in each period. Haudel offers outstanding insights into the complex arguments developed in the history of Christian theology. His solution is convincing, and it is enriched by the ecumenically orientated hope to overcome or at least to minimise the confessional differences to some degree: Churches should be able to find each other again on the basis of a proper doctrine of the Trinity.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Professor Haudels Habilitationsschrift ist deshalb von Bedeutung, weil sie ein zentrales Anliegen der christlichen Theologie anspricht, nämlich die Selbstoffenbarung des

dreieinigen Gottes und ihre entsprechenden Auswirkungen auf die Dogmen zu Kirche, Offenbarung und Trinität. Die umfangreiche Studie deckt den weiten Bereich christlicher Bekenntnisse ab, sie ist ausgesprochen gut erforscht und durchdacht. Das Werk erörtert sowohl die fortschreitende Entwicklung als auch die Mängel der Trinitätslehre von der Frühkirche an über die Scholastiker bis hin zur Reformation und dem 19. und 20. Jahrhundert. Dabei lässt sie den besonderen Schwerpunkten in jeder Epoche gebührende Aufmerksamkeit zuteil werden. Haudel zeigt brillante Einsichten in die komplexen Argumente auf, welche die Geschichte der christlichen Theologie hervorgebracht hat. Seine Schlussfolgerung ist überzeugend und von der ökumenisch orientierten Hoffnung getragen, die konfessionellen Unterschiede zu überwinden oder wenigstens zu einem gewissen Grad zu nivellieren: Die Kirchen sollten in der Lage sein, auf der Grundlage einer exakten Trinitätslehre wieder zueinander zu finden.

RÉSUMÉ

La thèse d'habilitation de Matthias Haudel traite d'un sujet central pour la théologie chrétienne, à savoir de la révélation du Dieu trine et de ses implications quant à son autorité pour l'élaboration de l'ecclésiologie, de la doctrine de la révélation et de la doctrine de la Trinité. Ce travail de recherche approfondi et bien pensé prend en compte le large champ des confessions chrétiennes. Il considère les progrès et carences des constructions de la doctrine de la Trinité depuis l'Église ancienne jusqu'aux XIX^{e} et XX^{e} siècles, en passant par la période scolastique et celle de la Réforme, et met en évidence les accents particuliers à chaque époque. Il apporte un éclairage remarquable sur les argumentations complexes élaborées au cours de l'histoire de la théologie chrétienne. Son option est convaincante et s'accompagne de l'espoir de pouvoir surmonter, ou tout du moins réduire jusqu'à un certain point, les différences confessionnelles en vue d'un progrès œcuménique. Les Églises devraient être capables de retrouvailles les unes avec les autres sur la base d'une doctrine adéquate de la Trinité.

* * * *

Die hochwertige, bewusst ökumenisch ausgerichtete Untersuchung des Systematikers der Universität Münster, Matthias Haudel, zur „Selbsterschließung des dreieinigen Gottes" fordert heraus und motiviert. Die Studie wurde 2004 als Habilitationsschrift angenommen und bekam bereits 2005 von der katholischen Fakultät der Universität Regensburg den „Theologie- und Ökumene-Preis".

Es ist wohl kaum zu bestreiten, dass die gegenwärtige Christenheit eine dramatische „Verkümmerung der Trinitätslehre" in ihren eigenen Reihen zu beklagen hat. Wenn dann eine Forschung sich genau dieser offensichtlichen Problemanzeige im Bereich zentralchristlicher Themen intensiv widmet, macht das hellhörig. Haudel leistet einen Beitrag zur Bewahrung des christlichen Evangeliums vor dem Absturz in die religiös-theistische Beliebigkeit. Was auch sonst noch zur Untersuchung zu sagen ist, alleine diese wichtige Beobachtung ist bereits ausdrücklich lobenswert. Haudel will ausdrücklich „den Zusammenhang von Trinitätslehre, Offenbarungsverständnis und Kirchenverständnis im Blick auf die gesamte Kirchengeschichte und alle großen Konfessionen.... untersuchen" (9), eine monumental anmutende Aufgabenstellung und Zielsetzung. Und doch – hat man die Lektüre des 640-Seiten Werkes hinter sich – ist es Haudel über weite Strecken wirklich gelungen, diese Aufgabe kenntnisreich – wenn auch substantiell ziemlich anspruchsvoll – zu lösen.

Der Autor beabsichtigt nachzuweisen, dass trinitätstheologische und ekklesiologische Prioritäten in einer Wechselwirkung – entsprechend konfessioneller Unterschiede und theologischer Divergenzen – stünden und dass ein sachgerechter ökumenischer Dialog konsequenter Weise letztlich nur unter Einsicht in diese Zusammenhänge gelingen könne (9). „Deshalb", so der Verfasser, „leitet die Studie aus der – in ost-westkirchlicher Ökumene entstandenen – gemeinsamen altkirchlichen Grundlage, der neunizänischen Theologie, neue Differenzierungen und Verhältnisbestimmungen ab, die allen Konfessionen einen Rahmen für offenbarungs- und trinitätstheologischen Annäherungen eröffnen" (9). Ein konstruktiver Ansatz, der – wie die Studie zeigt – tatsächlich überkonfessionelle Gespräche eröffnet und zu fördern vermag.

Ertragreich und präzise werden nach der guten Einführung des 1. Kapitels in Kapitel II die heilsökonomischen Parameter der Trinitätslehre in der Alten Kirche bis zum Konzil des Jahres 381 entfaltet und diskutiert. Im III. Kapitel wird die trinitätstheologische Neubesinnung im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert aufgezeigt, wobei von dort abgeleitet problemorientiert einige wegweisende ekklesiologische Implikationen gezogen werden. Bevor jedoch das Kapitel diese Aspekte beleuchtet, wird zunächst einmal die Weiterentwicklung der Trinitätslehre im Osten wie im Westen von der Alten Kirche über Augustin bis zur Scholastik ausgewertet. Dabei wird u.a. zu Recht auf die unitarisch gefärbte scholastisch-ontologische Sichtweise kritisch hingewiesen (154-173). Diesem dogmengeschichtlich interessanten Durchgang folgt sachlich einleuchtend „Luthers Rückgriff auf die biblisch-ökonomische Trinitätslehre der Alten Kirche in seiner reformatorischen und ökumenische Relevanz" (174-192), die die (teilweise) scholastische Engführung zu überwinden ermöglichte (178f.). Beschreibungen der Trinitätslehre(n) bis zur protestantischen Orthodoxie schließen diese Betrachtungen kritisch kommentiert mit der Bemerkung ab: „Mit dem Zurücktreten der heilsökonomischen Trinität in ihrer soteriologischen Funktion verband sich eine – zunehmend theistische – Isolierung der Gotteslehre von den übrigen dogmatischen loci" (192). Nach dieser ausführlichen Einleitung folgt schließlich – wie in der Kapitelüberschrift angedeutet – die Neubesinnung auf die Trinitätslehre im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert, quasi als eine Art Bestandsaufnahme der theologischen Bemühungen „zur Überwindung eines natürlich-theistischen Gottesverständnisses" (193-240).

Die Kapitel IV und V beschreiben unterschiedliche „heilsökonomisch neuorientierte Neubegründung[en] der Trinitätslehre" bzw. ihre Fortschritte, untersucht bei K. Rahner, E. Jüngel, J. Moltmann und Dimitru Staniloae, gefolgt von „ekklesiologischen Konsequenzen (…) trinitätstheologische[r] Defizite" (bzw. Einseitigkeiten), untersucht bei J. Ratzinger (katholisch), I. D. Zizilouas (orthodox) und M. Volf (protestantisch). Kritisch anzufragen ist, ob Miroslav Volf (baptistisch-freikirchlich, Moltmann-„Schüler"[?] – siehe 410ff.) in dieser Reihe wirklich als Repräsentant für *das* Protestantische bzw. das *typisch* Freikirchliche eine gute Wahl war.

Im abschließenden VI. Kapitel bietet Haudel einen „Lösungsansatz" zu den erarbeiteten theologischen Gedankengängen und prinzipiellen Problemanzeigen an. Er sieht einen wesentlichen Beitrag seiner Studie darin, dass zunächst einmal „die *Interdependenz von offenbarungstheologischen, trinitätstheologischen und ekklesiologischen Prämissen und Defiziten* in ihrer Bedeutung für das Gottes- und Kirchenverständnis wahrzunehmen sei" (604-605). Dies kann uneingeschränkt als gelungenes Fazit der Studie bestätigt werden.

