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T. CRIST

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## Reviews

*Internationale Zeitschriftenschau für Bibelwissenschaft und Grenzgebiete: International Review of Biblical Studies: Revue Internationale des Etudes Bibliques.* Band XX. 1973/74. Düsseldorf. Patmos-Verlag. Pp. xiv + 464. No price.

This international review magazine continues its valuable service to scholars and students of Biblical studies and of related fields of research. Over the years this publication has grown in size so that the present volume contains no less than 3,217 entries derived from some 600 periodicals, *Festschriften* and other books, representing the contribution of some 2,500 authors. It has been prepared by a team of 64 scholars. These figures speak for themselves, and there is no doubt that this truly international review has become an essential bibliographical aid and an extremely useful guide for students of Biblical problems. Each bibliographical entry usually provides a very concise summary or outline of the article or book referred to, but it is not

meant to be a critical review. The majority of the summaries are in German but there are many also in English, and some in French or Latin.

Thus the present review volume offers to its readers a fairly exhaustive survey of books and, especially, articles on Biblical topics, published between 1971 and 1973; most of the publications date, however, from 1972. The classification of the entries follows the established pattern of the previous volumes and it is quite efficient for the tracing of a particular subject of interest. Also the index of the authors is a helpful aid for the same purpose. The details of the pattern of arrangement are shown at the end of the volume in a table of contents.

This work is easy to use and it is well produced. Yet it may be helpful to note that the following abbreviations do not appear in the provided list: *DBM* (entries 927, 978, 983, 1044, etc.), *DGI* (402, 1456, 1461, etc.), *EKK* (657, 658, etc.), and *FThL* (754, 1485). Very seldom one finds slight inconsistencies in the actual form of the abbreviations, e.g. *ʔChE* (1415), while the list has *ʔCE*, *FRu* (2891) and *FrRu*, *TSTK* (2811) and *TsTK*, and *Bet Miqra* (2199) for the usual *Beth Mikra* (2196, etc.).

These very few misprints and omissions do not, however, detract from the exceptional value of the work as a whole, and no serious student of Biblical studies can well dispense with this outstanding volume and series.

A. A. ANDERSON

*Paul's Letter to the Romans*. J. C. O'Neill. Penguin Books. 1975.  
75 pence.

Church history has now been going long enough to make its many historians as variegated a collection as the events they have sought to assess and reconstruct. Interpretation is the woven pattern of the Church's life, but Scripture in its writing and transmission is the warp.

The interpretative process, however, is recognisable within Scripture itself. It is possible, for instance, to compare Paul's letters with that of James, asking how Christians in this or that place related themselves to Abraham—and to each other. It is possible, similarly, to take the Pauline corpus, to argue a particular chronology of the documents and then to discern an alleged change of mind in the apostle with the passing years. Or again, it is possible to concentrate on, say, Ephesians or 2 Timothy and without being outrageous to describe and to account for the Pauline and non-Pauline elements within one writing.

What J. C. O'Neill does, however, is more drastic. Despite the overwhelming *consensus academicus*, he takes an axe to the tree of Romans, chopping away not only a few glossary twigs but also whole branches of development. So down comes 3. 12-18; 5. 12-21; 7. 14-25; 12. 1-21; and more. The pollarding is severe. Can the resultant stump survive?

A combination of historical and theological judgements has persuaded Dr. O'Neill to take this action. First, as he remarks, the case for numerous small additions to the biblical texts during the copying of MSS is quite strong. Secondly, he holds that certain passages, notably those referring to predestination or to the State's authority, are in violent collision with Paul's known convictions. Thirdly, therefore, he reckons that editors added longer sections to the original letter to make it suitable for general use. Fourthly, he is sure that both Catholic and Reformed traditions have misunderstood the basic phrase "the righteousness of God". He wishes to translate this as "the righteousness that God approves"—without any imparting or imputing. "Nothing less is at stake," he writes, "than the simplicity and credibility of the gospel."

