

Volume X Number 1

Spring 1987

# KING'S

---

# Theological Review

---

The Playwright as Theologian: Peter Shaffer's <i>Amadeus</i> <i>Colin Gunton</i>	1
What is Changed in Virtue of Christ? <i>Anthony Baxter</i>	5
Ambiguity in the Marcan Narrative <i>Francis Watson</i>	11
Pentecostal, Charismatic or What's in a Name? <i>Graham Baldwin</i>	17
Theology in Anthropological Perspective? <i>Christoph Schwobel</i>	21
BOOK REVIEWS	26
FACULTY NEWS Insert	

---

## BOOK REVIEWS

### Jeremiah I-XXV

William McKane. T. T. Clark. Pp. ccxxii + 658. £24.95 (hardback)

### Jeremiah

R.P. Carroll. SCM Press. Pp. x + 874. £20.00

"The dearth of English commentaries on Jeremiah in the past sixty years is hard to explain." So wrote R.P. Carroll in 1981, in his first major study of the book, *From Chaos to Covenant*. This lack, which meant that Jeremiah has long been the only substantial Old Testament book for which no satisfactory commentary was available, was in some ways made more irksome by the wealth of detailed studies of particular aspects of the book, often interesting, indeed impressive, in themselves, but needing the context of a commentary on the whole book to be assessed in their appropriate larger setting.

Now, as is the way of these things, two major works have appeared within weeks of one another. (Indeed, it seems as if a flood of commentaries may now be anticipated, for more recently there has appeared W.L. Holladay's work on Jer. 1-25 in the *Hermeneia* series; and Professor Clements has completed his study which will appear in the *Interpretation Bible Commentaries*. But these must await other assessments.) Both of our present authors comes from Scotland: William McKane of St. Andrews has completed the first of what will be a two-volume International Critical Commentary, and Dr Carroll himself, who teaches at Glasgow, is the contributor to the Old Testament Library series. A few words first about the characteristics of each work, then an attempt at assessment.

McKane is foursquare within the exacting scholarly traditions of the International Critical Commentary. He plunges straight in with a detailed consideration of the features of the ancient versions, the Greek in particular. The versions are regarded as primary witnesses to the ongoing exegetical concern of the Jeremiah tradition, and so the character of the different versions requires and receives detailed analysis. As McKane himself justly claims, "No modern commentary on Jeremiah has devoted such attention to the ancient versions". The way in which our text of Jeremiah is best understood as an expansion of a shorter Hebrew text underlying the LXX is set out in careful detail.

Full consideration is then given to those proposals which have attempted either to detect a Deuteronomistic structure underlying the present form of the book (so W. Thiel), or to trace the words of the prophet himself in considerable detail (so H. Weippert). Neither is held to be satisfactory; instead we are led to think of a 'rolling corpus': "small pieces of existing text trigger exegesis or commentary", so that the present book of Jeremiah embodies commentary on the earlier elements of the tradition. In the last part of his introduction, McKane dismisses as a false trail attempts to recover the contents of the scroll in the famous story in ch. 36; and is very severe on attempts by Reventlow and others to dismiss the 'historical Jeremiah' from the laments or confessions.

All of these points are followed up with detailed references; by contrast the last section of the Introduction, 'Exegesis and Theology', occupies just two pages, though the former of these aspects is of course more prominent in the commentary itself. On theology, however, McKane takes a firm line. He has recently written an article entitled 'Is there a place for Theology in the exegesis of the Hebrew Bible?' which gave a strongly negative answer to his own question; and here the same principle is applied: "the exegete of a Hebrew text is dealing only with the grammar of a human document, and not immediately with 'God' or with a hinterland of truth claims". One can imagine vigorous debate arising from such an assertion.

Following the introduction, there is an extensive bibliography, but it is confined to works cited in the text; other works which McKane has presumably not found helpful are simply ignored. Greek and Hebrew are not transliterated (though other Semitic languages are). In short this is a piece of technical scholarship aimed almost exclusively at an academic readership.

Carroll also shows himself fully aware of the technical literature, but, as might be expected from the nature of the series to which he is contributing, he also recognises the need to awaken the interests of a wider readership. He focuses straightaway on the contrast between, on the one hand, the 'historical Jeremiah' approach, which has sought to see in the book the record of an individual's sufferings and emotions in a time of personal and national crisis, and, on the other, an assessment of the book which regards it as the end-result of an elaborate editorial process, drawing its material from a variety of contexts. From time to time in Carroll's work, there is a feeling that he has it in mind to *épater les bourgeois*, and this is especially so in the manner of his rejection of the traditional view that we can have access to the inner thoughts of the individual Jeremiah. In the section entitled 'Function, setting and date' the limitations of our knowledge are strongly emphasised; interests from various later contexts may well have supplied the impetus for the shaping of particular sections of the book. (The bitter hostility to 'prophets' as a class is taken as an illustration of this point.) In other words, no straightforward reading of Jeremiah will bring out all the nuances of the book; it is multi-layered. Here the influence of modern literary studies is evident. Like McKane, Carroll provides a full bibliography, and here there is a more comprehensive coverage, listing many works with whose approach the author will not have been in sympathy.

Detailed discussion of the commentary on individual sections is clearly not feasible, but perhaps one section may be taken as a representative sample: 10. 1-16, the section in many ways reminiscent of Isaiah 40-55, mocking the useless idols and proclaiming the incomparable power of Yahweh. It also contains the only verse in the whole prophetic canon which is in Aramaic (10.11). McKane provides his own translation of this unit, as he does throughout; and then he is primarily concerned with how the text reached its present form, and assesses it as a passage "built up by piecemeal contributions". Then detailed investigation of each verse follows, with main attention being given to textual difficulties and extensive discussion of the ancient versions and the

possible implications of their readings for the Hebrew text. The Aramaic verse is regarded as a gloss, with no real attention being given to the reasons for the inclusion of such a gloss.

Carroll's text is the RSV, which is printed at the head of each section; textual notes are provided, with the Hebrew and Greek transliterated. The comment begins with an overview of the section, rejecting Jeremianic authorship and setting out a likely background in the Babylonian period. The Aramaic verse may be a gloss, but could also be quasi-magical incantation directed against foreign cults. Carroll does not draw back from noting the chauvinistic nature of the poem, and the way in which paganism is misrepresented. Many of the condemnations could as well have been directed against Israel's own cult of Yahweh. As will be seen, this is a commentary which is not overawed by the fact that its subject is Scripture, and this vigour runs all the way through. (One is sometimes even tempted to explore further than one had intended; and of how many commentaries can that be said?) Inevitably there will be occasions when Carroll seems to go against the evidence, but caution is not the only virtue in a commentator! At the practical level, the limitation implicit in this, of course, is that this work may be less helpful than some others if the user's primary purpose is to find factual information or elucidation of a particular phrase. Carroll's style is vigorous, though just occasionally obscurities creep in; it is not quite clear what is meant, for example, when we are told that the tradition is 'syncitial in nature'.

It will be clear that there are enough basic differences between the two books for them to stand independently, McKane essentially as a work of reference, Carroll as a literary study in its own right. McKane has produced a remarkable example of a type of critical scholarship which one might have thought to be almost extinct. It is certainly right to be impressed by the erudition which underlies his book, though the question is bound to arise how long such an approach can survive. Carroll is more emphatically of the late twentieth century, and his literary allusions and his whole frame of discourse are very much in line with contemporary trends in biblical scholarship. For myself I shall be pleased to have both on my bookshelves: I envisage turning to McKane when seeking detailed information on literary or historical points, to Carroll when I want to get to grips with the issues raised by understanding an ancient text in a modern world.

Richard Coggins

### **The Old Testament: An Introduction**

Rolf Rendtorff. SCM Press, 1985. Pp. xi + 308. £12.50.

There are already so many 'Introductions to the Old Testament' that one groans a little at the sight of yet another. Not for long, however: for this one is really outstanding. It does not only provide the information for which the genre of 'Introduction' exists – dates and places of composition, authorship, sources – but, in effect, a complete guide to every aspect of Old Testament study apart from the theological ideas (and even these are not

neglected). The author first traces the history of Israel as the books of the Old Testament make it available to us, with comments on modern critical reconstructions, in a section entitled 'The Old Testament as a Source of the History of Israel'. Secondly, he provides an excellent brief account of the growth of the literature of ancient Israel, from the small units of oral tradition to the finished books of the Old Testament, not neglecting their 'final form' and even including a consideration of their canonical arrangement as the last stage in their literary development. This is possibly the first major German work to take note of the 'canonical approach' of B.S. Childs, and incidentally to spot the small but precious baby in the rather excessive quantity of tepid bathwater of Childs's theories. Finally, the bulk of the book presents the traditional material of an 'Introduction' in the form of a book-by-book account of the Old Testament literature, following the order of the Hebrew canon.

Rendtorff is a mine of information about current scholarly opinion, as well as contributing a good deal of his own, especially though not exclusively on the formation of the Pentateuch, where his own views are concisely sketched but not allowed to dominate the discussion. Best of all, he does not let bibliographical detail obscure the main lines of the discussion. The reader is referred to all major books and articles on the issues concerned, but still gets a clear impression of the whole. The layout of the book is a very strong point, with a creative use of inset paragraphs in a smaller typeface, good and plentiful section-divisions, and a mass of marginal cross-references which make the book virtually a small encyclopedia. A pleasant surprise for the English reader is that the author frequently refers to English-language books and articles, and is also at home with French and Israeli scholarship; while the style is clear and readable, thanks to John Bowden's usual skill as a translator. The work sets new standards in its field, and deserves to be widely used.