Die ökumenische Breite der Untersuchung ist – wie gesehen – beachtlich, leidet dann aber teilweise auch an dem weit verbreiteten theologischen Astigmatismus, freikirchliche Theologie und Kirchen zu übersehen. Denn die Untersuchung zu den Thesen bei Volf aus „freikirchlich-baptistischer" Sicht (410f.) erscheint nicht wirklich repräsentativ, eher dann schon die von Volf selbst kritisch abgelehnten „freikirchlichen Kreise" (die aber nicht näher erläutert werden), die für die Diskussion mit den Thesen der sogenannten „Groß-Kirchen" hätten noch besser verdeutlichen können, warum den „freikirchlichen Kreisen" u.a. aufgrund ihrer „individualistische[n] Auffassung der Glaubensvermittlung und des Heils" (…) „der Gedanke der Entsprechung der Kirche zur Trinität weitgehend fremd geblieben" ist (411 Anm. 318). Die Untersuchungsergebnisse Haudels dienen jedoch allen Konfessionen zur theologischen Orientierung und Reflexion. Insbesondere überzeugen Haudels herausfordernde theologische Urteile, die er jeweils sachgerecht begründet. Unter Berufung auf z.B. Moltmann oder G. R. Schmidt, verbieten sich für Haudel „*trinitätstheologische Reduktionen bzw. Einseitigkeiten ebenso wie Minimalisierungen*", weil diese sich „auch für den auf alle Religionen zielenden *interreligiösen Dialog* als wenig *hilfreich*" erweisen. Und weiter: „Das [eben Genannte, das sich verbietet] ergibt sich zunächst schon aus grundsätzlich hermeneutischen Erwägungen" [es folgt ein Zitat von Moltmann, Anm. d. Rezensenten]: „Es dient dem Dialog mit den anderen Religionen nicht, wenn Christen das besondere Christliche relativieren und zugunsten eines allgemeinen Pluralismus preisgeben. Wer sollte an einem Dialog mit christlichen Theologen interessiert sein, die das Christliche nicht mehr eindeutig vertreten wollen?" (598). Deshalb betont Haudel in diesem Zusammenhang zu Recht: „Weil sich die christliche Identität auf die trinitarische Selbsterschließung Gottes gründet, liegt für die christlichen Kirchen in einer angemessenen Trinitätslehre und ihren Implikationen die Maßgabe für den interreligiösen Dialog" (599). Solche und ähnliche Schlussfolgerungen überzeugen und machen auch dadurch das Buch erfreulich studierenswert. Letztlich setzt Haudel vielleicht dann aber doch zu viele „Hoffnungen" auf die Überwindung des die Kirchen Trennenden durch die Betrachtung der Gemeinsamkeiten der Trinitätslehre mit ihren Implikationen. Dennoch, allein die detaillierten Einzeldarstellungen zu Positionen der Dogmen- und Theologiegeschichte und der Dogmatik, dazu die ausgewogenen, intelligenten systematisch-theologischen Schlussfolgerungen und Auswertungen empfehlen nachdrücklich die Lektüre jedem theologisch Interessierten mit dem Gespür für den interkonfessionellen Gedankenaustausch. Das Literaturverzeichnis sowie das Personenregister erleichtern das Weiterstudium.

Berthold Schwarz
Giessen

Sorgen des Seelsorgers. Übersetzung und Auslegung des ersten Korintherbriefes.

Paulus neu gelesen, Band 1

Norbert Baumert

Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 2007; 448 pp, € 16,90 pb,
ISBN 3429029740

RÉSUMÉ

Ce commentaire sur la première épître de Paul aux Corinthiens, écrit avec une sensibilité toute pastorale, sera utile à un large public. Il manifeste une ouverture aux dons de l'Esprit et se caractérise par une interprétation appliquant au présent certains passages habituellement considérés comme ayant une portée eschatologique.

SUMMARY

Baumert's commentary on 1 Corinthians is written with the heart of a pastor and very helpful for a wide audience. It is characterised by openness to the gifts of the Spirit but also by a presentist interpretation of what are normally seen as eschatological passages.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Baumerts Kommentar über den Ersten Korintherbrief entspringt dem Herz und der Feder eines Pastors und bietet einem weiten Leserkreis eine wertvolle Hilfe. Er zeugt von Offenheit für die Gaben des Heiligen Geistes, aber auch von einer gegenwartsbezogenen Auslegung jener Passagen, die normalerweise als eschatologisch angesehen werden.

* * * *

Norbert Baumert, for many years chair of the theological committee of the Katholisch-Charismatische

Erneuerung, is Professor Emeritus of New Testament Exegesis at the Graduate School of Philosophy and Theology Sankt Georgen in Frankfurt. Looking back over his forty-five years of theological work, he is presenting a series of commentaries on the Letters of Paul under the title 'Paulus neu gelesen'. New approaches are to be explored throughout the series. The commentaries are based on doctoral colloquia that dealt primarily with grammatical and semantic issues and have 'often led, surprisingly, to new interpretations of content', as Baumert states in his Foreword (5). Apart from brief references to hypotheses concerning possible division of the letter, the author foregoes the standard introductory questions because here and in his running exegesis he does not want to repeat established conclusions. In his exegesis, he enters into debate primarily with Christian Wolff and Wolfgang Schrage; he also refers to commentaries such as that of Eckhard J. Schnabel, *Der erste Brief des Paulus an die Korinther* (Historisch-Theologische Auslegung; Wuppertal: Brockhaus 2006).

Baumert provides his own translation of 1 Corinthians. His working translation appears at the end of the commentary. Exegetical excursuses on individual verses, which provide questions for discussion, are preceded by a theological overview and gathered before the bibliography and the indexes of abbreviations, authors and biblical references. His commentary does not assume any knowledge of Greek but his exegesis is not always easy to read, for although Greek appears in transliteration, German translations are not always included.

It appears that Baumert assigns a presentist interpretation to certain eschatological passages in 1 Corinthians. This reading appears in comments on 1:7-9; 4:5; 5:5 and in the running text of 3:13-15. On the basis of the 'fire' metaphor and the associated verbs that echo the OT, the 'day of judgment' when the works of all will be revealed is usually interpreted as referring to the time of the Last Judgment, when wood and straw (the structure of the community) will be consumed. Basing his argument on the ductus of the text, Baumert sees it instead as referring to the 'pseudo-apostles' of the present. He argues that *day* refers to a process of discrimination in the daily activities that build up the community and therefore that *fire* means the 'daily judgment' in which the enthusiasts 'recognise their works as worthless' (47). That Paul is addressing specific individuals rather than the whole community may chime with contextual evidence, but the temporal sequence raises exegetical questions important enough to blunt the seriousness of the statements.

Material for discussion is provided above all by the presentist interpretation of 13:8-13, which Baumert analyses in great detail while also discussing critical questions. This does not mean, though, that he provides arguments for those who would argue for a cessationist position and against a charismatic interpretation. Instead he interprets the passage as referring to 'charismatic worship' in the present (226). He attempts to refute his own thesis by citing the terminology of the context, which ordinarily is eschatological, and by analysing the sentence structures. He places great weight on the metaphor of the 'child' who initially babbles but later matures to adult behaviour (v. 11). He compares this to 'improper and proper ways of dealing with manifestations of the Spirit' (233). Baumert is concerned with learning how to deal appropriately with the inward afflatus of the Spirit in the 'fullness' (German: *Ganzheitlichkeit*; Greek: *to teleion*) of love, not with the removal of content. In his view, this takes place 'much more by mature dealing with prophecies than by suddenly realising that they will pass away in heaven' (239). With his presentist interpretation Baumert refers to the reception history (German: *Wirkungsgeschichte*) which deals with these questions. He explains the practical side of this interpretation in chapter 14, where he analyses the 'mysterious being made manifest' that suddenly seems to intervene. Baumert is well aware that the presentist interpretation of 1 Cor. 13 is a novelty in the history of its reading.

In chapter 15, Baumert adapts the presentist accentuation to the text by distinguishing 'presentist and futurist eschatology' while understanding them as interrelated (309). He gives concrete form to this interrelationship in his excursus on the passage, in which he views, behind the denial 'of the present resurrection, trust in God and the forgiveness of sins' as denial, 'thus facilitating sin' (352).

This commentary contains no new insights into the definition of charismatic gifts. Here Baumert remains true to the position of his earlier publications, speaking of general 'gifts' and underlining their character as ministries. On the other hand, he emphasises the intrinsic value of the gifts and displays an understanding for the burden of prophetic ministry. He rightly corrects an autonomous understanding of charismatic gifts according to which capabilities are used independently. In its explanation of 12:31, the commentary remains convincingly within its argument about the nature of gifts, by including 'faith, hope and love', as in the Catholic tradition, in its understanding of these gifts.

Although some of the presentist interpretations need to be challenged, the commentary as a whole – besides its intricate syntactic and exegetical analyses – is distinguished by its topical references, in which Baumert himself shines through as an experienced pastor.

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Augustine and the Trinity

Lewis Ayres

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010, xiv +
360pp., £50.00, hb, ISBN 978-0-521-83886-3

SUMMARY

In recent decades it has become received wisdom in academic circles to portray Augustine as the source of much that is wrong in western accounts of the Trinity. Ayres provides a helpful counterbalance to this understanding. He suggests that a closer reading of Augustine reveals an insistence on the irreducibility of the three persons. He also argues that Augustine's doctrine of the Trinity cannot be reduced to one analogical model, but depends on a range of sources which combine to bring a rich interpretation of the Nicene formula.