Whether the Gospel is simple after this fashion is open to debate. Whether it is credible on the thesis of this book is a sharper issue. For Dr. O'Neill has written it for the general reader, in the belief that the "ordinary Christian" (sic!) is often nearer the truth than the official theologians of his Church. When, as in this case, the author is no mean scholar himself, the commentary would be mellower and richer for more evident signs of conversation with his (dissenting) peers.

MAURICE WILLIAMS

*Contrasting Communities: English Villages in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries.* Margaret Spufford. Cambridge University Press, 1974, xxiii + 373 pp. £7.70.

The local historian has come into his own of recent years. What happened in the countryside is as important as what happened at court. To know how ordinary people fared is as important as accounts of decisive national events. But local history has now become a specialised field of study, requiring among other things knowledge of landscape, soil and occupations, analysis of population and property, the careful examination of wills, and not least a recognition that "religious thought, anxiety and devotion were real factors in the life of the ordinary villager, however humble he, or she, might be". (p. 350). Most counties have skilled archivists busy collecting local records. From the Department of English Local History of Leicester University trained workers and invaluable material are steadily forthcoming.

Mrs. Spufford pays tribute to Leicester and Keele. This important book is the result of much close research and of persistence in the face of many difficulties. That there are some loose ends can be forgiven, though the result is longer and more expensive than will make for the circulation it deserves.

Three Cambridgeshire parishes have been chosen for study: Chippenham on the chalk on the east, Orwell to the south-west on the clay uplands and Willingham in the north on the border of the Isle of Ely. Twelve to fifteen acres was the minimum needed to support

a family in independence in the 16th and 17th centuries. Those with less had to hire themselves out as wage-labourers. There were pronounced distinctions between yeomen, husbandmen and labourers, but the small owner was being rapidly dispossessed late in the 17th century and the first half of the 18th. In Chippenham he had disappeared earlier. In Willingham with its stock-farming and dairying he survived longer and the number of small tenants increased.

The second part of the book deals with schooling and suggests that the number who could read was probably greater than those who could write. They were subject to much propagandist literature. In the third part the religion of the area is examined. It has not proved easy to link the evidence of the 1550s, the 1580s and the 1630s, but Mrs. Spufford is convinced that the population in general was Protestant in sympathy, though not universally or strictly Calvinistic. The importance of family traditions and loyalties is clear—a fact of which many illustrations can be given from our own denomination.

Mrs. Spufford has found much valuable material in the *Fenstanton Records*, published by the Hanserd Knollys Society in 1854. The General Baptists were an influential and active community, even if not very numerous. The total number of Baptists in the kingdom in 1669 is put at 7,000, of whom 600 were in Cambridgeshire. There were five or six times as many Presbyterians and more Congregationalists and Quakers than Baptists. But Dissenters were to be found in every layer of society. In Willingham many of them were in relatively comfortable circumstances. In most congregations there appear to have been three times as many women as men. The established clergy were never very successful in determining the theological sympathies of their parishioners.

These pages contain significant new evidence of Familist adherents in Cambridgeshire. This emphasises the likelihood of Anabaptist opinions having been known in the countryside in the 16th century and is perhaps confirmation of Christopher Hill's insistence on Milton's interest in Familists. A parallel to Mrs. Spufford's careful study of wills may be found in Edward Parry's article on Helmdon Wills, 1603-1760 in *Northants Past and Present*, Vol. V, 1974, No. 3.

Whitley's initials were W.T. (p. 276, n. 21) and the map referred to on p. 184 should be 11, not 9.

ERNEST A. PAYNE

*The Improbable Puritan: a life of Bulstrode Whitelocke 1605-1675.*  
Ruth Spalding. Faber & Faber. 1975. 318pp. £4.50.

This, the first full-length biographical study of Bulstrode Whitelocke for over a century, is a most exciting and attractively written book. It is exciting for any student of the period not merely because it brings Whitelocke himself into close and sympathetic focus but because it draws attention to the wealth of manuscript material bearing on his life and times which he left behind him.