John Barton

### **Studying the Old Testament: From Tradition to Canon**

Annemarie Ohler. T. T. Clark, 1985. Pp. 388. £17.50 (hardback).

Much attention has been given in recent years to appropriate means of making the riches of the Old Testament more accessible to the intelligent reader without any formal background of study. The literary genre known as 'Introduction' has always been somewhat anomalous, implying a range of questions and problems that would never have occurred to most readers to ask. With such issues in mind Dr Ohler attempted in the early 1970s to sketch out a new approach, by way of the great variety of literary forms to be found in the Old Testament. Her work was first published in two volumes in 1972/3; now it has appeared in English translation.

Her method is to begin by outlining some of the distinctive features of Hebrew thought and language, and then in the four main chapters which follow she

analyses different literary forms, beginning with the smallest units and finally reaching the complete Old Testament as itself a single literary unit. Each chapter is prefaced by a specimen passage which is discussed in such a way as to focus upon the characteristic problems: Exod.3:10–15 for the distinctiveness of Hebrew; Gen.11:1–9; 32:22–32; Exod.20:1–21; and Ps.31 as individual literary forms; Ezek.1:1–28; Prov.8 as illustrative of the interrelation between personality and ongoing tradition; Gen.12:1–4 for the larger literary units (in this case 'J'); and Isa.7 for the Old Testament as a whole.

So much one could discover from the table of contents and some judicious dipping. But the basic question is, of course: does it work? Does this method of approach actually make 'studying the Old Testament' a more enjoyable or illuminating experience? Regretfully, one is forced to say that for most people the answer is likely to be No.

There are several reasons for this. Some can scarcely be laid at Dr Ohler's door. There is a strong feeling that she has not been well served by either her translator or her publishers. The translation is never flowing, and at times positively opaque: "The Israelitic custom of seeing the whole future people summed up in the ancestor expresses itself even in the explanation of such sagas as do not materialise in individual form characteristics of collectives" (p.94) – an extreme but not an isolated example. Even when the translation is accurate and readable the risk of misprints remains: footnotes wrongly numbered or omitted entirely, page numbers left out, mistakes, most of them obvious but some which defy correction – what can have been intended when the Deuteronomists are described as "the second gap of historians" (p.297)? From publishers with a high academic reputation, this is very disappointing.

But even when these mechanical problems have been overcome all is not well. At times the book seems to be aimed at beginning students with little previous knowledge; elsewhere the tightly-knit and allusive argument presupposes considerable prior acquaintance with the text. The basic approach is an interesting one, but does not always seem to have been fully worked out, so that the reasons for the placing of some of the material are not clear. Possibly the English title may add to the confusion here: *Studying the Old Testament* suggests, as does the blurb, a book for "college students and all those in the churches who want to read the Old Testament intelligibly (*sic*)"; the title of the German original, *Gattungen im Alten Testament*, conveys a different and more accurate impression.

One other criticism is necessary. The delay since the original was published gives parts of the present book a very old-fashioned appearance. To take three examples: there is no reference to the current debate on the composition of the Pentateuch, JEDP being virtually taken for granted; there is strong emphasis on the individual experience of prophets such as Jeremiah, with no consideration of the questions raised by this type of interpretation; the section on the final shape of the Old Testament does not allude to 'canonical criticism'.

These criticisms may seem harsh. If so, it is at least partly because of a feeling of frustration. Could some of

the points mentioned above have been handled more satisfactorily, this could have been a very worthwhile project. Many of the individual sections are excellent: for example, the ones on the sagas of Genesis; the relation of Israel's laws to those of surrounding states; and the constructive role of redactors in the development of prophetic and other books. The pity is that these very interesting sections are only too liable to be lost in the larger context.

Richard Coggins

## The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and the New Testament

J.H. Charlesworth. SNTS Monograph Series 54. CUP. Pp. xxiv + 213. £19.50

During the Watergate investigations one prestigious participant repeatedly said, "I *caveat* that". Letters to the media brought comfort in displaying that there were still around purists who, if by nothing else, were at least shocked by the abuse of the Latin language. But how is the purist to survive in the modern world? Can a passion for precise definition and for a clear demarcation of the limits of our knowledge master great projects and persuade the multitudes? This book will suggest both positive and negative answers.

For the purist, to find in a *monograph* series not just the text of two public lectures or the minutes of a series of seminars, but both, will come as a double shock. The minutes (certainly not a *monologue* if now perhaps a *monograph*) represent the passion for precision. Recording the debates of the SNTS Pseudepigrapha Seminars between 1976 and 1983, they reveal the limits of scholarly consensus on subjects such as *The Testaments of the XII Patriarchs*, *The Books of Enoch*, Jewish use of terms such as Messiah, and other issues arising from the Jewish non-canonical literature of approximately the 3rd century BCE to the 2nd century CE commonly known as the Pseudepigrapha. Those whose interest in the area is real but not so specialised as to make them participants in the seminars or in the technical scholarly literature will gain here a sense of the variety in scholarly opinion, the areas of dissent and consent and the trends in the debate, but, as with any minutes, they will miss the passionate argument, the careful proof and counter-proof and the sense of general support or rejection.

Those who prefer the wide sweep and the excitement of the story will turn to the first three chapters which are adapted from two plenary addresses given in 1983 to learned bodies. Here they will find first a concise, somewhat triumphalistic, historical survey of the modern study of the Pseudepigrapha with examples of those issues in the study of first century Judaism and Christian origins which must now be reexamined in the light of new editions and research. Chapters 2 and 3 range more widely over questions of methodology and of relating the Pseudepigrapha to the NT and other contemporary Jewish or gnostic thought. A consistent theme is the crucial importance of the Pseudepigrapha particularly as that literature reveals the multiformity of 1st century Judaism. This leads to a critique of E.P. Sanders's search

for the “essence” of Judaism (in defiance of Sanders’s own disavowal of that term), although Charlesworth himself is willing later to describe the *Zeitgeist* of early Judaism. Rightly, he rejects the use of such terms as normative, sectarian or hellenistic Judaism in our period and perceptively recognises that an awareness of that diversity should caution us against too simple a picture of what might be early or late in early Christian thought. There is a breadth and verve here which may prove attractive to beginners in the subject and counter the assumptions of older studies of the period.

The purist will fare less well here. The scholarly caution and diversity of the “Minutes” are lost behind “What specialists now affirm”. The rhetorical sweep is too florid; of the period from 1914, under the subheading “The World-wide psychosis” – “A great cloud not only obscured any research on the Pseudepigrapha, it threatened to obliterate civilization” and, later, “The Pseudepigrapha contained writings not to be understood, but to be mined (or to put it perhaps too harshly, not to be loved but to be used as Dinah was by Shechem; f. Gen 34:2, Levi 6:5-8 (*sic*, i.e. *TLevi*))”. Latin is used, only to be abused: scholarship of the 40s and 50s affirmed the legitimacy of searching not only for the *ipsissima verba Jesu* but also for ‘*bruta facta* in Jesus’ life’. The glossary intended to interpret for the general reader the necessary *termini technici* ((Latin) ‘technical terms’!) of scholarship explains *bruta facta* as ‘(Latin) indicates brute, uninterpreted facts’. Not in my dictionary! There are historical errors too; Erasmus is credited with an edition of the Greek text of 4 Maccabees completed in 1517 and published in 1524. The reference must be to his Latin paraphrase of those years, based on an earlier Latin text. Unfortunately, examples could be multiplied and, distracted by these, the purist may lose confidence in the grounds for enthusiasm.

Charlesworth himself is evidence that the concern for detail and the vision of the whole can coexist in one person. He has edited the new edition of *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (DLT 1983,85) which will prove an indispensable tool for English speaking study of the literature, and has been tireless in his espousal of its cause. That cause is less well served by this volume. “Language is a vehicle, almost never destination” quotes the author in his final paragraph; “but”, responds the purist, “only the well-tuned vehicle may be sure of reaching its destination”.

J.M. Lieu

## Jesus and the Kingdom of God

G.R. Beasley-Murray. Paternoster/Eerdmans, 1986. Pp. x + 446. £19.95.

As the largest and most recent book on a key subject, this is bound to be regarded as the standard work in succession to the well-tryed texts of Schnackenburg, Perrin, Ladd, *et al.* In the wide range of its interaction with scholarly literature, and in the detailed documentation of the exegetical issues discussed, it is well worthy to fill this role. But before ordering it as the basic undergraduate text-book on the subject, theological teachers would be

well advised to recognise that this is not quite the same type of book.

It begins traditionally enough, with four brief chapters on the Old Testament background to “kingdom of God” language, and four more on the same theme in early Judaism. But even at this point the section headings warn of a particular focus which will determine much of the following discussion, in that the theme is specified as “the *coming* of God”. The focus is on theophany and on eschatological “coming”, rather than on the theme of God as king in the present situation, and this focus on “coming” remains throughout the book.