RÉSUMÉ

Ces dernières décennies, il est devenu de bon ton dans les milieux académiques de présenter Saint Augustin comme le responsable de bien des égarements dans la formulation occidentale de la doctrine de la Trinité. Ayres apporte un correctif utile à cette manière de voir. Il suggère qu'une lecture plus juste des ouvrages de Saint Augustin révèle une insistance sur le caractère irréductible de la distinction entre les trois personnes. Il montre aussi que la doctrine augustinienne de la Trinité ne peut se réduire à un unique modèle analogique, mais qu'elle dépend d'une diversité de sources qui se mêlent pour produire une riche interprétation de la formule nicéenne.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In vergangenen Jahrzehnten gehörte es zur akzeptierten Weisheit akademischer Kreise, Augustin als die Quelle vieler Falschaussagen in westlichen Darstellungen der Trinität zu bezeichnen. Ayres sorgt für ein hilfreiches Gegengewicht zu einem derartigen Verständnis. Er legt nahe, dass sich bei einer genaueren Lektüre Augustins dessen beharrliche Überzeugung erschließt, dass die drei göttlichen Personen nicht einzuschränken sind. Ayres behauptet ebenfalls, dass die augustinische Trinitätslehre nicht auf ein einziges, analoges Modell begrenzt werden kann, sondern auf einer Reihe von Quellen beruht, die zusammengenommen eine reiche Auslegung der Nizänischen Glaubensformel mit sich bringen.

* * * *

In recent decades it has become received wisdom in academic circles to portray Augustine as the source of much that is wrong in western accounts of the Trinity. He stands accused of over-emphasising the unity of God, primarily as a consequence of his use of neo-platonic categories, thus rendering personal Trinitarian distinctiveness problematic. Ayres offers a significant contribution to a growing field of literature seeking to revise this negative assessment. Rather than engaging at length with secondary work, Ayres traces the development of Augustine's thought through a critical account of his own works. The first three chapters focus on the origins of Augustine's Trinitarian theology, much of which will be unfamiliar to most readers; Ayres considers such works as *De fide at symbolo* to be foundational yet 'a text whose importance has been consistently underrated'. Chapters 4-6 focus on *De Trinitate* and explore Augustine's attitude to Scripture and the way in which his understanding of analogical reasoning underpins his Christological epistemology. Chapters 7-10 give a detailed account of Augustine's mature Trinitarian ontology; the final two chapters focus on the practice of reflection detailed in the latter chapters of *De Trinitate*, suggesting that a simple account of Augustine's Trinitarianism as analogical is deeply problematic.

Three arguments are central to the argument Ayres seeks to sustain. Firstly, that Augustine insists throughout his work that the three persons of the Trinity are irreducible. The unity of God is grounded in the Father's eternal generation of the Son and the eternal procession of the Spirit; the divine communion results from the eternal intra-divine acts of the three persons in love. Here Ayres regards Augustine as offering an important and 'compelling' interpretation of Nicea's 'God from God'. Secondly, rather than imbibing unhelpful philosophical categories into Trinitarian theology, it is argued that Augustine draws upon a range of theological terms and metaphorical resources. This can only be fully appreciated by a chronological reading of the texts; Augustine's critics stand accused of failing to take into account this 'clear trajectory' of theological development.

Finally, it is argued that Augustine understood Christian growth as participation in the life of God which is both illuminating of the triune life, yet also an acknowledgement of the mystery of God; 'the foundational quality of a Scripture that points towards divine mystery… and our knowledge of human noetic fallenness and necessary humility all undergird the provisional and complex nature of Augustine's Trinitarian styles' (325).

This is clearly an academic book intended for serious students of theology, but the writing style is clear and the argument would be accessible to those with a limited grasp of the background (though the price is likely to prohibit many). As a contribution to debate, this is a robust and strongly argued reappraisal of Augustine's developments in Trinitarian theology. As such it should serve as a caution for those brought up to consider Augustine as the origin of all that is wrong in western accounts of the Trinity. Perhaps it is much more a matter of the way in which Augustine has been read and interpreted. The author is Professor of Catholic Theology at Durham (UK) and part of his intention is to relate the new revisionist approach to Augustine with modern Thomist theology. This perspective needs to be recognised when assessing the argument, but the importance of this book is far wider than the Catholic tradition. Teachers of theology ought to be aware of the moves to reconstruct our understanding of Augustine's doctrine of the trinity; to that end this is a helpful and erudite contribution.

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Revelation. A New Covenant Commentary

New Covenant Commentary Series, 18

Gordon D. Fee

Eugene, OR: Cascade Books (Wipf & Stock), 2011;
332 pp, $ 37, pb, ISBN 978-1-60899-431-1

RÉSUMÉ

Ce commentaire sur l'Apocalypse constitue un manuel clair et utile, qui se lit facilement. Il n'entre pas dans la discussion sur les diverses interprétations. Fee considère que l'empire romain est la cible principale de la critique prophétique dans l'Apocalypse. Malgré l'objectif annoncé de la série, ce volume ne sera pas d'une grande utilité aux pasteurs et enseignants.

SUMMARY

Gordon Fee's commentary on Revelation is a clear and helpful support which reads fluently and does not interact with other interpreters. The Roman Empire is seen is the main object of Revelation's prophetic criticism. Despite the ostensible aim of the series in which it appears, the commentary does not contain much help for preachers and teachers.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Gordon Fees Kommentar zum Buch der Offenbarung erweist sich als verständlicher, hilfreicher Beitrag. Er läßt sich flüssig lesen und setzt sich nicht mit anderen Auslegern auseinander. Als Hauptziel der prophetischen Kritik in der Offenbarung wird das Römische Weltreich angesehen. Trotz des offensichtlichen Zieles der Reihe, in welcher der Kommentar erscheint, enthält er keine große Hilfe für Prediger und Lehrer.

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When I picked up this commentary, my first response was: 'No, not another commentary series!?' There are now more series of commentaries on the New Testament than any person can reasonably consult. Every publishing company wants to have its own series and some run several series. The *New Covenant Commentary Series* is announced as a series with contributors from all continents which will explicitly pay attention to the meaning of the text for the people of God. It is the first series by American publishers Wipf and Stock.

Gordon Fee's introduction to the volume on Revelation is surprisingly short. On just 11 pages he says a few (very useful) things about the book's genre, authorship, reason for writing and date – but more thorny issues such as the book's structure and its social and historical background are not touched upon. Fee merely states that he thinks some elements of Revelation have already occurred but will occur again. One also expects some discussion of John's use of the Old Testament and intertestamental literature as well as an overview of the main schools of interpretation in the introduction – but these are absent

The commentary itself is written in running style with the words under discussion in bold print so that it reads fluently. Fee entirely refrains from interacting with other commentators; as a result the book has few footnotes. He systematically shows how John uses elements from the Old Testament to describe his visions and he often expresses his admiration for John's 'literary artistry'. Fee frequently comments on the rendering of the Greek text by the NIV but in such a way that no knowledge of Greek is necessary to understand the comment. If the meaning of a word or phrase is unclear, he is not ashamed to admit this. The translation that Fee uses as basis for his work, the NIV 2011, is printed in full. He regularly discusses the decisions made by the revisers of this edition, of whom he was one; apart from these places, in my opinion the translation merely uses up valuable space.

Fee states that he divides Revelation into two main parts, chapters 1-11 and 12-22. Yet more importantly he seems to take everything up to chapter 16 as 'prelude' to the last, eschatological battle which is described in chapters 17-20. In line with this, chapters 15-16 are described as concerning the 'penultimate' events (207); 14:14-20 is taken as a separate section of which 14:14-16 anticipates chapters 21-22 and 14:17-20 anticipates chapters 17-20. The notorious passage 20:1-6 is treated as describing no more than 'an interlude' in the 'last battle' in between 'the divine overthrow of the unholy triumvirate' and 'the final judgement of all evil' (280).

The main target of John's criticism throughout the book, according to Fee, is the Roman Empire. Not that there is already much persecution of Christians at the time of writing, but as a prophet John foresees persecution in the near future – which indeed came in the second and third centuries AD. Fee argues that Revelation was written at the end of the first century and that 8:8-9 reflect the eruption of the Vesuvius in AD 79.

Within the exposition there are not many hints at what the text means for contemporary believers although after three sections (chs. 2-3; 4-6; 21:1 – 22:5) there is a brief separate unit called 'Fusing the horizons'. I wonder why there are not more such units, especially given the series' aim of paying attention to the meaning of the text as mentioned above. At the end of the book one finds a short bibliography and an index of texts.

Fee's commentary is one of several good, medium sized commentaries that have already appeared this century. Of the others I want to mention Ben Witherington's (2003) and Joseph Mangina's recent volume in the series of SCM Theological Commentaries. The latter is the richest in theology and application but also the most demanding of the three.

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Deification in Christian Theology

Stephan Finlan and Vladimir Kharlamov (eds.)

Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2010; 194 pp.
$42.50; ISBN: 9780227173299

SUMMARY

Deification (Greek: *theosis*) is an important concept in the Orthodox Churches but disputed in the West. The present volume of essays largely on the biblical material and the Early Church is an important contribution to a necessary debate. The book is well researched and it is regrettable that modern debate is not well represented. From the West there are no essays by Lutherans, Methodists or Pentecostals, only a good one by the Reformed Myk Habets.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

„Gottwerdung" (im Griechischen *theosis*) ist in den orthodoxen Kirchen ein wichtiger Begriff, aber im Westen recht umstritten. Der vorliegende Aufsatzband geht hauptsächlich über biblisches Material und die Urgemeinde und leistet einen wichtigen Beitrag zu einer unerlässlichen Auseinandersetzung. Das Buch stellt eine gründliche Studie dar; es ist nur bedauerlich, dass die gegenwärtige Debatte zum Thema nicht ausreichend vertreten ist. Aus dem westlichen Lager gibt es keine Aufsätze von Lutheranern, Methodisten oder Pfingstlern, sondern nur einen guten Beitrag von reformierter Seite durch Myk Habets.