He played a part in public affairs for upwards of 40 years in

England although perhaps his most colourful contribution was his experience as ambassador of the regicide republic to Queen Christiana of Sweden. Nevertheless, readers of the *Quarterly* will probably be most interested in his links with the radical Protestants of the period which Miss Spalding promises to explore at greater length in her proposed edition of Whitelocke's "Diary". Certainly the man himself was an interesting mixture: honest to the point of bluntness, uxorious to a degree, an enthusiast for music and dancing, a rather strict (not to say priggish) Sabbatarian, distinctly worldly in his dress and yet one who seems to have taken his stand firmly and without false heroics with the persecuted dissenters after the restoration.

In the 1640s the author believes that Whitelocke's vote went to the Independents more for their belief in religious freedom than for their congregationalism. It would be interesting to know whether his friendship with George Cockayn the Independent minister changed this. Other men among the sectaries appear briefly too—John (not Thomas!) Tombes in a rather muddled reference, Peter Chamberlain, James Naylor, John Owen (and his son, a Cromwellian captain in Ireland), the two Goodwins, John and Thomas (both granted doctorates by Miss Spalding) and John Wildman the plotter. Even Jerome Sankey makes a brief appearance as a species of academic bear leader to Whitelocke's son James! Finally, Miss Spalding suggests that his three sermons published in 1711 with an introduction by William Penn "might well have been written by a Quaker". All this not only makes a worthwhile and thoroughly readable story but also whets the reader's appetite for the promised "Diary".

B. R. WHITE

*Science and the Modern World.* A. N. Whitehead. Glasgow. Fontana Books. 1975. 252pp. £1.50.

Process thought, if only theologians would read it, has much to give to modern theology. In the complex areas of the character of God and the nature of his activity, and in the vexed question of theodicy, process thought is especially fruitful. Why then is it still widely neglected?

There are two main reasons. The basic philosophical texts are extremely difficult to master, and they were written mainly in the 20s. Now the reissue of Whitehead's *Science and the Modern World*, first published in 1926, makes readily available one of the easier works of the acknowledged father of process thought.

The original purpose of the book was "to analyse the reactions of science in forming that background of instinctive ideas which control the activities of successive generations" (229). The history of modern science is traced from the 17th century, and, as one expects from Whitehead, his alternative philosophy of science, in which *organism takes the place of matter*, is worked out with it. This feature of the

book makes it a useful first hand introduction to Whitehead's metaphysics.

The chapter on "God" sees him as the metaphysical principle of concretion, limitation and activity within the philosophy of organism. Lack of familiarity with the terms, rather than lack of orthodoxy, is the main problem here. In the penultimate chapter "Science and Religion", Whitehead recalls how "both religion and science have always been in a state of continual development" (216). The advances in science *are matched* by advances in religion, not least in that realm of the doctrine of God, where the "instinctive fear of the wrath of a tyrant which was inbred in the unhappy populations of . . . the ancient world" (220), is happily replaced by a religious vision "of something which stands beyond, behind, and within, the passing flux of immediate things; something which is real, and yet waiting to be realised . . ." (227).

Modern theologians and thinking Christians should use Whitehead, much in the manner Augustine used Plato and Aquinas used Aristotle. Both these giants of Greek philosophy are pre-Christian, yet a careful use of their ideas by Christian theologians helped to reconceptualise Christian doctrine for centuries to come. Christian theology today should use process thought in the same way. It is trite to dismiss Whitehead's doctrine of God as sub-Christian when his metaphysics can be fruitfully employed in the apologetic task of restating God's activity in a processive, emergent world.

The book has, of course, historical as well as contemporary value. Whitehead's synthesis between religion and science pre-dates the publication of Teilhard de Chardin's *The Phenomenon of Man* by more than 30 years, and it pre-dates the standard works of the emerging experts in this field, Barbour, Peacocke and Schilling by nearly half a century. However, an evolutionary version of Christianity still needs a metaphysics, and only a process metaphysics will do.

ADRIAN THATCHER