The rest of the work then consists not of a discussion of *themes* in the New Testament relating to the kingdom of God, but of a detailed study of a large number of individual sayings or brief passages from the Synoptic Gospels (only), each of which is separately discussed. While reference is frequently made to the context of the saying under discussion, this approach has the unfortunate result, in contrast with much recent scholarship, that sayings or pericopes are viewed more as isolated units of tradition than as parts of a literary whole.

There are few attempts at summary of the findings, or at an overview of the material, except for a final concluding chapter of only 7 pages (based on 266 pages, plus copious notes, of exegesis of NT passages!). This is not a book which makes concessions to the skim-reader.

The one overt attempt at systematisation is in the division of the exegetical studies into six chapters. Two deal with the sayings and parables (respectively) “on the coming of the kingdom of God in the present”, and two with the sayings and parables (respectively) “on the coming of the kingdom of God in the future”. Such a division immediately sets the agenda in terms of the classical “realised v. futurist” debate, and leaves little room for the more fluid approach proposed by Perrin with his “tensive symbol” language, which aimed (helpfully in my view) to get away from the idea that “the kingdom of God” can be identified with any specific time, event or state of affairs and thus to move the debate away from the “chronology” of the coming of the kingdom of God.

Of the two remaining chapters, the first deals with Jesus as the Son of Man. This too is not yet another general discussion of this over-worked subject (there is no attempt to survey all the recent “Son of Man books” – for which relief much thanks!), but an exegesis of the Synoptic Son of Man sayings, whether or not they have any overt connection with the kingdom of God (which of course, notoriously, few do). The omission here of any reference to the relevant Johannine material is strange, for if “kingdom of God” is barely a Johannine theme, “the Son of Man” certainly is.

To devote nearly 100 pages in a book on the kingdom of God to the Son of Man is a calculated challenge to the assumption still dominant in German scholarship that the two themes represent separate areas of early Christian thought. Beasley-Murray demonstrates effectively that Jesus understood his role in the light of Daniel’s vision of a son of man who is “the representative and mediator of the kingdom of God”. Indeed the importance of Daniel

7, and the propriety of interpreting the son of man there as an individual eschatological figure, not merely an image for the people of God, is a recurring theme throughout the book.

The final chapter deals with 'discourses of Jesus on the parousia', viz the 'Q apocalypse' and Mark 13. On the latter the author is surprisingly brief, in view of his considerable previous writing on the subject, and at this point I found his work least satisfying. He dismisses the expressed setting of the discourse (vv. 2-4) very much to the sidelines in his account of its focus. On 13:30 he concludes uneasily that it must refer to the events of vv. 24-27, which he interprets of the parousia, but that Mark put it here to refer to the fall of the temple. This does not say much for Mark's competence as a compiler.

The overall thrust of the book will offer little comfort to those who are in the habit of talking about 'the Kingdom' (a misleading abbreviation into which the author also sometimes falls) as primarily a matter of ethical, social or political change in this world. The author understands the kingdom of God (which he helpfully paraphrases as 'the saving sovereignty') as a term with primarily apocalyptic connotations. It is a 'divine intervention that brings about judgment and redemption'. It comes in the totality of Jesus' action as Son of Man, which is focused in his death, resurrection and parousia as an inseparable sequence, but its coming marks the end (however extended in actual chronology) rather than a new beginning. This is why for Jesus the parousia was always *near*, and this is no cause for embarrassment to his followers however long the delay, because 'near expectation is endemic to hope itself'.

This is a book full of good things for all who appreciate rigorous exegetical discussion. Its breadth of scholarship is impressive, and it is unusual to find an English author who pays far more attention to German scholarship than to British. It will prove an invaluable work of reference for the exegesis of specific passages (including many that do not directly refer to the kingdom of God). But its structure is such that it will not be easy to use as a systematic guide to what Jesus meant by 'the kingdom of God'.

R.T. France

## Four for the Gospel Makers

Linda Foster. SCM, 1986. Pp. xii + 127. £3.95

This is an excellent book, and strongly to be recommended. It makes good sense of the kind of study of the gospels that has been going on for about two hundred years, but seldom seems to have reached further than some educational establishments (i.e. it does not yet appear to have entered the life of the churches).

Linda Foster asks questions, and points us in the direction to look for the answers: Why did people tell stories about Jesus? Why did they put together the individual stories and make larger collections? Why is there more than one gospel (in the sense of book)? What were the aims of the four writers? How do the books differ

from one another? (She is particularly good on the difference between John and the other three.)

A characteristic of this book is its modesty. Miss Foster does not pretend that we can know what we do not. "Today we are too far from the events, detached by a vast gulf of years, to be able to say with certainty, 'It happened like this'. We can only say that this is how the evangelists tell the story. Perhaps it happened like that, perhaps not. We are not in a position to say one way or the other with certainty" (p.23; this is about Easter Day). "When it comes to the final analysis, we have to admit that there are no answers to our questions, or rather, that there are no right answers. There is a great deal of which we can speak only hesitantly, and much of which we must be brave enough simply to say we do not know" (p. 117; this is about the historical Jesus).

She is honest and realistic, not sceptical; certainly not sceptical: everything is used by her in the service of faith. What matters is not that our questions are answered in the way that we expect them to be answered when we ask them, but that the questions are turned back on us, and we are made to say, What does this mean for me? "When we ask questions about Jesus and his story, we are asking questions about ourselves and whether that story makes sense for us. And how we finally understand that challenge, and whether we take it up, also depends upon each of us as individuals. The process of asking questions about Jesus is also a probing into how we understand ourselves in relation to him and the significance he may or may not hold for us" (pp. 116f).

All the styles of gospel criticism are explained and employed in this book: source-criticism (on which she is rather old-fashioned and favours not only the priority of Mark but also the existence of a source used by Matthew and Luke independently, Q.), redaction-criticism and historical-criticism (i.e. the quest of the historical Jesus). She makes the good point that the story of Jesus "may never seem the same again" since the arrival of gospel criticism. "The simple story is not simple after all, but quite complicated" (p. 110). And here again she makes positive use of what is the case but might have been seen only negatively: "A critical examination of the gospels is important for our understanding of the person and message of Jesus" (p. 111).

I have read all this book twice, and some of it more often; it can take re-reading, and it requires it. I shall recommend it to students and those on lay-training courses; it would be a good book for a study group – a Lent course, for example, if the members meant to take things seriously. There are five main chapters, an Introduction and a Conclusion.

J.C. Fenton

## Law in Paul's Thought

Hans Hübner. T.&T. Clark, 1984. Pp. xi + 186. £10.95

When this book appeared in German in 1978 it usefully filled a gap. The difference in what Paul says about

the law in Galatians and Romans deserved a monograph, and Hübner's tight exegesis of the relevant passages in these epistles (especially Galatians 3) was helpful. Its emphasis upon the differences was and still is persuasive, the discussion of other relevant literature illuminating, and the suggestion of what happened between writing Galatians and Romans provocative. James or someone may have protested about Paul's virtually unchurching Jewish Christians in Gal 5.2, so Paul wrote more carefully in Romans.

While better than older harmonizations, all this was not entirely convincing. It did not resolve the tensions, not to say contradictions, in what Paul says about the law within Romans, and the thesis of "development" in Paul's thought raises other issues not germane to the thesis (other epistles, chronology, opponents, the rest of Paul's theology, and other aspects of his biography). The subject cannot satisfactorily be treated in isolation from Paul's teaching about justification, i.e. his soteriology and his christology on the one hand and his ethics on the other. But within these limits the differences between what Galatians and Romans say about the law can be looked at, and the resulting monograph was worth translating.

But then came a bit of a blow. The translation was evidently delayed (p. 11), and in 1983 two outstanding treatments appeared, those of E.P. Sanders and H. Räisänen. These recognize and render intelligible the contradictory things that Paul says on this topic without really diminishing the apostle in the way his defenders fear. The whole subject was simply set in a more plausible frame of reference.

The delay over translation gave Hübner the chance to respond, and on some of the exegetical details he could reasonably stick to his guns. However, his two-page response to Sanders at the end of the book is woefully inadequate, and the half page on Räisänen worse. After claiming (with some immodest exaggeration) that "the author has presented his book to a very large degree as a discussion of my thesis . . ." he says "I cannot of course deal with Sanders's argument in detail. To do that . . . would require a book on its own" (p. 152). Yes, a very different book on Law in Paul's Thought.

The response to Räisänen is even sadder: "At this juncture however I cannot enter into discussion with him as I am to publish a detailed review of the book in the *Theologische Literaturzeitung* (Leipzig)". So what? That is a puzzling excuse. He advises readers (of his English translation) to refer to that (in German) "at the appropriate time". That being now ripe, I translate from it: "It seems characteristic of the history of research that from time to time you get a total break. All previous attempts at a solution are pressed at their weak points and these are mercilessly exposed. A new explanation is given for the open questions, and this radically supersedes the earlier hypotheses. The evident contradictions of the earlier solutions are taken up and overcome in a new synthesis. This is what we seem to have in Räisänen's book on the Law in Paul . . ." (*TLZ* 110, 1985, 894).