RÉSUMÉ

La notion de la déification (*theosis* en grec), controversée en Occident, joue un rôle important dans les Églises orthodoxes. Le présent ouvrage contribue au débat de manière utile et nécessaire en considérant l'enseignement biblique et celui de l'Église ancienne. La recherche y est bien menée, mais on peut regretter que le débat actuel n'y retienne pas une attention suffisante. Parmi les contributions représentant le point de vue occidental, aucune ne provient de luthériens, de méthodistes ou de pentecôtistes ; on doit se contenter d'un bon texte du réformé Myk Habets.

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Deification is the transformation of believers into the likeness of God. While Christian monotheism does not support the notion of any literally becoming 'god', the New Testament speaks of a transformation of mind, character, vision and mission towards those of Jesus and an imitation of God. None of these passages spells out the concept in detail, however. The idea of deification was often mentioned in the Early Church but the term 'deification' (Greek *theosis*) was only coined by Gregory of Nazianzus in the fourth century. Even though the term has taken many meanings in church history, nowadays it is used to designate all instances where any idea occurs of taking on God's character or being made divine. In the Orthodox Churches, the Old Oriental Churches, and the Oriental Churches in Union with the Roman-Catholic Church, the term plays a central role as salvation from an unholy life to partaking in the holy life of God himself. For the Orthodox, theosis is the process of a believer becoming free of sin (in the general meaning) and being united with God, beginning in this life and later consummated in bodily resurrection.

The Oriental concept of deification has often fallen prey to confessionalism as the Orthodox were blamed to believe that humans could become God. Deification was seen as a pagan idea by e.g. Adolf Harnack (9). The editors want to overcome this static warfare, arguing that theosis never meant 'becoming God' or giving up the distinction between creator and creation; see the leading Romanian theologian Dumitru Staniloae, who emphasises that theosis may not be taken literally (161).

Two Orthodox academics working at Drew University edited the present volume to examine the history of the concept, and they invited contributors from other confessions. Besides the introduction by the editors, there are chapters on Judaism and the Old Testament (Gregory Glazov), on 2 Peter 1:4 (Stephen Finlan), on the Apostolic Fathers, on the Apologists of the second century (both Vladimir Kharlamov), on Irenaeus, on Athanasius (both Jeffrey Finch), on Augustine (Robert Puchniak), on Maximus the Confessor (Elena Vishnevskaya), on Soloviev (Stephen Finlan) and 'Reforming Theosis', a chapter by a Reformed scholar evaluating the concept of deification (Myk Habets). The Evangelical theologian Thomas C. Oden says of this book: 'An extraordinary collaboration of scholars examining the neglected theme of deification in the classic Christian tradition from its biblical roots through Irenaeus, Augustine, and Maximus, to contemporary reconstructions of Torrance and Soloviev.'

It is not always clear whether this book is more a historical investigation or an Orthodox defence of the concept. One wished there would have been an essay on the history of the criticism of the concept and a clearer presentation of the possible differences between the classic presentations of soteriology in Reformation times in regard to theosis as part of the process of salvation. The subject is important for Protestants and Evangelicals, but getting closer to each other is only possible if the possible obstacles are clearly stated. Subsequently the Bible and its interpretation in the history of the Church should be studied.

For Evangelicals, exegesis will play a major role in evaluating the concept and this volume is a good starting point to do so. Clearly there are enough texts to be explained, not only in the New Testament but also in the Old. The issue is not to deny that believers become 'participants of the divine nature', but how to interpret this in the light of all of Scripture. In this book Gregory Glazov examines Old Testament covenant theology, divine adoption, bearing the fruit of knowledge and attaining the stature of a tree of righteousness in Proverbs, Isaiah and Sirach.

As all articles are well researched and shed new light on the whole debate, I want to confine myself to two remarks and then concentrate on the article of Habets. First, I do not understand why the article on Vladimir Soloviev is included. Bible and Early Church is a given, but Soloviev is a modern poet of comedy. At most I would have made it an appendix.

Second, Finlan takes it for granted that 2 Peter was written around AD 100 (32) and interprets the letter accordingly. This surely is not in line with the thinking of the Church Fathers and traditional theology, on which so much emphasis is laid in this volume. [Ed.: see the article by Prof. Van Houwelingen in this Journal, issue 19.2.]

An exception among the authors is the Reformed theologian Myk Habets, both as a Protestant and because he compares Orthodox teaching with Reformed theology. He compares theosis to the 'heart of Reformed theology', union with Christ, which 'is compatible with a doctrine of theosis' (147). According to Habets, Calvin's comment on 2 Peter 1:4 could have been written by an Orthodox theologian because his emphasis on 'union with Christ' (148-150) is very similar to the Orthodox position and was taken up by theologians in his line like Jonathan Edwards and even Karl Barth. At length Habets describes the positive appraisal of theosis by the Scottish Reformed theologian Thomas F. Torrance. For Habets (and Torrance), the second biblical and Reformed concept in line with theosis is 'imago dei'. Humans are the image of God, but this image has been destroyed by sin. Through salvation, this image is restored and believers will be transformed into the real image of God, who is Jesus, the Son of God. [Ed.: see also Myk Habets, *Theosis in the Theology of Thomas Torrance* (Aldershot; Ashgate, 2009) ISBN: 0754667995.]

In response I would say that there are many concepts in the Bible that make a doctrine of deification possible, as long as the concept is not taken to mean that we become God. We are created in God's image and will be transformed into the image of God, Jesus Christ. We are indwelled by the Holy Spirit and Jesus is in us (and we in him). All this leads to the concept of becoming holy which is central not only to all holiness movements but to all Protestant revivals and Evangelical movements. For Protestants the same questions concerning the relationship between salvation and theosis arise as concerning salvation and sanctification. At this point the real discussion should have started. It is a pity that in this book only a Reformed scholar (Habets) interacts with theosis but no Lutherans (who are mainly critical of 'deification'), Methodists (who are mostly positive, starting with John Wesley) or Pentecostal theologians.

Thomas Schirrmacher

Paul Unbound: Other Perspectives on the Apostle

Mark D. Given (ed.)

Peabody: Hendrickson; Edinburgh: Alban Books, 2010; xix + 210 pp. Pb.; ISBN 978-1-59856-324-5. £17

SUMMARY

This is a useful volume of essays on the topics Paul and politics, Paul and patronage (and wider economic issues), the identification of Paul's opponents, Paul and ethnicity, Paul and the law (with a 'newer perspective'), Paul and Judaism, Paul's view of women in the church, and the rhetorical analysis of Paul's letters. The 'new perspectives' presented here have great potential but should be assessed critically because many scholars have their own agendas.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Das Buch ist ein nützlicher Aufsatzband zu folgenden Themen: Paulus und die Politik, Paulus und Sponsorenschaft (sowie breit gefächerte wirtschaftliche Anliegen), die Widersacher von Paulus, Paulus und ethnische Belange, Paulus und das Gesetz (aus „jüngerer Perspektive"), Paulus und das Judentum, die paulinische Sicht von Frauen in der Gemeinde sowie rhetorische Analyse der Paulusbriefe. Die „jüngeren Perspektiven", wie hier dargestellt, haben großes Potential, aber sie sollten kritisch bewertet werden, weil viele Wissenschaftler ihre eigenen Anliegen vertreten.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage contient un ensemble d'études utiles sur l'apôtre Paul : son enseignement sur la politique, sur la bienfaisance (et d'autres questions économiques), l'identification de ses adversaires, la question ethnique, son approche de la Loi (avec une perspective encore plus nouvelle que la « nouvelle perspective »), son rapport au judaïsme, son point de vue sur le rôle des femmes dans l'Église, et l'analyse rhétorique de ses lettres. Les « nouvelles perspectives » présentées ici sont grandement prometteuses, mais doivent être évaluées avec un regard critique car de nombreux spécialistes ont leurs objectifs particuliers.

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The present collection provides a representative survey of recent perspectives on the life and letters of Paul. The volume is intended 'to provide the advanced undergraduate, graduate student or interested layperson with an introduction to a wide range of fascinating approaches to Paul that are relevant to, yet go beyond, traditional theological and historical concerns' (1). As such, it supplements the standard textbooks on Paul. The chapters reflect some of the ways in which the study of Paul has, in recent years, been liberated from traditional or conventional perspectives (1). While both, old and new theological perspectives, play a role in all of the essays that make up this work, they do not command the stage.

In 'Paul and the Roman Empire: Recent Perspectives', W. Carter surveys and evaluates the work of the Society of Biblical Literature's *Paul and Politics Group*.

