

tine empires in the first five centuries of the Common Era (CE). The ways in which ancient Jews participated or refrained from participating in this mobility become clear through a combination of literary, epigraphic and other material sources. She discusses the nature of these sources and the methodological challenges they pose, and she provides excellent surveys of research on mobility in Graeco-Roman and early Christian society and on Jewish mobility in antiquity.

Her focus is on mobility on the part of Jews in Hellenistic and Roman Palestine itself as well as between Palestine and the Diaspora, especially as far as Egypt, Syria, Rome and Babylonia are concerned. She describes the significance of this quest as follows: 'Whether, how, and to what extent particular segments of the ancient Jewish population were mobile has important implications and consequences for our understanding of the transmission of knowledge amongst Jews and the cultural exchange between Jews and non-Jews in antiquity' (1f).

In the *first part*, Hezser describes the material basis of Jewish travel in antiquity as consisting of spatial perceptions, the road network, the extent and significance of hostels, road stations and private hospitality, the means of land travel and the extent and significance of sea travel, in order to survey the travelling options which ancient Jews had. *Part two* addresses the literary presentation of mobility in ancient Jewish sources: first the narrative depiction of mobility in Jewish narrative sources and then the *halakhah* of travel, the halakhic regulations relating to particular aspects of travel. These regulations address 'the major issues and problems that Jewish travellers might have encountered during or as a consequence of their journeys. Since almost all aspects of daily life were religiously significant for rabbis, their advice for a proper religious lifestyle also included the situation of travellers, taking cultic, economic, and family aspects into account' (197). The author concludes that 'The very phenomenon of such an extensive and intricate discussion of travel-related issues indicates that mobility constituted an important aspect of daily life for ancient rabbis and their contemporaries' (197). After this, Hezser studies the references to travel between the land of Israel and Babylonia in Late Antiquity, the extent and significance of Jewish pilgrimage in antiquity, the mobility of women and the relation between travel and trade.

The concluding chapter addresses the close link between 'Mobility and the Rabbinic Movement'. Hezser notes that

the very transmission, collection, and eventual composition of rabbinic works is based on mobility and networking amongst rabbis within Palestine and between Palestine and Babylonia in late antiquity. Rabbinic society in particular and Jewish society in general can be understood properly only if mobility is recognized as the basis of communication and intellectual exchange amongst Jews and between Jews

and non-Jews (3f).

The volume closes with a bibliography and an index of references and subjects. It offers a fresh, and excellent, detailed analysis of ancient Jewish travel that leaves little to critique. In addition to discussing ancient Judaism, its widespread mobility and its significance for the rabbinic literature, Hezser's study also sheds light on the mobility involved in Christian mission in the first six centuries. One might add most of the earliest Christian missionary efforts to the picture, as they were undertaken by Jewish Christians, first and foremost among them Saul of Tarsus. The infrastructure and conditions of land and sea travel in the Near East would have been similar, to a large extent, for all inhabitants of the region.

The infrastructure and conditions described here would also have applied to Christian pilgrims travelling in the Near East during the period surveyed here, in particular to and within Palestine; for a recent survey see S. Penth, *Die Reise nach Jerusalem: Pilgerfahrten ins Heilige Land*. Geschichte erzählt 26 (Darmstadt: Primus, 2010); for a collection of the most ancient reports of pilgrims see H. Donner, *Pilgerfahrt ins Heilige Land: Die ältesten Berichte christlicher Palästina-pilger (4. -7. Jahrhundert)*, 2. Aufl. (Stuttgart: KBW, 2002). They also affected bishops and other Christian leaders travelling within or through Palestine, synods, councils, etc.

It would be intriguing to apply the material of this study of Jewish mobility to the existence and development of the Christian canon: could one – to play on Hezser's words quoted above – claim similarly that the *very transmission, collection and eventual composition of the canon is based on mobility and networking amongst early Christian communities and leaders in the Eastern Mediterranean in the first two centuries*? The same issue may be raised regarding the rise and development of early Catholicism and of later Christian orthodoxy.

Hezser recently served as the editor of the excellent *Oxford Handbook of Jewish Daily Life in Roman Palestine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) which offers the same benefits.

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**Herman Bavinck: Pastor, Churchman,
Statesman, and Theologian**

Ron Gleason

New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing
Company, 2010, xvi + 511pp,
£22.99, pb, ISBN 978-1-59638-080-6