There are problems about applying Kuhn's thesis about scientific revolutions to the humanities, but I agree

with Hübner that something like a paradigm shift has happened in Pauline interpretation over the past few years. As the translation of Hübner got stuck in the works, New Testament research made some remarkable progress. When the translation appeared, the book was dated. That happens to books that are not translations, too, and in this case no blame attaches to the author – except that he cannot quite bear to draw the consequences of the insight just quoted. Instead, he defends his earlier position, or claims to, without giving an adequate response.

The change of perspective pioneered by Krister Stendahl (who is not even mentioned by Hübner), and now brilliantly developed by Francis Watson, arises from seeing Paul's theological argument about faith and works in its historical context as an argument for Gentile converts not being circumcised. Hübner is reluctant to accept this because he fears it relativizes Paul's theology (and so his own). But that fear is misplaced, even though Paul's value for today may need restatement. It needs it anyway, and the historically conditioned character of theological statements is no argument against their truth or their value for a later generation. It is clear that Sanders and Räisänen can illuminate Paul historically without giving much thought to theology. But theologians should welcome the clarifications, take up the new insights and get on with their own job of theological interpretation, not defend trenches dug in the 1920s.

The clearer historical perspective on Paul is germane to the close exegesis undertaken by Hübner. Paul's Greek creaks with ambiguities, and one's exegetical decisions will often hinge on one's overview. It is silly of Hübner (in his preface) to play off "philological arguments together with the theological arguments which arise out of them" against (admittedly hypothetical) historical reconstructions. Such hypotheses are inescapable in trying to understand Paul's epistles. Nevertheless, this monograph was a splendid addition to the literature in 1978, and remains a powerful contribution in the present debate. Paradigm shifts take time to get accepted, and the history of research remains a source of stimulus.

Robert Morgan

## The Social World of the First Christians

John Stambaugh and David Balch. SPCK, 1986. Pp. 194. £6.95

It is surely a sign of the times in New Testament scholarship to have a book on the social environment of the first Christians (note, not of the New Testament alone) jointly authored by a classicist (Stambaugh) and a New Testament specialist (Balch), both from America. The old partnership between classical and New Testament studies is fortunately taking on a new lease of life at present and nowhere more so than in America (it is, strangely, much less evident in Britain). The common ground of interest is, of course, the social realities of the Graeco-Roman world in the first century AD – a subject which is essential grist to the mill of all those currently trying to analyse the early Christian movement sociologically. In fact Stambaugh and Balch eschew sociological

analysis and content themselves with providing a broad-ranging description of the Graeco-Roman world with particular reference to Jews (in the Diaspora and in Palestine) and Christians (especially in an urban environment).

The value of this book lies in the scope of its interests. When Eduard Lohse published his *Umwelt des Neuen Testaments* (1974; translated as *The New Testament Environment*, 1976), like many other writers on the same subject, he was almost exclusively concerned with two topics: political history and religious/philosophical movements. Stambaugh and Balch throw their net a lot wider and rightly so, if we are going to get an adequate picture of social life in the first century: political history has a part to play, but only alongside sections on, for instance, law, economy, language, work, education, social status, clubs, cults and city life in general. The first three chapters (by Stambaugh) provide a general overview of the historical, political and legal background, together with particularly informative discussions of mobility, the movement of religions and the ancient economy. Balch then contributes a chapter on Palestinian society which concludes with a section on "the ecology of the Jesus movement"; and both authors combine to write the final chapters on city life and the early Christian house-churches in an urban environment. The effect of the whole book is to put the first Christians in amongst the Galilean towns, the temple courts, the Diaspora synagogues, the itinerant sages, and the city households and clubs of the first century, which is socially where they belonged. With brief descriptions of the range of social status represented in the churches and the social and economic circumstances of some of the main urban centres, one begins to get a glimpse of the social realities in which Christianity took root. Thus this book has many merits as a summary description of the first century world and the Christians' place within it. An extraordinary amount of information is packed in, but the authors manage to keep it readable throughout. Inevitably it also suffers from the main disadvantage of all summary descriptions. So many different topics are discussed that none can be pursued in any detail, leaving one with the feeling of having rushed around the Mediterranean world in a kind of whistle-stop package tour. At many points I found myself wanting to stop for a while and look at the scenery more carefully; but that, I suppose, is the mark of a stimulating tour and there are, fortunately, some useful suggestions for further reading at the end of the book.

It would be fair to say that the authors do not (and probably did not intend to) break much fresh ground in their descriptions of the social location of the first Christians. Rather their work brings together the evidence marshalled by others, with Meeks, MacMullen and Theissen playing a particularly important role. Thus, though there will be something new and valuable for most scholars, this book is probably best characterised as a student handbook. One unfortunate result is a tendency to make confident generalising statements often based on flimsy evidence. It is hard to see how one could support such statements as "most Greeks did not perceive any immorality in prostitution" (p. 158) or "the Jewish people in general were observant [of the law]" (p. 100), especially when the evidence cited for the latter is only

Rom. 9:30-10:4 and various passages from Josephus' clearly apologetic work *Against Apion*. Still harder to swallow is the bold statement that Jesus' unconventional social relationships with women "stimulated negative reactions that led to Jesus' death on a cross" (p. 104). Indeed, it is a pity that Stambaugh and Balch do not discuss more explicitly the value of the primary sources they are using. They sometimes exhibit an uncritical use of the gospels and Acts and rarely allow themselves to admit where their evidence is insufficient or suspect. On many points I am inclined to think that the social realities of the first century were a lot more complex, diverse and fluctuating than they are represented here.

A few maps would have come in handy at several points and a list of abbreviations and primary sources would have helped students with references like "T.B. Shabbath 14b" (p. 87). The British publishers have retained American spelling and vocabulary and even the conversion of ancient prices into American dollars (pp. 80-81). I think most of us will be able to do the necessary translations; and perhaps the foreignness will spur a few British New Testament scholars to talk more earnestly with their Classical colleagues before either or both get "rationalised" (or emigrate to America).

John Barclay

### **Gods and the One God. Christian theology in the Graeco-Roman world**

Robert Grant. SPCK, 1986. Pp. 211. £6.95

What Grant writes is always learned, never boring, sometimes difficult and invariably provoking. In this case we have a series of studies of the relation of Christian theology to its early environment in pagan philosophy and religion. The first part reviews attitudes to paganism in Acts and the state of Mediterranean religion at the time. The second part expounds missionary preaching against idolatry and the terms in which the gods were praised by their cultivators. The third part, occupying over half the book, involves intricate examinations of basic doctrines – Greek philosophical theology, the teaching of the earlier fathers, the status of Christ from the NT onwards, divergent christologies at Antioch before Nicaea (a whole chapter), the Holy Spirit, the Trinity (including remarks on Arianism), and finally "Creeds and cult", which discusses creedal origins and compares Christian and pagan attitudes to doctrinal tradition. Brief documentation is given, disguising the undisplayed depth of learning behind.

The writing is full of pointed little forays like this comment on some affirmations of revealed certainty in the New Testament:

"If we say that they defended "orthodoxy", we say no more than that they meant what they said and were sure they were right. We may add that they had no idea that Christian doctrine would have a history that their thought would be part of it" (p. 166).

More substantive points of interest abound. It is claimed that Origen's position on the passibility of God

changed drastically between *On first principles* and the *Commentary on Matthew* as a result of reading Ignatius' letter to the Romans (pp. 91-94). Partly following R.L. Sample, Grant traces two traditions of christology in pre-Nicene Antioch, deploying his unrivalled experience as an interpreter of Theophilus (pp. 124-135). Such things combine to make the book fascinating to the moderately well-informed reader. It is particularly helpful to have so compactly expressed so much information on the religion and thought of the world into which Christianity emerged. It remains a difficult book however, especially for the beginner. That is first because it is a series of studies round a theme, and not a clear sequential argument; it could have stopped at various points, or gone on longer, without being obviously wrong. It is also difficult because not enough is done to assist the beginner. The first section on Asclepius (pp. 32-33) cites only documents which call him Aesculapius, without explanation. After several discussions of Clement of Alexandria, "Clement" suddenly refers to Clement of Rome (p. 133). The compressed, telegraphic style aggravates this. It may also explain the numerous unqualified statements which the reviewer notes for challenge. My list includes: that the Christians were called "godless" because they had no images (p. 42), when surely it was because they repudiated the gods; that in Rom. 2.22 Paul insists "that abhorrence of idols does not justify robbing pagan temples" (p. 49), when Paul in fact writes as though abhorrence of idols should make one *avoid* such acts; that "by whom all things were made" in the old translation of the Nicene Creed is incorrect, attributing creation to the Son and not the Father (p. 113), when the Prayer Book translators were actually using "by" to signify "through"; that Hippolytus' account of Callistus' doctrine is (by implication) reliable (p. 108); that "there was when he was not" was an Arian slogan (p. 161), when there is no evidence that any Arian ever used this catchword of current philosophical cosmology (see for instance M. Simonetti, *La crisi ariana nel IV secolo*, Rome 1975, p. 48 n.6).