The origin of this group lies in the rediscovery of imperialism in other disciplines, postcolonial criticism, the influence of non-European-American scholars, and certain recent historical Jesus research that focuses on the world of Roman imperialism. The group addressed four interrelated topics: Paul and the politics of the churches, Paul and the politics of Israel, Paul and the politics of the Roman Empire, and Paul and the politics of interpretation. Warren suggests areas of further study and contemporary relevance.

S.J. Friesen writes on 'Paul and Economics: The Jerusalem Collection as an Alternative to Patronage'. He rightly argues for a different picture of Paul *the activist*. In addition to his theology and rhetoric, Paul's economic practices also need to be examined, 'For his gospel not only challenged fundamental economic ideas such as patronage, but also promoted alternative economic practices of community sharing among the poor, based on Paul's understanding of the example of Christ' (3). Friesen addresses what he calls 'capitalist interpretations' of the Pauline churches (i.e. Pauline scholarship has largely ignored economic inequality) and discusses how to define and to measure poverty. He then develops a poverty scale for analysing early imperial populations with descriptive examples (imperial elites, regional or provincial elites, municipal elites, moderate surplus resources, stable near subsistence level, at subsistence level, below subsistence level). Finally, Friesen interprets the Jerusalem collection as an alternative to the patronage economics of its day. A new picture emerges once our understanding of the Pauline churches does not exclude economy and inequality from its analysis.

J.L. Sumney provides a survey of research from F.C. Baur to the present on Paul and his opponents. He focuses on the methodological issues of distinguishing between those Paul opposes and those who oppose Paul, of evaluating types of texts within a letter to determine their usefulness for acquiring data to identify opponents, of recognising the implications of the diverse nature of early Christianity and of the use of other groups within the first-century environment to supply information about Paul's opponents. Sumney argues that, while it is often neglected, methodological care is of primary importance in this particular quest.

In 'Paul and Ethnicity' C. H. Cosgrove provides a broad survey of interpretation of Paul's attitude toward ethnic identity. He covers the universal (non-ethnic) human being in Paul, Paul and anti-Semitism, the 'separate but equal' in Paul, divine impartiality in Paul, interpretations of Galatians 3:28 and Paul's quest against ethnocentrism. He includes Bishop Colenso's radical commentary on Romans and post-Holocaust, dispensationalist and recent non-Christian philosophical interpretations of Paul as they bear on the question of ethnicity.

A.A. Das writes on 'Paul and the Law: Pressure Points in the Debate'. Das describes the key issues in the debate of the past 25 years, describes the 'New Perspective on Paul' and surveys the ongoing criticism of this New Perspective. He presents his own view as a newer perspective that takes seriously the strengths and weaknesses of previous perspectives.

In 'Paul and Judaism: Why Not Paul's Judaism?', M.D. Nanos makes the observation that the investigation of Paul and Judaism often proceeds as if we were confronted with a case of Paul *or* Judaism and as if these referents represented two *different* religious systems. Instead, he argues, Paul's ethnic divisions along the lines of Jew/Gentile and Israel/other-nations should be seen as drawn within the boundaries of Christ-believing Judaism. Paul's statement of flexibility in 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 does not render his law observance a sham. Even the New Perspective's improved understanding of Judaism is still inadequate, because it is still indebted to the traditional reconstructions of Paul and Paulinism. For Nanos, 'what Paul would find wrong in Paulinism: it is not Judaism' (159).

D. Krause surveys studies regarding women and the churches of Paul. She argues that, in recent research, the key Pauline texts 'are interpreted not as evidence for Paul's attitudes towards women, but rather for how they reveal struggles of identity and power within the churches of Paul and how these struggles connect with the expectations of women and their speech within the larger culture'. In this light the letters of the Pauline tradition are neither friend nor foe in the cause of women for their full inclusion in the leadership of the church. The letters 'are witnesses to an enduring struggle against which women and men who hope for a more humane, inclusive, and just church will not necessarily take comfort but through which they might take courage' (173).

M.D. Given's essay on Paul and rhetoric provides a brief survey of research on Paul and rhetoric, and examines how classical or new rhetorical criticism has been applied to 1 Corinthians. A classical rhetorical-critical reading involves determining the rhetorical unite, defining the rhetorical situation, determining the rhetorical problem and species of rhetoric, supplying rhetorical analysis and evaluating rhetorical effectiveness, including discussion of Paul's rhetorical strategies. Given further addresses some of the 'seductions' of Paul's rhetoric and concludes that the wisdom and knowledge which Paul offers does not seduce with the promise of glory in the kingdom of Rome, as does the *sophos* of this age. However, it does seduce with the promise of a surpassing eternal weight of glory in a kingdom that is about to appear: 'Paul, like Prometheus, was a dispenser of mysterious knowledge and power for the benefit of humankind, but his true identity has often been bound by theological, academic, and rhetorical constraints: Paul was a *sophos* in the kingdom of God' (198). An index of modern authors and of ancient sources closes off this volume.

These essays show that several 'new perspectives' on Paul need to be noted which have the potential to liberate Paul from theological interpretations and traditional historical criticism. However, caution is required with such alternatives, since they have significant theological implications and are no less historical in approach than previous scholarship. Paul will have to be liberated from all who, for whatever reason, try to make him proponents of their own agenda. A further volume of essays should contain what Given identifies as lacking in the present volume, namely, essays on post-colonial criticism of Paul and on Paul and sexuality. In addition, Paul's use of Scripture and its significance for his self-understanding, ministry and theological arguments deserves a solid introductory essay. One might also ask what further fresh perspectives would arise if the solitary figure of the 'free-lance Paul', as traditionally understood, was seen more in the context of his co-workers, mission partners and churches and also in the context or even as part of the other 'early Christianities' such as Jerusalem and Antioch. Has Paul been understood far too long and too exclusively against his own, heavily rhetorically shaped statements in Galatians 1-2?

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Documents and Images for the Study of Paul

Neil Elliott and Mark Reasoner (eds.).

Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press/Alban Books,
2011; xi + 418 pp. Pb.; ISBN 978-0-8006-6375-9.
£25.00

RÉSUMÉ

Les éditeurs de cet ouvrage offrent ici des ressources diverses apportant un éclairage sur l'apôtre Paul et son temps. Parmi les sujets abordés figurent l'esclavage, les philosophes, la pureté, la rédaction de lettres, l'empire romain, le judaïsme et bien d'autres. Les images sont accompagnées d'explications. Des pistes sont proposées pour poursuivre l'étude. C'est là un ouvrage de référence excellent pour la recherche académique et la prédication.

SUMMARY

The editors present a variety of resources which shed light on Paul and his times; issues covered include slavery, philosophers, purity, letter-writing, the Roman Empire, Judaism and many more. The images are provided with explanations, and there are suggestions for further study. The book is an excellent resource for academics as well as preachers.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die Herausgeber legen eine Vielfalt von Ressourcen vor, die Paulus und seine Zeit beleuchten; die Themen beinhalten Sklaverei, Philosophen, Reinheit, die Kultur des Briefeschreibens, das Römische Weltreich, Judentum und vieles mehr. Die Bilder sind mit Erläuterungen versehen, und Vorschläge zu weiteren Studien werden gemacht. Das Buch ist ein ausgezeichnetes Hilfsmittel für Wissenschaftler und Prediger.

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The present volume offers well-selected and well-introduced sources from the Greco-Roman world for understanding the life and theology of Paul. The volume is intended to provide a firsthand encounter with the world of Paul and is to be a

> window onto ideas and images that can be used to help us understand Paul. None of the documents and images presented here is offered as a claim regarding the source of Paul's ideas. We cannot prove what Paul had read, seen, or studied… But we can encounter some of the ideas and images from the worlds in which Paul and his first communities lived and thus form a better picture of Paul's context (1).

The introductory chapter, 'Exploring Paul's Environment', begins with a cautionary note on the use and significance of such parallels, describes other available resources for appreciating the backdrop of Paul, and discusses what differences parallels can and should make to our reading of Pauline texts.

The first of six substantial chapters provides documents and images for understanding 'Paul's Self-Presentation'. Discussion includes Paul's self-designation 'slave of Christ, called an apostle', the figure of the philosopher, attitudes towards manual labour and weakness, the obedience of faith among the nations, and background material to Paul's autobiographical statements. For each heading, texts and images are provided together with short introductions. Each chapter closes with suggestions for further study. All chapters offer a good combination of literary texts, inscriptions, numismatic evidence and photographs of other material remains.

Chapter two is devoted to 'Paul's Gospel and Paul's Letters' and covers Paul as writer of letters, the purpose of letters as a means of connecting people, letters of exhortation, types of ancient letters, the Gospel in Paul's letters (turning from idols to serve the living God), the public face of ancient piety and Paul's expressions 'the word of the cross' (on ancient execution and crucifixion) and 'this present evil age'.

Chapter three sketches 'The Gospel of Augustus' which permeated 'a large part of the environment in which Paul and the members of his assemblies lived' (119) as a backdrop to Paul's understanding of the Gospel (the 'gospel according to Virgil', the achievements of Augustus and their presentation, Claudius' death and Nero's accession, the disdain of the upper classes for their inferiors).