RÉSUMÉ

Voici la première biographie couvrant la totalité de la vie de Herman Bavinck, l'auteur de la *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek* récemment traduite en anglais. L'auteur explore l'arrière-

plan familial de Bavinck à la recherche des facteurs qui ont façonné sa vie et sa pensée. Il considère la formation de Bavinck comme théologien à l'université de Leyde, dont la théologie était libérale. Il s'intéresse à l'activité de Bavinck comme pasteur, enseignant de la théologie et homme d'Église. Il présente dans le détail les relations parfois difficiles de Bavinck avec Abraham Kuyper. Un style quelque peu inélegant et un travail éditorial peu soigné rendent l'ouvrage moins agréable à lire qu'on aurait pu le souhaiter. Il n'a cependant pas d'équivalent en langue anglaise sur le marché. Ce travail de recherche soigneusement effectué fournit une mine d'informations biographiques détaillées.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dies ist die erste umfassende Biographie von Herman Bavinck, Autor von *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek* (kürzlich auf Englisch übersetzt unter dem Titel *Reformed Dogmatics*). Ron Gleason untersucht Bavincks Familienhintergrund und versucht dabei, die Faktoren zu entdecken, die sein Leben und Denken geprägt haben. Er schildert Bavincks theologische Ausbildung an der theologisch liberalen Leidener Universität. Besondere Aufmerksamkeit widmet er dessen Werk als Pfarrer, theologischer Ausbilder und Kirchenmann. Gleason beschreibt Bavincks zuweilen schwierige Beziehung mit Abraham Kuyper. Der schwerfällige Stil und die unzulängliche Ausgabe schmälern den Wert der Lektüre dieses Werkes. Jedoch ist Gleasons Unterfangen die einzige, umfassende Biographie auf Englisch, die es über Bavinck gegenwärtig im Angebot gibt. Seine sorgfältig erforschte Arbeit bietet einen Reichtum detaillierter biographischer Information.

SUMMARY

This is the first full-length biography of Herman Bavinck, author of *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek* (recently translated in English as *Reformed Dogmatics*). Ron Gleason delves into Bavinck's family background in an attempt to discover the factors that shaped his life and thought. He discusses Bavinck's theological training at the theologically liberal Leiden University. Attention is given to his work as a pastor, theological educator and churchman. Gleason details Bavinck's sometimes difficult relationship with Abraham Kuyper. Inelegancies of style and poor editing make the work a less enjoyable read than it could have been. However, Gleason's effort is currently the only one on offer when it comes to a full-length Bavinck biography in English. His carefully researched work provides a wealth of detailed biographical information.

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Readers of *Reformed Dogmatics* by Herman Bavinck (1854-1921), recently published in English translation, will understandably want to acquaint themselves with the man behind those four majestic volumes of theology. However, apart from the biographical sketch that forms part of the introduction to each volume of *Reformed Dogmatics*, little information on Bavinck's life has been available in English. Ron Gleason has made good on that lacuna with this full-length biographical study.

Gleason delves into Herman Bavinck's family background in an attempt to discover the factors that shaped his life and thought. His father, Jan Bavinck, was a Separatist pastor, serving various Christian Reformed Church congregations over the course of his ministerial career. When the time came for Herman to undertake theological study it was expected that he would enrol at the Separatist theological seminary in Kampen. He caused something of a stir in Separatist circles, then, by electing instead to study at Leiden University, a bastion of theological liberalism.

How did Bavinck manage to leave Leiden with his Reformed faith intact? Gleason suggests that his upbringing among the Separatists gave him a thorough grounding in the Scriptures and Reformed theology. This is no doubt true, but the situation was a little more complicated than that. Gleason makes no mention of the crisis of faith that Bavinck experienced while at Leiden! It would have been interesting to learn how Bavinck recovered from this so that he emerged from his theological studies capable of exposing the failings of liberalism in the light of the historic Reformed faith. His ability in this area is amply displayed in *Reformed Dogmatics*.

After graduating from Leiden with a doctorate, Bavinck became pastor of a Separatist congregation in Franeker. He was only in pastoral ministry for a year, but his time as pastor had a formative influence on his work as a theology professor. Bavinck served at the Separatist seminary in Kampen from 1882-1902 and then at the Free University of Amsterdam from 1902 until his untimely death in 1921.

Much of the biography is taken up with Bavinck's role in the ecclesiastical politics of his day. Central to this was the union of the Christian Reformed Church and the *Doleantie* Churches in 1892. The *Doleantie* Churches were a reformist grouping that had broken away from the Dutch Reformed State Church. Under the leadership of Abraham Kuyper they took a strong line against liberalising tendencies. The union, however, was not a happy one. There were differences of emphasis in the two bodies that formed the united Church while strong characters on both sides vied for supremacy. A particularly intractable issue was the proposed merger of the theological seminary at Kampen and the Free University in Amsterdam. Bavinck was heavily involved in the tortuous and ultimately futile negotiations.

While Herman Bavinck is the hero of this book, Abraham Kuyper is cast as something approaching the villain of the piece. Apart from an occasional lapse, Bavinck is presented as a man of patient integrity and godly wisdom. Kuyper is not without his virtues, but he comes over as a slightly sinister figure. An unflattering picture emerges of a man who was capable of high handed imperiousness and low political cunning. Although Bavinck and Kuyper often worked closely together, they became increasingly uneasy allies and eventually fell out over Bavinck's scheme for the merger

of the Theological Seminary and the Free University. While Kuyper undoubtedly had his faults, Gleason's account seems one-sided at times.