I am also unconvinced by the lining up of Antiochene witnesses for high and low christologies, and especially by the calling of Marcellus of Ancyra as a witness (pp. 134-135). A different interpretation in D.S. Wallace-Hadrill (*Christian Antioch*, Cambridge 1982) goes unmentioned. Furthermore Marcellus' economic trinitarian doctrine was held by Eusebius and others of the Arian camp to diminish the deity of Christ by denying his pre-existence as personal Son. In itself, however, it was an attempt to be biblically and consistently homoousian. If Marcellus follows Theophilus of Antioch, then perhaps Theophilus himself is further from Ebionism than Grant implies. That however is ground on which I would hesitate to challenge him. Altogether this book is a royal dish of meat to chew upon.

Stuart G. Hall

## Studies in Christian Antiquity

R.P.C. Hanson. T.&T. Clark, 1985. Pp. xi + 394. £16.95

"Are we cut off from the past?": this provocative question and the author's strong assurance that we are

not (1981), head a collection of 17 studies by an acknowledged authority on the history and theology of the Early Church. Such is the range of Hanson's scholarly interest and depth of learning that the collection will undoubtedly appeal to a broad spectrum of scholars whose interest lies in the theology and history of the Early Church. Being a well-trained Classical scholar as well as an eminent theologian and patristic scholar, Hanson brings formidable skills to bear on the topics he has chosen for investigation, discussion or refutation. His deep familiarity with the Classical World and especially with its literature lies at the heart of his defence against the more negative assertions of the cultural relativists or historical sceptics on the relevance or reliability of the Bible. In "The journey of Paul and the journey of Nikias" (1968), he light-heartedly applies to a comparable passage in a Classical author (the journey of Nikias to Syracuse in Thucydides VI, 1-61) the type of destructive historical criticism which Conzelmann had used to discredit the historicity of Paul's voyage to Italy in Acts, in order to highlight the outcome of such an approach if widely applied to the study of ancient texts. The biblical scholar may also have cause to consult his piece on "The provenance of the interpolator in the 'Western' text of Acts and of Acts itself" (1966) which focuses on the enigmatic ending of the book and adduces a Roman origin of the 'Western' text. Patristic scholars are unlikely to ignore the studies on Origen (1972), the Trinitarian debates (1982) and the development of religious language and liturgy in the Early Church. It is a pity that his study on the Creed of Constantinople of 381, based on a lecture delivered at New College, Edinburgh (1981), has no notes, not even bracketed references in the text, as the author has made use of a wide range of sources, including papyri, which are not easy for a less well-informed student to locate. The *humanitas* of the church in the last days of the Roman Empire in the West is underscored by the author in "The Reaction of the Church to the Collapse of the Western Roman Empire in the fifth century" (previously unpublished). In the same vein is the delightful study of Sidonius Apollinaris (again previously unpublished) and the church in fifth century Gaul. The author's own considerable episcopal experience might well have influenced his understanding of the role of the church in the barbarian world. While it is right to stress the important part she played in the preservation of Roman culture and social order, one must not be blind to the problems created by her intolerance. The Visigoths, for instance, who were mainly Arians did not enjoy the full membership of the new Roman Empire of St. Peter until their conversion to Catholicism in Spain under King Richard in 589. The reviewer is particularly pleased to see the inclusion in the collection of the author's well-documented study on the transformation of pagan temples into Christian churches. Originally published in the Bruce Festschrift (*Journal of Semitic Studies* 23, 1978), the article makes the important observation that the process did not begin in earnest till the fifth century as a result of special imperial legislations. In support of his argument, that the temples on the whole were unsuitable for conversion, the reviewer would like to add that in the mind of some less-educated Christians, pagan temples were haunted by demons and their sites had to be cleansed by holy men (cf. *Vita S. Danielis Stylitae* 14-15 ed. Delehaye, pp. 14-16). However, the study seems to have been little known to late Roman historians for whom the subject is of considerable importance. It

should be read along side Fowden's equally admirable study on the role of the bishop in this process of transformation in the Greek East ("Bishop and Temples in the Eastern Empire", *JTS*, n.s. 29, 1978, pp. 53-78).

The collection contains a study of monograph length on Christian attitudes to pagan religion (pp. 144-229). Originally published in the prohibitively expensive and interminable *Festschrift* for Josef Vogt (*Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, 23/2 1979), it is a major contribution to an area which has been much neglected by modern scholars, especially those contributing in English, as it falls uneasily between the traditional boundaries of patristics and the history of Roman religion. The author is admirably qualified to tackle the subject and he gives a thorough examination of the main types of arguments used by Christian apologists and polemicists against aspects of pagan cults such as sacrifice, allegorical interpretation, anthropomorphism, orgiastic rites etc. He rightly draws our attention to the debt which the Christian polemicists owed to Euhemerus, a Hellenistic fabulist whose novel on an imaginary voyage was seen by many ancient writers as a work of rationalizing atheism. The respect shown by both Jews and Christians towards oracles and the consequent attack on the effectiveness of pagan oracles is admirably shown. The section on the "Sibylline Oracles" (pp. 190-94) is probably one of the best brief introductions in English to the subject. On the other hand, by adopting a thematic approach and conflating and combining material from three centuries, the author does not always make clear whether there were any historical developments in this type of polemic nor how accurately they reflected changing fashion in contemporary paganism. Nor does he indicate the motivation behind the Christian attacks or their choice of targets other than briefly indicating their Jewish inheritance (pp. 144-45). In the discussion of the themes, the reader is occasionally bombarded by examples, each of which, though interesting in itself, does not always add much that is new or different to the subject. There are paragraphs in which virtually every sentence begins with the name of a source (see eg pp. 153-54). An author examination may seem more mundane but can draw out more effectively the unique contribution of each apologist or polemicist. It will also give more attention to apologists like Athenagoras and Tatian who are often cited only in passing.

The article concludes interestingly with a study of Constantine's attitude towards paganism which may seem to some readers as somewhat out of place as he hardly shared the polemical views of Athanasius or Firmicus Maternus on paganism. Much of what he has to say about Constantine is not new and he pays a long overdue tribute to the work of the American scholar C.B. Coleman whose work *Constantine the Great and Christianity* (New York, 1924) remains invaluable because of its extensive use of both pagan and Christian sources. What is however original is his demonstration that Constantine's attempt to produce a form of sanitized paganism was carried out along lines which were not dissimilar to those which had been sign-posted by Christian apologists.

Hanson assumes that the majority of his readers would have had as good a Classical education as he him-

self and he therefore often leaves long citations from his ancient sources untranslated. This may deter some students from making good use of these very valuable studies: it therefore behoves the *magistri* to direct their attention to them.

Samuel N.C. Lieu

## Metaphor and Religious Language

Janet Martin Soskice. Clarendon Press, 1985. Pp. x + 191. £17.50

Theologians can often be heard to say that religious language is metaphorical; but exactly what metaphors are and how they might depict reality in an irreducible way are matters rarely given precise analysis. This book is important because it undertakes such an analysis. It falls into two parts; the first five chapters explore the nature of metaphor as such, and the last three deal with matters of reference and metaphor in religion.

In the first part, the author rejects the "substitution view", that metaphor is only a decorative substitute for what can be literally said; and "emotive theories", for which metaphors have no cognitive content, but only psychological efficacy in evoking novel ideas. Her own view is an "incremental theory" which she calls a form of "interanimative theory", after I.A. Richards. Metaphor is "a figure of speech whereby we speak about one thing in terms which are seen to be suggestive of another" (15). There need be no comparison of two subjects, and there is no special metaphorical meaning of single terms. Metaphorical ascription is the reference, by a speaker in a certain context, to one subject in terms of an associative network allied with another subject. The interanimation is between the word explicitly referring to one subject and various subsidiary associative networks of meaning, which belong to subjects which remain implicit and indicated only by speaker's intention and context.

This view puts a great emphasis on the speaker's intention rather than on the formal properties of a linguistic system. But a speaker can only properly intend to use language in a way that its formal properties allow. We can play with language in many creative ways; but words do have meanings regardless of how we intend to use them. I am not convinced that we speak metaphorically only if we intend to do so. Metaphor can be detected linguistically by the literal falsity of the attributed metaphor. On this point the author's argument against Donald Davidson and others seems to elide the issues of "the meaning that a word has" and "what a speaker intends by using the word". The truth-conditions of "He is a lion" and "He is like a lion (in certain unspecified respects)" are very different; but a speaker may intend to do just the same thing in using these different expressions. So I think a formal semantic analysis may reveal more about metaphor than the author thinks.

Yet this leaves her main argument intact, that metaphors are cognitively unique and genuinely creative. They can embody new insights, which might not otherwise have occurred. They can suggest new categories of interpretation and enable us to go on extending the

significance they have enabled us to discern in a new way. Most importantly, they are irreducible to literal descriptions.

In the second part of her argument, she draws on various accounts of scientific method to illustrate how models and metaphors have an essential cognitive and explanatory role. Then she argues that the analogy with religion is fairly close, so that metaphors may have an explanatory and irreducible role in speaking of God. It remains rather unclear, however, just how metaphors can “explain” in religion; for do not the ways of God remain a mystery? It is also paradoxical to claim that metaphors refer to a God whom, she says, “we cannot describe as he is in himself”.