Chapter four provides documents and images for understanding Paul's statements on Israel, an aspect of his life and theology not given due attention in earlier collections of sources. The present volume reflects the emphasis on Paul's Jewish identity in the research of the past two decades. Included is a short introduction to the New Perspective on Paul and quotations, mainly from Jewish sources, on the Diaspora, the Jewish rejection of idols, the tension between Rome and Jewish communities and Jewish attitudes to Roman rule, and on early Jewish soteriology.

The chapter 'The communities around Paul: the *ekklesiai*' is devoted to the particular challenge of Paul of creating holy communities among the nations to whom he was sent. The editors provide parallels for various matters of holiness and impurity, (sexual) impurity among the nations, cases of sexual immorality in the churches, the Roman concern for social order and the challenges of community (giving up the past, social and purity-related tensions at the table, pleas for unity as one body).

A final chapter is devoted to Paul's legacy in apocryphal and pseudepigraphic sources. It covers Paul as the writer of letters (the *Letter to the Laodiceans*; 'Third Corinthians' in the *Acts of Paul*; Paul's correspondence with Seneca), Paul as philosopher and theologian, as an ascetic and as a compelling preacher and wonder-worker. Paul has also been seen as the opponent of the true faith, for example in Ebionite sources and the Clementine Recognitions. The last two sections gather sources on Paul the martyr and on the sword as the apostle's emblem in Christian iconography.

The editors provide succinct introductions to the texts and questions for reflection at the end in order to prompt the readers to see possible similarities and differences between Paul's letters and the roughly contemporaneous texts (7). All photographs are black and white, some are of poor quality. The volume closes with indexes of subjects, references to Scripture and references to other ancient sources. On several occasions, the differences between the Paul of the letters and the presentation of Paul in the Book of Acts appear exaggerated, compare S. E. Porter, *The Paul of Acts*, WUNT 115 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999).

Elliott and Reasoner have put together an excellent, handy resource for the study of Paul's life, letters and theology. They do not argue for a particular view of Paul, but have gathered 'documents and images from his world(s) that bear comparison with one or another aspect of his thought and practice' (6). This book is a highly commendable textbook for undergraduate and postgraduate courses on Paul, a practical reference tool and collection of sources for scholars and a helpful exegetical tool for interpreting Pauline literature. Its many illustrations from the ancient world can be used as illustrations in preaching from Paul's letters.

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Understanding the Social World of the New Testament

Dietmar Neufeld & Richard E. DeMaris (eds.)

London, New York: Routledge, 2010; 285 pp; pb.;
ISBN 978-0-415-77582-3; £20

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Das Werk bringt seinen Lesern den kulturellen Kontext nahe, in dem das Neue Testament entstanden ist. Die Autoren sind davon überzeugt, dass die moderne Welt sich in vielem von der antiken Welt unterscheidet. Um diese Lücke zu schließen, stützen sie sich auf Paradigmen, die der kulturellen Anthropologie und Ethnographie entlehnt sind. Derartige Modelle werden verwendet, um uns zu einem besseren Verständnis von Wertesystemen zu verhelfen wie Identität, Familie und Verwandtschaft, geschlechtsspezifische Fragen, Reinheit, landschaftliche Gestaltung und Raumverständnis. Das Buch legt ebenfalls dar, wie das Neue Testament seine Umwelt herausfordert. Es stellt einen wichtigen Beitrag dar, allerdings sollten seine Voraussetzungen nicht unkritisch hingenommen werden; es bedarf der Ergänzung durch traditionelle Einführungen.

SUMMARY

This book introduces readers to the culture in which the NT was written. The contributors are convinced that the modern world differs much from the ancient world and they rely on models from cultural anthropology and ethnographical studies to bridge the gap. Such models are used to help us understand value systems such as identity, kinship, gender issues, purity, landscape and spatiality. The book also shows how the NT challenges its world. This is an important book but its presuppositions should not go unchallenged and it should be supplemented by traditional introductions.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage vise à présenter le monde culturel dans lequel le Nouveau Testament a vu le jour. Les divers auteurs tiennent pour acquis que le monde moderne est très différent du monde d'alors et ils tirent parti de modèles utilisés dans les études d'anthropologie culturelle et d'ethnographie pour établir des ponts entre les deux. Ces modèles sont mis en œuvre pour aider à comprendre les systèmes de valeurs, et notamment les conceptions entretenues sur l'identité, les liens de parenté, les rapports entre hommes et femmes, la pureté, la territorialité et l'organisation de l'espace. Ils tentent aussi de montrer en quoi le Nouveau Testament est critique de la société. C'est un ouvrage important, mais les présupposés des auteurs ne devraient pas être acceptés sans évaluation critique et l'ouvrage ne remplace pas les introductions plus traditionnelles.

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This book serves as a guide to readers unfamiliar with the world of ancient Mediterranean culture. Its essays set out to develop interpretive models for understanding such values as collectivism, kinship, memory, eth-

> nicity, and honor, and to demonstrate how to apply these models to the New Testament texts. (frontpage)

To clarify the cultural values of the world in which the NT and ancient Christianity emerged, the book introduces the ancient Mediterranean's value system with the help of interpretive models developed by the social sciences. Most authors come from the United States, others from South Africa, Norway, England and Finland. Each essay closes with suggestions for further reading. All contributors are convinced that the modern world is very different from the ancient world and rely on models from cultural anthropology and ethnographical studies to bridge the gap.

The introduction contains an instructive case study of Acts 6-7, combined with brief introductions to the following essays. The essays are meant to be read jointly as their topics are inextricably interwoven so that they work together as a whole to illuminate the New Testament.

Part one addresses issues of identity: B.J. Malina on collectivism (individualists and collectivists, examples of reading texts with 'collectivistic lenses'); M.Y. MacDonald on kinship and family (New Testament household codes and the classical model of family organization, marriage, slaves and masters, parents and children); C. Osiek, J. Pouya on constructions of gender ('Questions about sexuality are always socially controversial.... we need to remember that they felt, thought, and spoke out of their own social context with its presuppositions and prejudices, and that we do the same', 55); A. Kirk on memory theory as applied to the Gospel Tradition (the nature of human memory, memory as symbolic representation, preservation of traditions and memory, Paul and the gospels as memory sites, Luke 10:38-42); D.C. Duling, 'Ethnicity and Paul's Letter to the Romans' (the language and theory of ethnicity, ethnic features in Paul's context such as kinship, myths of common ancestry, homeland, customs, language, shared historical memories, religion, phenotypical features and the significance of names, examples of 'ethnic reasoning' in Paul's early letters, ethnicity in Romans) and H. Moxnes on 'Landscape and Spatiality: Placing Jesus' (landscape and common identity, landscape and memory, Luke's landscape of Jesus, the moral landscape of village and wilderness, Jesus in the spatial centre of Luke's Gospel).

Part two treats patterns of interaction and social engagement: R.L. Rohrbaugh on honour (concern for both ascribed and acquired honour; behaviour based on the honour ranking of the participants; the honour of Jesus); P.F. Craffert on visions, spirit possession and sky journeys (defining altered states of consciousness and their constituting components; their significance for understanding the New Testament; reassigning biblical phenomena as human phenomena); J.J. Pilch on healing as political activity, Jesus' healing activity as treason, the power Jesus wielded; E.C. Stewart on social stratification and patronage (characteristics of patrons and clients, patronage systems, New Testament examples; God understood as a patron, Jesus as a broker for God's benefaction in the synoptic gospels); A. Batten on brokerage (brokers, divine brokers as mediators of goods and services between believers and the heavenly realm, of which God and eventually Jesus, were the ultimate patrons, Jesus and other brokers in the New Testament, Paul and brokerage); P. Oakes on urban structures and patronage in Corinth (a patronage model of first-century urban layout and various types of city, Corinthian Christians and a patronage model of urban structure); D.A. Fiensy on economy and the NT (ancient economy as agrarian, aristocratic and as a peasant society; lower Galilee; Jesus did not criticise the system so much as the dominant partners of the system: the aristocrats); R.H. Williams on purity, anomalies and abominations (purity and impurity, social and physical bodies, Israelite and Judean purity rules, Mark 7:1-22) and R. Uro, 'Ritual and Christian Origins'. The volume closes with a detailed glossary, a bibliography and indexes.

This collection certainly achieves its aim and offers fresh perspectives for students and scholars alike. In particular, where the New Testament evidence or evidence from the ancient world is scant, it can be helpful to draw on some social-scientific models to help us fill the gaps and to appreciate better the little evidence that we do have. The essays show how the New Testament is moored in the values of the ancient Mediterranean world but they also demonstrate to what degree it challenges these values and poses clear alternatives to them. The latter issue could have been made clearer in some contributions.

Any assessment will depend on the extent to which readers share the presuppositions of the authors. Some would argue that the present volume should be supplemented with a more traditional survey of the New Testament world, drawing more on ancient literary or material sources and serious reading of representative primary sources, in particular early Jewish sources, as well as material remains. Given that this volume is aimed at students, the presuppositions of the approach employed here should have been argued in more detail and defended against valid criticism: why and how may we employ ethnographical studies of current, non-western, traditional cultures to understand the ancient Mediterranean world? In addition, this approach should be set in the larger perspectives of contemporary approaches to the scholarly study of the New Testament, in particular to the various forms of historical criticism which are also employed in this volume. Both points would deserve separate treatment.