Gleason concentrates on Bavinck the ecclesiastical politician and gives few glimpses of his interior life. Little is said about him as a husband and father, or his personal walk with God. Readers of *Reformed Dogmatics* might have liked to know how the theologian went about writing his *magnum opus*. More discussion of Bavinck's special contribution to Reformed theology and an account of his key theological ideas would not have gone amiss. A good biography will give readers the feeling that they have come as near as possible to getting to know the subject personally. A compelling psychological portrait will bring the subject to life as the pages turn. Gleason gets close, but he doesn't quite get under Bavinck's skin.

In places the work suffers from an inelegant style and poor editing. Gleason's attempts at humour are sometimes ill-judged, such as the 'joke' about the discovery of gin bottles belonging to Bavinck's alcoholic predecessor as pastor at Franeker. The occasional Americanism may grate, such as 'slam dunk' (92) and 'However, this was a *huge* however...' (246). Gleason intimates that he will say something about the death of Herman's brother, Johan Gerrit, in chapter 7 (152) but an account of Johan's passing is held off until chapter 8 (203). The exact words used by Gleason to describe Bavinck's mindset on page 172 are repeated in the context of Kuyper's advice to Bavinck on the following page. The writer sometimes lapses into cliché: 'Both sides had thrown down the gauntlet; a line had been drawn in the sand' (253). Such blemishes detract from the reader's enjoyment of the book.

Gleason's effort is currently the only one on offer when it comes to a full-length Bavinck biography in English. His carefully researched work provides a wealth of detailed biographical information. That said, one could perhaps have wished for a slightly more insightful and better written account of the life of the great Dutch Reformed dogmatist.

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Creator Spirit: The Holy Spirit and the Art of Becoming Human

Steven R. Guthrie

Grand Rapids: Baker Academic Press, 2011,
v + 222 pp., £14.99, pb, ISBN 978-0-8010-2921-9

SUMMARY

Creator Spirit offers a popular discussion of the relationship of art and spirituality to Christian theology. Drawing from Athanasius's pneumatology, the author uses a cross-disciplinary approach to rethink the relationship between the Holy Spirit and artistic practice. The volume employs

a biblical theology of the Spirit to confirm, question and contest various views of how art and the artistic process are inherently spiritual. The result is a constructive work that explores the Spirit's power to restore humanity, inspire creativity and transform the world. The volume is commended for its relevant, clear and compelling account of the Spirit's activity in art and culture.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet ouvrage traite de la relation de l'art et de la spiritualité avec la théologie. Partant de la pneumatologie d'Athanasius, l'auteur adopte une approche pluridisciplinaire pour repenser la relation entre le Saint-Esprit et la pratique artistique. Il se fonde sur une théologie biblique de l'Esprit pour évaluer divers points de vue sur la manière dont l'art et l'œuvre artistique peuvent être considérés comme spirituels. Il en résulte un travail intéressant qui considère la puissance de l'Esprit pour restaurer l'humanité, susciter la créativité et transformer le monde. On peut recommander cet ouvrage pour son traitement clair, pertinent et convaincant de l'activité de l'Esprit dans les domaines de l'art et de la culture.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Das Buch bietet der christlichen Theologie einen populärwissenschaftlichen Diskussionsbeitrag zur Beziehung von Kunst und Spiritualität mit der Theologie. Der Autor bezieht sich auf die Pneumatologie von Athanasius und benutzt einen interdisziplinären Ansatz, um neu über die Beziehung zwischen Heiligem Geist und künstlerischer Praxis nachzudenken. Das Werk wendet eine biblische Theologie des Heiligen Geistes an, um unterschiedliche Ansichten darüber, dass Kunst und der künstlerische Prozess genuin geistlicher Natur sind, zu bestätigen, in Frage zu stellen und zu bestreiten. Das Ergebnis ist eine konstruktive Arbeit, welche die Macht des Heiligen Geistes erforscht, wenn es darum geht, Menschen wiederherzustellen, Kreativität zu inspirieren und die Welt zu verändern. Das Buch verdient Lob wegen seiner relevanten, klaren und überzeugenden Berichterstattung über das Wirken des Heiligen Geistes in Kunst und Kultur.

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The perennial association of aesthetics with spirituality is given a pneumatological treatment in this masterfully clear cross-disciplinary exploration of the relationship between art and Christian theology. Taking Athanasius as his chief source, Steven Guthrie demonstrates the close relationship between Christian pneumatology and many of the questions surrounding the current discussion on the relationship between art and theology. The result is one of the most relevant, readable and compelling treatments of theology and art in recent literature.

Guthrie introduces the subject in the first chapter by examining the relationship between the idea of art as ineffable and the mysterious work of the Spirit. Surveying Schleiermacher's *Gefühl*, Calvin Seerveld's art as allusivity and Robert Wunthrow's description of artists as those who 'say the unsayable', Guthrie explores the