To deal with these problems, she develops an account of reference, drawing on Kripke and Putnam, which permits us to refer to something without having an un-revisable description of it. But in science such reference must in the end be established by giving a paradigm instance – e.g. “*this is gold*”. What is the equivalent naming-situation in religion? Her suggestion is that we refer to God as “that, whatever it is, which causes certain experiences (either of ecstasy or a general sense of contingency)”. But the question is precisely whether there is any such cause. In science, the cause is part of a wider explanatory theory, giving rise to a cumulative body of experimental knowledge. But what does God explain, with his mysterious will? And what cumulative knowledge is there in religion, that battlefield of endlessly competing claims?

There is also an internal difficulty with the claim that we can point to God without claiming to describe him. “God is spirit”, she says, denominates the source of thousands of experiences in a tradition, rather than describing God. But while we may not claim an unrevisable or infallible description, it is impossible to refer to something without providing some description, especially when what we are referring to is an explanatory-theoretic term. Thus God cannot be just *any* sort of cause, one knows not what. He must at least be conceived as an agent through will and knowledge. If the apophatic way qualifies this claim, it does not do so just by renouncing it or allowing that it may be wholly mistaken.

I have, perhaps unfairly, picked on the difficulties in Janet Martin Soskice’s account – unfair, because no such account is without difficulties. I hope it is clear that her discussions are invariably of philosophical depth and insight; and that her key position – that metaphors have an irreducible cognitive role in language, and can refer to God in a realist way without claiming to reduce God to the level of a comprehensible object – is subtly and convincingly argued. In particular, her account of how metaphors in a religious tradition accumulate diachronically to produce a “layered” series of associative networks, is one that I hope she will develop more fully in subsequent work. This book is now important reading for all who think of metaphor as having a central place in the language of religion.

Keith Ward

## Only Human

Don Cupitt. SCM Press, 1985. Pp. xii + 228. £5.95

Mr Cupitt’s title has Nietzschean overtones, as has the heading of the final part of his book, “I have said, ye are gods”. And very powerful is the rhetoric of his summons to religious integrity, giving us notice that the “old external supports, inducements, consolations, cognitive and ethical guidelines, guarantees and promises are no longer required”. Convergence on the ethical and on the present moment synthesizes the wide spectrum of belief “back into white light”. Indeed, he explicitly appeals to the image of the welder at work, “unifying divine and human creativity, the ultimate with the here-and-now, religion and morality, heaven and earth”. Conversion experience of this kind – self-creation – frees us from forms of belief which are at once “imprecise and gratifying, pseudo-factual and self-serving”. But may it not be equally gratifying and self-serving, notwithstanding what is supposed to follow? For having abandoned consolation once and for all, we can then pride ourselves that “we” are able to concentrate, Kant-wise, on inner truthfulness, using the way of purgation (but not the other “ways” of spirituality, since there is no ultimate “illumination” to be had from any “divine” other than ourselves to be looked for). Dislike of outward show will reinforce preference in the best iconoclastic manner for religion which is “austere, hidden, dry and subjective”, and above all, *cool*. Moreover, “spiritual poise” comes like a cake-mix from the right combination of commitment and non-attachment, a packet-deal which explains what it is to have eternal life, and indeed to enjoy one’s own life’s “battling self-affirmation”. One is, however, recommended to pursue certain spiritual values which are in a sense dearer even than one’s own life, of which spiritual freedom is obviously the chief. Hence Mr Cupitt’s entirely proper detestation of the “snooping, censorious and over-scrupulous psychology of dogmatism”. Expressed here too is a certain invigorating toughness towards one’s own life, to be seen of course as devoid of grace or the means of grace. The axiom of one’s life should be that one makes one’s bed and lies on it. “The way reality is for you depends upon just what you are and what you have put in.” Other axioms we might notice are, “eschew dreams of salvation” and “never, ever, complain”, which latter is rough on Job, not to mention even David Hume.

This is exhilarating stuff, prompted for instance by appreciating Darwin in the first part, “A life in time”, for Darwin’s work has helped us to rediscover our sense of kinship with all life, re-awakening in us “a truly passionate love for the natural environment”. Notwithstanding the predictable Wittgensteinian touches, the core of this book is to be found in part two, which has a nice medieval title, “The mirror of the soul”, but which is focussed principally on Freud. This leads to part three, “A common life”, which takes us along to the acknowledgement that religion deals with the world of man as “an emotional, embodied, active social being”. But as I have indicated, the key to this text as a whole is to be found in Mr Cupitt’s view of Freud, a view most appropriately applied to his own writing, unless I’m much mistaken. For Freud’s system, Mr Cupitt tells us, is a

work of art, a hermeneutic, constructed to *persuade* us to adopt Freud's view of life. It is an *expression* of Freud's spirituality – which indicates the considerable value of Mr Cupitt's own writing. The trouble with it, as is well known, is that he insists on coupling his own expression of spirituality with claims such as “there simply is not anything else that religion could ever possibly have been”, which is surely mistaken. We can and do use the resources of religion expressively, aesthetically and regulatively, as he urges us to, but these uses are I think parasitic on intellectual and moral commitment to forms of objective realism about the way things are. Making religion one's own is not identical with making one's own religion, even when, lucky us, we find other like-minded democratic rational relativist voluntarists who happen to have worked it out in the same way, thus mitigating our Cartesian loneliness. If we are to opt for self-wrought religion and the gratification that option sustains, let us be clear that that is what we are doing, and not suppose it to be identical with Christianity as it has been and is believed, not least when it is purged of the sheer sentimentality and egocentricism Mr Cupitt rightly deplores.

At one point Mr Cupitt comes close to acknowledging the radical character of his revision when he writes that “Western Christianity is a psychologically very ‘hot’ religion that imposes severe stress on the serious believer”, so we can cool it – Mr Cupitt's option, or leave it for Buddhism, say. Mr Cupitt's text is best read as a plea for attention to neglected elements in the Christian tradition – no cheap grace as an ascetic Orthodox might say – but his difference from the tradition is no more clearly indicated, perhaps, than when he comments that the function of our ideas of God or of Christ's death is to “stabilize the self” in the face of the enigma of the human condition. Take, for example, Abelard's “Solus ad victimam procedis, Domine”, which in Helen Waddell's translation ends:

So may our hearts have pity on thee, Lord  
That they may sharers of the glory be:  
Heavy with weeping may the three days pass,  
To win the laughter of thine Easter Day.

Abelard may have got it all wrong, or Aquinas or whoever – and even Siger of Brabant could be found conversing with the latter in Dante's *Paradiso* – but that their fundamental beliefs are different from Mr Cupitt's is abundantly clear.

Ann Loades

## **Domination or Liberation. The Place of Religion in Social Conflict**

Alister Kee. SCM, 1986. Pp. xiii + 126. £5.50

Alister Kee's latest book is hardly his best, but it displays his customary crisp style: uncluttered exposition, sharp analysis, deft humour. (Mocking tables are turned here on journalistic chauvinism, for example, with Jürgen Moltmann nicely identified as the husband of Elizabeth Wendel, a dapper, brown-haired father of four daughters.) The volume falls rather disappointingly between a critical introduction, too selective and cur-

tailed to be pedagogically satisfactory, and a creative thesis whose persuasiveness is compromised by partiality.

Originally the 1986 Ferguson Lectures at the University of Manchester, here is a call for Christians to “examine the part which their religion has played in the legitimation of domination in the spheres of gender, race, class, politics and economics, [and] . . . consider how religion, freed from its associations with domination, might contribute to liberation” (p. xi). At one level, this is a brief introduction to Christian feminism, black theology and Latin American liberation theology, showing how “religion” (never defined, unhappily) has reinforced social domination, and concluding with an analysis of the religious dimension to the current conservative backlash against liberation.

The general reader will learn much here about the multiform theology of liberation; yet, due no doubt to the original lecture format, brevity is frequently the enemy of balance. Attempting, it seems, to out-feminise the feminists, Kee short-circuits the exegetical debate about women in the Bible. Excessively critical of both OT and NT, he under-represents the positive readings of some feminists. On Genesis 2-3, for example, he too quickly dismisses one such (Phyllis Bird), and ignores others (eg Phyllis Trible in *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*), who see in the J account the equality and oneness of female and male. The discussion of women's ordination is curiously lop-sided. There is first an overly sanguine assessment of the Reformed churches, for whom this is allegedly no longer an issue, with particular reference to the Church of Scotland. In truth the change of law and practice has left many old attitudes and conventions in the Kirk unaltered; and the fact is that half the members of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches do not ordain women. With this is juxtaposed an extremely negative, rhetorical judgment upon the Roman Catholic Church, with little allowance for the rapid changes of attitude to women now occurring within that communion. Between Edinburgh and Rome there is not a mention of the great debate on women priests in Anglicanism; which, however happy a reversal of the normal complaint north of the Tweed, is odd, given the Mancunian provenance of these lectures, and the intrinsic significance of the Church of England for any discussion of the role of religion in the socio-political life of Britain.

In this connection, too, Kee's implicating of religion in the rise of Thatcherism fails to convince. His outrage at the hypocrisies of the New Religious Right in the USA is fully justified; but a few articles on “Christianity and Capitalism” notwithstanding, is British neo-conservatism remotely “religious” in the manner of the Moral Majority? For many of us the significance of the Thatcher years, rather, has been precisely the new courage of erstwhile crastianism to resist government pressure and directly or obliquely indict state policy.