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A Brief Guide to the Hebrew Bible

Hans M. Barstad, trans. Rannfrid Thelle

Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2010, vii + 229 pp., £19.99, pb; ISBN 9780664233259

RÉSUMÉ

Ce bref guide de la Bible hébraïque constitue une introduction accessible et stimulante à la littérature de l'Ancien Testament et à l'histoire des études scientifiques qui lui ont été consacrées. Le livre n'est pas organisé selon le canon juif ou chrétien, mais selon les catégories des milieux académiques. Il apporte aussi une réflexion de base sur une herméneutique responsable, avec des excursus traitant une variété de sujets intéressants et utiles. Il contient un glossaire des termes historiques, littéraires et scientifiques. Bien que rédigé à l'intention d'étudiants, il sera utile aux membres d'Église, aux pasteurs, aux enseignants qui ne sont pas des spécialistes et aux étudiants en quête d'une rapide vue d'ensemble de la littérature vétérotestamentaire et de l'état de la recherche.

SUMMARY

A Brief Guide to the Hebrew Bible introduces the reader to the literature of the Old Testament and the history of scholarship pertaining to it in an accessible and engaging way. The book is not organised according to Christian or Jewish canon order but by scholarly categories. This book also functions as a primer in responsible hermeneutics with excurses on a variety of interesting and helpful topics. It includes a glossary of historical, literary and scholarly terms. While intended for undergraduate students, this book is useful for lay people, pastors, non-specialist scholars and graduate students in Old Testament who desire a quick overview of Old Testament literature and scholarship.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Ein kurzer Wegweiser zur Hebräischen Bibel führt den Leser auf leicht zugängliche und gewinnende Weise in die Literatur des Alten Testamentes und die dazugehörige Forschungsgeschichte ein. Die Abhandlung ist nicht nach dem christlichen oder jüdischen Kanon aufgebaut, sondern folgt wissenschaftlichen Kategorien. Sie dient ebenfalls als Einführung in eine verlässliche Hermeneutik mit Exkursen zu zahlreichen interessanten und förderlichen Themen. Das Buch beinhaltet ein Glossar mit historischen, literarischen und wissenschaftlichen Termini. Ursprünglich für Studenten gedacht, stellt das Werk auch eine nützliche Hilfe für Laien, Pastoren, Wissenschaftler aus anderen Disziplinen und Jungakademiker im Bereich Altes Testament dar, die einen raschen Überblick über die Literatur und Forschung im AT gewinnen wollen.

* * * *

A Brief Guide to the Hebrew Bible by Hans Barstad introduces the reader to the literature of the Old Testament and the history of scholarship pertaining to it. It is intended to function as an undergraduate textbook but its usefulness extends well beyond that context. It differs from other comparable books is in its organisation. Most Old Testament surveys are arranged according to the order of the Christian canon or according to the tripartite Hebrew organisation of Torah, Prophets and Writings. Barstad chooses to present the literature according to scholarly categories: the Priestly History (Genesis through Numbers), the Deuteronomistic History (Deuteronomy through 2 Kings, excluding Ruth), the Chronicler history (1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah), Prophetic Literature, Poetry and Wisdom Literature (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs) and Novellas (Jonah, Ruth, Esther).

After a brief first chapter covering some preliminary issues (manuscript evidence, languages, the process of canonisation), Barstad divides his treatment of historical narrative into three groups: the Priestly, Deuteronomistic and Chronicler histories. In each chapter he not only summarises the individual books, but more significantly he deals with them as groups. Though he discusses Genesis through Numbers as a unified work under the title 'Priestly History', he makes a distinction between this title and the P source of the Documentary Hypothesis, of which he is sceptical. He regards Genesis through Numbers as a unified 'Priestly History' because the work as a whole seems to address priestly concerns. This chapter contains an excellent summary of Pentateuch scholarship since Wellhausen.

Chapters three and four, the Deuteronomistic and Chronicler histories, introduce the reader to standard scholarly opinions and their associated problems. The discussion of opinions pertaining to the Deuteronomistic History could, perhaps, have been a little more developed. Although Barstad disagrees with Noth's single redactor theory, he discusses neither post-Noth theories nor the current scepticism over the very existence of a Deuteronomistic History – but entire books are written for just that purpose. Instead, he points out some of the most important themes that distinguish the Deuteronomistic History, like covenant and holy war. Similarly, his focus in chapter four is on what unifies and differentiates the Chronicler history (including Ezra and Nehemiah) from the Deuteronomistic history.

The chapter on the Prophets is particularly praiseworthy. Barstad, a leading expert in Israelite and comparative ancient near eastern prophetic literature, ably guides the reader through issues of form, content, dating and historicity in an accessible way. This chapter is also an especially good introduction to the relevance of non-Israelite prophetic literature. Curiously, he includes the book of Daniel in this chapter. In the Christian canon, Daniel comes after Ezekiel, but the Hebrew canon places it in the Writings, not the Prophets. Daniel is unlike the other prophetic books in that it is made up of folk-tales and apocalyptic, not oracles against nations and other common prophetic genres. Furthermore, Jonah, a constituent member of the Twelve (which has been subject to final form criticism as a whole), is discussed in another chapter. Either decision could be justified by itself, but since Jonah is separated because of content, why is Daniel not also kept separate? Regardless of this, Barstad deals with both books intelligently in their respective places.

The chapter on Poetic and Wisdom Literature is, again, replete not only with up-to-date insights about the literature itself but also with a survey of the history of scholarship. Barstad is especially thorough in his treatment of the Psalms (23 pages). A short chapter covering Jonah, Ruth and Esther finishes the book.

More than a mere survey of the books of the Old Testament, this book also functions as a primer in responsible hermeneutics. Throughout, Barstad argues that older critical methods, while still applicable and helpful, are insufficient in and of themselves. The current diversity of methods, including especially final form literary analysis, is a necessary and beneficial development. The book is sprinkled with helpful excurses (not so named) on topics like the 'The Bible and Archaeology', 'The Deuteronomistic History and History' and 'Prophecy as a Phenomenon', which correct common misunderstandings and misuses of the Old Testament, and which are invariably fascinating. The end matter includes a glossary of historical, literary and scholarly terms which is a treasure in and of itself.

While intended for undergraduate students, *A Brief Guide to the Hebrew Bible* contains an astounding amount of information in comparatively little space, making it useful for laypeople, pastors, scholars not specialising in Old Testament and graduate students in Old Testament who want a quick and accessible overview of Old Testament scholarship. Barstad manages to encompass and distil the bewildering diversity of contemporary scholarship and present it in a way that is both understandable and engaging for the non-specialist.

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A Basic Introduction to Biblical Hebrew

Jo Ann Hackett

Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2010; xxv + 302 pp., £26.99, hb; ISBN 978-1-59856-028-2

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Jo Ann Hacketts *Elementare Einführung ins Bibelhebräische* stellt eine klar geschriebene und kreative Grammatik des Bibelhebräischen dar, die in einem Semester vermittelt werden kann. Sie bringt traditionelle Lehrmethoden auf den neuesten Stand und verbessert sie mit Hilfe origineller Beiträge. Hacketts Grammatik ist deduktiv, aber sie folgt einer natürlichen Anordnung und besitzt somit viele Vorteile eines induktiven Ansatzes. Die Autorin vermeidet es, den Studenten mit Fachausdrücken zu überfrachten, aber sie lehrt traditionell anspruchsvolle Konzepte, wenn dies einem besseren Verständnis dient. Zwei Besonderheiten dieser Grammatik bestehen zum einen in Hacketts Terminus für die *wayyiqtol* Form (konsekutives Präteritum) und zum anderen in der Anführung von Verbparadigmen, die mit der grammatischen Form der ersten Person beginnen statt der dritten. Diese ausgezeichnete Grammatik umfasst nützliche Appendices und eine CD-Rom mit Aussprachehilfen zu hebräischen Wörtern.

SUMMARY

Jo Ann Hackett's *A Basic Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* is a clearly written and fresh one semester Biblical Hebrew grammar, updating and improving traditional teaching methods with some original contributions. Hackett's grammar is deductive, but it is organised intuitively and so has many of the advantages of the inductive approach. She avoids overwhelming the student with technicalities but teaches traditionally advanced concepts when they aid comprehension. Two unique features of the grammar are Hackett's term for the *wayyiqtol* form (consecutive preterite) and the presentation of verb paradigms starting with first person forms instead of third person forms. This excellent grammar includes helpful appendices and a CD-ROM with audio pronunciations of Hebrew words.

RÉSUMÉ

Cette première introduction à l'hébreu biblique contient une présentation claire et novatrice de la grammaire de cette langue, mettant à jour et améliorant les méthodes traditionnelles d'enseignement avec des apports originaux. Cette grammaire est déductive, mais étant organisée intuitivement, présente bien des avantages de l'approche inductive. L'auteur a su éviter de submerger l'étudiant de points techniques mais expose les notions qu'on présente traditionnellement lorsque celles-ci aident à la compréhension. On peut signaler deux éléments originaux de cette grammaire : la désignation de la forme *wayyiqtol* comme un prétérit consécutif, et l'arrangement des paradigmes verbaux en commençant par la première personne au lieu de la troisième. Des appendices utiles et un CD-ROM donnant la prononciation des mots hébreux sous forme audio accompagnent cette excellente grammaire.