Again, Kee seems less than fair on Rome's response to liberation theology. There is surely sufficient tension between the biblical witness and a Marxist interpretation of reality, and sufficient concern about the restraint of dissent, worship and mission in societies where that interpretation has been implemented, for questions justifi-

fiably to be raised. Critical theory must tolerate critique. And while the Vatican's 1984 "Instruction on the Theology of Liberation", and examination of Leonardo Boff, were unduly hostile, probably for the ecclesiastical reasons Kee suggests, it is a pity that the second, more positive, "Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation", issued shortly after Kee's Lectures, was not assessed in their subsequent revision for this book.

It is from Boff that Kee adapts his specific thesis. Movements for the liberation of women, and blacks, are blind to their own complicity in the ideology of domination, and do more to condemn oppression than to halt it. For they lack that critical theory which explains *why* even the best of people conspire to dominate others: the analysis of Marx that society is determined by its means of production. The church itself is a "religious monopoly capitalism" (was the Body of Christ ever more pitifully conceived?), and "can only be changed when the mode of religious production is replaced" (p. 85). But whereas Kee asserts that "the church is not guided by theology, by ideas or ideals", Boff himself is clear that nothing will change the balance of power in the church but "the Christian experience with its content of revelation". It is the gospel of Christ himself, the theology that recaptures him, the ideals he evokes, which transforms hierarchy into community, enslavement into freedom (*Church: Charism and Power*, pp. 113 ff). Kee admits occasionally the ideological vices of the Left as well as the Right. Yet his blanket denunciations of capitalism, and incautious uses of Marx not only concerning the world's problems but also their solution, sometimes evade the gospel's prophetic, relativising critique of *every* programme and policy besides that of a Crucified Liberator, whose kingship is not of this world.

Alan E. Lewis

## Christianity and War in a Nuclear Age

Richard Harries. Mowbrays, 1986. Pp. 170. £4.95

In his latest book, Richard Harries moves from some theological considerations about power and coercion, through a summary of just-war tradition, to a discussion about how this can be applied to nuclear deterrence, finishing up with some remarks about war and theodicy.

Nothing in this progress impresses. To take firstly the core of the book, in which Harries argues that a "minimum deterrence" may meet the criteria of discrimination and proportionality: this argument founders on the fact that the threat of long-term ecological damage and massive loss of population is an inherent part of what distinguishes "deterrence" from "defence". No serious secular nuclear strategist supposes, like Harries, that it is possible to separate an incapacitating degree of military damage from damage to the civil infrastructure. And the more the use of nuclear weapons can be regarded as "proportionate", then the more possible it is to think of this use as part of the conventional strategy of a winnable war. Although Harries says that nuclear wars are not winnable, he clearly does not believe this, because his notion of "acceptable use" assumes that an early, "small" nuclear attack could have the effect of forcing the enemy

to sue for terms. A similar contradiction exists between Harries's claim that nuclear escalation from an initial strike should not be assumed probable, and his admission that the risk of escalation is an inherent part of deterrence. Where, like Harries, one associates "flexible response" with the paramount duty not to give way to unjust aggression, one is committed to a nuclear game of chance in which the "defending" side will be always likely to turn the nuclear screw one twist further, in the hope that this will secure some margin of advantage.

Harries concedes that the principle of "non-combatant immunity" can scarcely be used to discriminate between nuclear exchanges, and puts the weight of his argument upon "proportionality". His case for the possible legitimacy of "limited" uses fails at any point seriously to face up to the scale of long-term damage that would be involved. But the nub of the issue is not here; Harries argues that even *admitting*, as he does, some real risk of escalation to apocalypse, there is still an overriding moral duty to resist evil. He recognises that the *whole point* of the principle of proportion is to deny that this duty should always be acted upon, but he feels, nonetheless, that the double risk of a full-scale *conventional* world war or of a totalitarian tyranny founded on nuclear blackmail permit us to take a chance on ultimate destruction. But the proper answer to the threat of "conventional" world war cannot be to sustain an even worse threat; rather, as Harries himself suggests in relation to the issue of multilateral arms reduction, the real solution here can only be the political one of dismantling the grounds of enmity. In the case of the totalitarian threat one can sympathise, up to a point, with Harries's fear of a "seamless" oppression founded in a nuclear monopoly. But in this circumstance, surely, the imperative to "resist injustice" is not exemplified in a counter-nuclear threat, but rather in a courageous calling of the nuclear bluff – on the assumption that substantial use of nuclear armoury is destructive also for the perpetrator.

The irony is that the nuclear pacifist is much more likely than Harries to recognise the post-Clausewitzian character of nuclear strategy, in which realism dictates that "proportionality" is relativised, because a seemingly disproportionate act may be the gamble necessary to trounce the enemy and win unimaginable, long-term stakes. Of course this very *strategy* must seem "disproportionate" to the Christian who is never able to rate the "security" of a human state or socio-economic order so highly. If Harries is blinded here it is ultimately because he takes an unhistorical and fatalistic view about the structures of power and coercion as being somehow permanently fixed in their scope and character. Hence international nuclear terror, and the modern sovereign state can be equated by him with the temporary and local "police power" endorsed by St Paul, or, yet more ludicrously, with the "anarchistic" consensual order presupposed for the *Torah*. The "Kingdom of God", on the other hand, cannot for Harries establish any real scope in this world (Utopia is not here in question) because, we are told, non-coercive action is not intended to convert our enemy, but rather symbolically anticipates the eschaton when God will see to it that the wicked get their deserts. I was sorry to realise that a bishop-elect is unaware that the ontological state of the wicked is always and everywhere, and without extrinsic reinforcement, a

reflex of their wickedness.

Schoolboy relish for technical details cannot replace genuine realism and historical sense. Absence of the latter vitiates Harries's brief guide to just-war theory. He perplexedly wonders why Victoria was the first theologian to be seriously interested in the *ius in bello*, and fails to connect this with the rise of the nation-state, and the increasingly "total" character of renaissance power warfare formalistically detached from *ius ad bellum* questions of justice and policing. So far, *pace* Harries, is Grotius from being in the line of Catholic natural law, that already within the rationalist formalism of his "Godless" iusnaturalism he can conceive of "justice on both sides". Even in the seventeenth century Grotius knew, as Harries still does not, that "pre-Copernican" *ius ad bellum* theory will scarcely endorse most of the actuality of "post Copernican" warfare. If there is any "Catholic" judgement, it is of the entire modern "conjuncture".

The book is worthy of its climax which introduces the enterprising Professor Michael Howard as a major theodocist of war and celebrates the pagan and pre-Augustinian sense of conflict as an impersonal force, which is yet the occasion for the exercise of heroic honour. Although the inherently redemptive character of war "is a question which takes us beyond the scope of this book", Harries is here far too modest. We are admirably prepared for the conclusion which introduces a new God whose providence is overdetermining the human manufacture of nuclear weapons.

That the world is such as for our intervention to be able to bring about mayonnaise or meringue, is, as Alice Thomas Ellis has shown us, a very good proof of God's existence; but that its nuclear bomb-potential should demonstrate his "ways to men" – and not the *mere* "seriousness of sin" – well, here we have had to wait on Dean Harries.

John Milbank

## The Making of a Moonie

Eileen Barker. Basil Blackwell 1984. Pp. xv + 142. £5.95

First published in 1984, this is a most timely book. On 22 May that year, the European Parliament, against the advice of Christian leaders in many countries, passed a bill which advocated a common approach by member states of the European Community towards various infringements of the law by new organisations, operating under the protection afforded to religious bodies. The act appears to militate against freedom of worship. Moreover, it does not describe what a new religious movement is: is the URC such, having come into being in 1972? Furthermore, how competent are Euro-MPs to judge what constitutes a genuine religion or religious person?

There is a widespread assumption that young people are conned or forced into the Unification Church and other new-ish religious groups. This could seem to be confirmed when, in 1980-81 the British leader of the Unification Church fought a libel action against the *Daily*

*Mail* and lost. On 29 May 1978, that paper had published an article accusing the church of breaking up families, and the article had included a story entitled "They took away my son and then raped his mind".

What Barker's book does is to make us ask whether, in the case of the Moonies (which members of the Unification Church are often called, after the founder, Sun Myung Moon), people are brainwashed into becoming members or can choose to.

Chapter 1 describes some of the ways she went about collecting and analysing the data on which her book is based. It tells how she first came across the movement in 1974 when she was invited to speak to a conference by an organisation founded by Sun Myung Moon, whom she vaguely remembered having heard about and whom she determined to investigate further. This led eventually to her being given permission by the British leadership to study the church on more or less her own terms. Among her ways of gleaning information were interviews with members, ex-members, potential members, parents of members, "anti-cult" people, and participation in Moonie activities. Above all, she wanted to find out about Moonies rather than Moon – he interested her for "what his followers are prepared to believe and do for him as the (possibly no more than symbolic) focus of their attention".

Chapter 2 gives a historical background to the Unification Church, ending with Moon's imprisonment in the USA on charges of tax evasion. Chapter 3 is about Unification beliefs: an important point is that they are sincerely held by some, providing a new world view which can disrupt previous relationships. Moreover, since the movement claims to be Christian, this can bring it into sharp conflict with those who would deny it. Chapter 4 describes the process of meeting Moonies and attending Unification "workshops" – residential courses during which potential recruits are told of beliefs and see some of the practices of Moonies.