* * * *

Jo Ann Hackett's *A Basic Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* is an outstanding addition to the range of introductory Hebrew grammars. Clearly and concisely written, it approaches teaching Biblical Hebrew from an original (if, at times, idiosyncratic) angle, updating and improving traditional methods.

Hackett's grammar is designed for one semester (10 or 15 weeks, three or two lessons per week). Reading mechanics are covered in the first six chapters, nouns, pronouns and adjectives in chapters seven through eleven, and verbs from chapter twelve on. Other parts of speech are scattered throughout the book. The fact that the mechanics of reading and pronunciation occupy the first six chapters means that, if the schedule of two to three lessons per week were rigidly kept, this would take up two to three weeks, which seems excessive. As Hackett predicts in her introduction, however, instructors will likely want to cover more ground early on in order to make time for more difficult lessons later in the semester.

Verbs are introduced two-fifths of the way through. The problem is that the later the translation and creation of full sentences is delayed, the longer the student lacks the full advantage of inductive learning. The ideal grammar has the advantages of both deductive and inductive teaching methods: clear categories and structure so the student has a place to put the data mentally, and realistic translation situations as soon as possible, since retention and comprehension are best facilitated through application. This being said, the delay of the introduction of verbs in Hackett's grammar is less serious than it initially appears for two reasons. First, as mentioned, teachers will likely choose to cover the first several lessons more rapidly than later lessons. Second, the Hebrew noun system is relatively simple, and full sentences are possible using only nouns. Due to this, Hackett's grammar manages to teach the material as intuitively as possible for a deductive grammar while avoiding the pitfalls of an inductive grammar like that of Kittel, Hoffer and Wright, which fails to provide a mental structure (i.e. paradigms) until relatively late in the book.

Hackett avoids overwhelming the student with technicalities but does not shy away from teaching traditionally advanced concepts when they aid comprehension. When a rule has exceptions, Hackett notes this in the text teaching the rule and then relates the exception(s) in a footnote. This arrangement is advantageous in that the text is not bogged down with minutiae, but the student also is not left in the dark concerning something for which standard Hebrew pedagogy has no systematic means of teaching outside of an introductory grammar. Students of Hackett's grammar will be well prepared for more advanced discussion afterward, and will not be left constantly wondering whether a rule applies in a particular case. Knowing the exception ahead of time allows the rule to function as a genuine rule.

Hackett often chooses morphologically descriptive terms, like 'prefix conjugation' instead of syntactic terms like 'imperfect'. At times, her terminology is unique. For example, her name for the *wayyiqtol* form, often called converted imperfect or imperfect consecutive (both of which Hebraists consider inaccurate, but which stubbornly persist in introductory grammars anyway), is 'consecutive preterite': 'consecutive' because of the presence of a prefixed waw (with an aside to the student about the history of the form) and 'preterite' for the form's aspect/tense. Hackett confesses this uniqueness to the student and explains its reason. One can only hope that other Hebrew instructors will follow her lead.

Another area where Hackett is unique with a good reason is in the presentation of verbal paradigms. The standard way of presenting the Hebrew verb is in the order third, second, and first person forms, singular then plural. Instead, Hackett presents verbs in the order first, second, third person to more closely approximate the way other languages are learned. Furthermore, all charts are presented in a right-to-left direction to coincide with the direction of Hebrew reading. The only disadvantage to this organisation is its lack of cross-compatibility with other grammatical tools, which universally present third person first. However, its benefit for students learning Hebrew may outweigh any drawbacks.

The grammar contains eight appendices, including the standard paradigm lists and glossaries, as well as the text of Genesis 22:1-19 (used at several points in the grammar) and a set of guidelines to aid in the identification of weak roots. Also included is a CD-ROM that contains, among other things, the answers to the exercises, vocabulary lists and audio pronunciation of Hebrew words.

It is clear that this grammar was written by someone who is well acquainted with the specific problems of teaching and learning Biblical Hebrew. From its organisation to its up-to-date and even original terminology, Hackett's *A Basic Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* is a very welcome addition to the market of introductory Hebrew grammars.

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Judges
Word Biblical Commentary 8
Trent C. Butler

Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2009; xcii + 538, £29.99, hb.; ISBN 978-08499-0207-9

SUMMARY

Judges by Trent Butler is an outstanding addition both to the Word Biblical Commentary series and to scholarly literature on the book of Judges, being both very readable and rigorously scholarly. Butler's approach is conservative and up-to-date, arguing for an early composition date and treating Judges as a literary unit. The volume contains an extensive and helpful bibliography and appendix of tables. The occasional division of the text into units of three or more chapters makes parts of this volume cumbersome, and there are a number of typographical errors, but *Judges* remains exceedingly useful and scholarly.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce commentaire sur le livre des Juges vient ajouter un volume remarquable à la série du *Word Biblical Commentary*, ainsi qu'aux études académiques sur ce livre biblique. Il est à la fois très lisible et d'une grande rigueur scientifique. L'approche est conservatrice. L'information est bien à jour. L'auteur considère que la date de composition du livre est ancienne et l'aborde comme une unité littéraire. L'ouvrage comporte une bibliographie substantielle et des tables en appendice. Le texte est parfois divisé en sections de trois chapitres, voire davantage, ce qui peut rendre l'utilisation de ce commentaire malaisée, mais cela 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 soigneuse 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 Pannenbergs dar. Das Werk behandelt die jeweiligen doktrinellen 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 Pannenbergs 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 Pannenbergs trinitarischem Denken zurückweist. Der Autor zeigt eine durchgehend wohlwollende Lesart von Pannenbergs Theologie, zögert aber nicht, sorgfältig abgewogene Kritik zu formulieren. Während nicht alle Leser Pannenbergs mit seiner Bewertung übereinstimmen mögen, so wird doch dieser Band durch das Verständnis seines Autors von Pannenbergs Dogmatik äußerst wertvoll für jene, die dessen trinitarische Theologie noch weiter erforschen möchten.

* * * *

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 doktrinären 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 traditionelle 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.

* * * *

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 those not having read his previous work.

Haight's driving concern for a Christology both orthodox and compelling in a postmodern and religiously plural world runs closest to the surface in his refashioning of the doctrines of the incarnation and the atonement. Related to the doctrine of the incarnation, Haight contends that because religious pluralism puts 'severe pressure on the tradition's absolutistic understanding of Jesus Christ' (51) such tradition must be modified. For Haight, Christianity's ultimate credibility before the world hinges on the degree to which it articulates a non-competitive view of salvation, one that includes rather than excludes other religions. Thus, on his account, 'one cannot consider Jesus the exclusive historical mediator of salvation. Rather, God causes salvation through a variety of historical mediations' (91). By affirming other religious mediations Christian theology does not lower its estimate of Jesus but expands 'its relevance'; it recognises that other religions and other religious symbols mediate the '*same* transcendent source of salvation' (164, emphasis added) and that these mediations are 'potentially on the level of Jesus' (193).

One hears nothing here of the sheer uniqueness of the incarnation, the free, unrepeatable and utterly gratuitous self-giving of God in Christ. Rather, the incarnation is one instance of many potential 'divine mediations'. Haight certainly does not find grounds for this move either in the creedal tradition or in the Scriptural witness, but looks instead to the pressing situation of religious pluralism which 'mediates another broader horizon of consciousness', a horizon in which God's revelation cannot be contained by only one religious mediation such as Jesus (193).

Haight's account of the atonement is problematic if one hopes to retain a strong emphasis on divine initiative in Christ's suffering. Haight maintains that because suffering and death cannot in themselves 'be transformed into a good' Jesus' suffering cannot be necessary for salvation. In fact, it would have been 'better for Jesus and for us if he were not tortured or crucified' at all but had died a natural death (87). Thus, Haight contends that the formula of salvation 'by or through the cross is gravely misleading' for it misses the reality that Jesus' death was not salvific but *revelatory* of God's salvation (92). God saves 'in spite of and in the face of the cross', not because of or through the cross. Haight dismisses theologies of the cross that maintain a robust emphasis on divine initiative or God's capacity to use suffering redemptively as 'revelational positivism and a facile assertion of various formulas', nothing more than 'searching, symbolic language' of people trying to make sense of a crucified Messiah (94). Examples such as 1 John 1:7, 1 Peter 1:18, Revelation 1:15 and Mark 10:45 which testify both to divine initiative and the redemptive purposes of Christ's suffering are discounted as simply 'questionable.'

Those who share Haight's conviction that orthodox Christology needs significant revisions in order to engage in non-competitive dialogue with other religions will need to evaluate if what is *gained* on Haight's formulation outweighs what is lost. On the other hand, readers hoping to find here a robust confession of the sheer uniqueness of the incarnation, 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 – they will be consistently disappointed. For Haight, obligations such as these put Christian theology at odds *against* and unable to dialogue *with* a world increasingly characterised by religious pluralism and postmodern sensibilities and should thus be modified or discarded.

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