Chapter 5 is crucial. It is entitled "Choice or Brainwashing?". It first of all describes the libel action already referred to. Then it has a section entitled "Whose Story?": has the convert had a liberating experience as he would claim, or a personality change induced by brainwashing as his relatives might? Are ex-Moonies' claims that they were brainwashed entirely unbiased or motivated by an attempt to explain a phase in their life they now regret? Barker thinks the question needs reformulating to discover under what circumstances a person can objectively be claimed to have made a choice. She isolates four key variables which must be considered if we are to conclude that a person has made a choice: "(1) the individual's predispositions; (2) his past experience and expectations of society; (3) his understanding of the attraction (or otherwise) of the Unification Church; and (4) the immediate environment in which he finds himself".

In Chapter 6, the workshop is examined from the point of view of the potential convert, their "guest", to use Moonie parlance. The vast majority believed Moonies to be misguided, though sincere. Smaller groups in the one case joined up, in the other regarded the church as evil. Certainly, the majority cannot be said to

have been brainwashed. Chapter 7 looks at the effects of alleged deception of potential converts, at the effects of a controlled environment upon them, and the attention showered on guests (“love-bombing”). Chapters 8 and 9 look at the kind of people who become Moonies and their experience of society. The last chapter contains the author’s conclusions.

She concludes that it is not really satisfactory to pose the question “Choice or Brainwashing?” in quite that way, “but that the evidence seems to suggest that the answer lies considerably nearer the rational-choice pole of the continuum than it does to the irresistible-brainwashing pole”.

Is her evidence convincing? Some statistics (e.g. the one on page 207) seem to me to merit Mark Twain’s/Benjamin Disraeli’s assessment of their merits. But by and large her arguments are convincing; she does not seek to promote the Moonie cause, nor does she seek to absolve them from their share of the blame for the way in which many regard them, nor was she at any time convinced by the merits of their claims and thus tempted to join them.

So this book must be warmly commended, especially to gentlemen of the press, and members of the legal profession and of the European Parliament.

Martin Forward

## BOOKS RECEIVED

- Dale C. Allison. *The End of the Ages has Come*. T.&T. Clark. Pp. xiii + 194. £13.95 (hb).
- Angelus Silesius. *The Cherubic Wanderer*. Classics of Western Spirituality. Paulist Press/SPCK. Pp. xxii + 145. £9.95.
- C.J. Arthur. *In the Hall of Mirrors. Problems of Commitment in a Religiously Plural World*. Mowbray. Pp. xiii + 172. £6.95.
- Kenneth Boyd, Brendan Callaghan SJ, Edward Shotter. *Life before Birth. Consensus in Medical Ethics*. SPCK. Pp. viii + 168. £6.95.
- John Calvin. *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536 edition). Collins. Pp. lix + 396. £17.95.
- Jane Dillenberger. *Style and Content in Western Art*. SCM Press. Pp. 240. £10.50.
- Gillian R. Evans, Alister E. McGrath, Allan D. Galloway. *The Science of Theology. The History of Christian Theology*, Vol. I. Marshall Pickering. Pp. xi + 363 (n/p).
- Duncan S. Ferguson. *Biblical Hermeneutics. An Introduction*. SCM Press. Pp. 220. £7.75.
- Dieter Georgi. *The Opponents of Paul in Second Corinthians*. T.&T. Clark. Pp. 464. £19.95 (hb).
- George Goodman. *Seventy Lessons in Teaching and Preaching Christ*. Marshall Pickering. Pp. viii + 402. £4.95.
- Timothy Gorringe. *Redeeming Time. Atonement through Education*. DLT. Pp. xvi + 239. £6.95.
- Robert Grant. *Gods and the One God. Christian Theology in the Graeco-Roman World*. SPCK. Pp. 211. £6.95.
- J.W. de Gruchy. *The Church Struggle in South Africa*. Collins. Pp. xv + 290. £7.95.

- John Halliburton. *The Authority of a Bishop*. SPCK. Pp. viii + 104. £3.95.
- Mary Hayter. *The New Eve in Christ. The Use and Abuse of the Bible in the Debate about Women in the Church*. SPCK. Pp. x + 190. £6.95.
- Richard Harries. *Christianity and War in a Nuclear Age*. Mowbray. Pp. 170. £4.95.
- John Helgeland, Robert J. Daly, J. Patout Burns. *Christians and the Military. The Early Experience*. SCM Press. Pp. vii + 101. £4.95.
- Morna D. Hooker. *Continuity and Discontinuity. Early Christianity in its Jewish Setting*. Epworth. Pp. 76. £3.95.
- Roger Hooker and Christopher Lamb. *Love the Stranger. Christian Ministry in Multi-Faith Areas*. SPCK. Pp. xiv + 161. £4.50.
- J.L. Houlden. *Backward into Light. The Passion and Resurrection of Jesus according to Matthew and Mark*. SCM Press. Pp. x + 84. £3.95.
- Luke T. Johnson. *Sharing Possessions*. SCM Press. Pp. viii + 151. £5.95.
- Alister Kee. *Domination or Liberation. The Place of Religion in Social Conflict*. SCM Press. Pp. xiii + 126. £5.50.
- Judith Lieu. *The Second and Third Epistles of John*. T.&T. Clark. Pp. x + 264. £12.95 (hb).
- D. Martin Lloyd-Jones. *Revival: Can we make it happen?* Marshall Pickering. Pp. 316. £4.95.
- H.D. McDonald. *The God who Responds*. James Clarke and Co. Pp. 204. £5.95.
- Donald M. Mackinnon. *Themes in Theology. The Three-Fold Cord*. T.&T. Clark. Pp. 256. £14.95 (hb).
- D. Moody Smith. *Johannine Christianity*. T.&T. Clark. Pp. xix + 233. £12.95.
- Janet Morley and Hannah Ward (ed.) *Celebrating Women*. MOW/Women in Theology. Pp. 44. £1.50.
- Oliver O’Donovan. *On the Thirty-nine Articles. A Conversation with Tudor Christianity*. Paternoster. Pp. 160. £5.95.
- T.H.L. Parker. *Commentaries on Romans 1532-42*. T.&T. Clark. Pp. xii + 266. £14.95 (hb).
- Francis Penhale. *The Anglican Church Today – Catholics in Crisis*. Mowbray. Pp. viii + 167. £6.95.
- Henry Pickering. *One Thousand Subjects for Speakers and Students*. Marshall Pickering. Pp. 216. £3.50.
- R.H. Preston. *The Future of Christian Ethics*. SCM Press. Pp. viii + 280. £12.50.
- Tom Regan (ed.) *Animal Sacrifices. Religious Perspectives on the Use of Animals in Science*. Temple University Press. Pp. xii + 270. \$24.95.
- Dietrich Ritschl. *The Logic of Theology*. SCM Press. Pp. xxiii + 310. £12.95.
- Jack T. Sanders. *The Jews in Luke-Acts*. SCM Press. Pp. xviii + 410. £15.00.
- Edward Schillebeeckx. *Jesus in our Western Culture. Mysticism, Ethics and Politics*. Pp. viii + 84. £4.95.
- John Stambaugh and David Balch. *The Social World of the First Christians*. SPCK. Pp. 194. £6.95.
- Alan Storkey. *Transforming Economics*. SPCK (Third Way Books). Pp. xi + 212. £5.95.
- Christopher Tuckett. *Reading the New Testament. Methods of Interpretation*. SPCK. Pp. 200. £6.95.
- Christopher Tuckett. *Nag Hammadi and the Gospel Tradition*. T.&T. Clark. Pp. xi + 194. £11.95.

Peter Vardy. *God of our Fathers? Do We Know What We Believe?* DLT. Pp. ix + 124. £3.95.

Francis Watson. *Paul, Judaism and the Gentiles. A Sociological Approach.* CUP (SNTS Monograph Series). Pp. xii + 246. £22.50 (hb).

Claus Westermann. *Genesis 37-50. A Commentary.* SPCK. Pp. 269. £30.00 (hb).

Theo Witvliet. *The Way of the Black Messiah.* SCM Press. Pp. xiv + 332. £12.50.

## OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Graham Baldwin completed the BD at King's College in 1986. He is Independent Evangelical Churches' Chaplain to the University of London.

Anthony Baxter, SJ, teaches Christian Doctrine at Heythrop College, London.

Colin Gunton is Professor of Christian Doctrine at King's College and Joint Editor of the *King's Theological Review*.

Christoph Schwoebel is Lecturer in Systematic Theology at King's College.

Francis Watson is Lecturer in New Testament Studies at King's College and Joint Editor of the *King's Theological Review*.

# THE HOUSE OF VANHEEMS LTD

Established 1793

## ROBEMAKERS AND CLERICAL OUTFITTERS

Makers of Single and Double-breasted Cassocks, Ripon, Sarum and Old English style surplices, Albs, Cassock-Albs, Gowns and Hoods – including the A.K.C. Hood.

We also supply clerical shirts, stocks and collars, choristers' robes, vestments and church textile goods, flags, hassocks and finest quality brass and silverware. A catalogue will be sent upon request.

**BROOMFIELD WORKS, BROOMFIELD PLACE, EALING  
LONDON W13 9LB. Telephone: 01-567 7885**