

trends and contemporary voices; between the voices of believers/belongers and those of scholars (though see below on the evenness of this). Some of the preoccupations of those within the religions in the latter part of the 20th century are included as well as material focusing on themes such as sacred place, women in religions and making moral decisions. These latter are selected topics for the Open University Course. One comment I have on the theme of women in relation to the revised Buddhism section is that I missed the voices of women such as Rita Gross or Chatsumarn Kabilsingh who speak as contemporary Buddhist women on this theme. All the 'recent and contemporary concerns' voices seem to be male! Another omission for me concerning the theme of sacred place seemed to be a contemporary account of the Hejj or a visit to a sufi shrine. Of course themes alone should not mould or determine selection but rightly what emerges out of a religion's own literature, but these two examples of omissions are central to these faiths.

Quite differently, I found the critical scholarly essays in the Hinduism section on the whole concept of Hinduism; caste; theodicy and karma etc. very stimulating and I think that the inclusion of some analytical anthropological writing on the other traditions, of which there is a good amount in most cases, would have enriched the texts. Having said this, it is already a weighty volume. Finally I want to make a very different kind of point. The 1978 volume had at least one *visual* text, the ox-herding pictures. Visual, and aural, texts are as important in the communication and understanding of traditions as are words, and I should like to see more attempts to present at least some examples of these in such a volume as this. I realise that both the visual and the aural are present in the broadcasting support to the Open University's courses, and also that artwork is more expensive to produce than words, but this volume is obviously intended to be sold and used as a resource in its own right and independently of the rest of the course materials and should therefore highlight the place of the visual text.

These suggestions, and every reviewer will have her own, do not, however, detract from the contribution of a volume whose extensive index and well-presented table of contents make it usable in a variety of contexts.

PEGGY MORGAN

THE NEW TESTAMENT WORLD: INSIGHTS FROM CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY by Bruce Malina (Third Edition Revised and Expanded) *Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, Kentucky 2001 Pp. xiv + 256, pbk.*

This is a reworked edition of a popular book intended primarily for beginners at tertiary level in America. The premise of the work is 'that to understand what people say and mean to say one must know their social system.' (xii) Cultural anthropology is presented as another tool, to be used along with more traditional exegetical disciplines, to help understand the world in which Jesus lived and moved, and from which the church was born. The inhabitants of the New Testament world are compared to a 'transplanted group of foreigners'(p.2) and this image recurs throughout the work. The modern student needs as many tools as possible to help them understand what these

foreigners are saying.

Some doubts which were raised about earlier versions of the book (e.g. a review by PHEME PERKINS in *CBQ* 45, 1988, pp. 498-499) have been taken into account, as well as responses from pupils and colleagues. Perkins suggested that the book was too detailed or specialized for beginners; the Introduction seems geared to answer this. Doubts about the suitability of applying descriptive models to NT data are addressed when the author shows that models used derive mainly from 'contemporary Mediterranean anthropologists' and that continuity allows such models to be applied to the region in the NT period (xii).

Moving to the text proper, culture is obviously basic to understanding anthropology and Malina defines it (p.9) as 'an organised system of symbols by which persons, things, and events are endowed with rather specific and socially shared meanings, feelings, and values.' Here the debt to Clifford Geertz is clear. The first model (p.7) has a general application to the study of any society. The model schematises the differences, similarities and identities of human cultures based on nature (identical), culture (similarity/difference) and person (unique) and is a very useful one.

The introduction gives an informative tour of basic anthropological approaches and styles. The three models most used by Malina are structural functionalist, symbolic and conflict/interest. He hopes that these serve to function as 'eyeglasses' you can put on better to understand the NT documents. These models are applied throughout the following chapters, and each chapter has NT texts against which to test their usefulness.

The main chapters focus on honour and shame (1), person and group (2), maintaining social status (3) envy as a social evil (4) kinship and marriage (5) purity (6) group development (7) and there is a brief theological conclusion. These are all standard anthropological *topoi* and Malina does a good job in introducing them, making them intelligible and suggesting how they can be applied to the NT. Particularly interesting is chap.2 which is based largely on the work of Bernard de Géraudon's three zone model of the 'Makeup of Human Beings'. This itself is presumably indebted to Augustine's model of memory, will and intellect and is integrated constructively with biblical anthropology. The chapter on purity, heavily influenced by Mary Douglas, is also fascinating. It is particularly refreshing to read that Jesus actually shared the symbolic purity rules and attitudes of his contemporaries and differed only on their purpose and application (pp.187-196). It is interesting to note that Malina does not see Jesus' death, as represented in the NT, as a sacrifice (p.193), even though the evidence fits admirably with his own analysis of sacrifice a few pages previously (p.180-187). Also the evidence adduced does not warrant the conclusion that none of the terms for office-holders in the church came from sacred spheres (p.193). This also ignores work done by such scholars as John Collins on the term *diakonia*. One minor irritation is the constant use of sickly etic terms such as 'Jesus movement', 'Jesus-group', 'post Jesus-group.' Why not use the more historically accurate and emic term *ekklesia*?

Overall, this is a very interesting and useful introduction to anthropological analysis of the NT. It also helps to raise all sorts of interesting

historical and ecclesiological questions. After all, if Jesus belonged to a group-oriented, collectivistic society which respected boundaries and valued hierarchy, this surely has implications for the society *he* founded, whether it be called a 'post-Jesus group' or the Church?

NEIL FERGUSON OP

ISAIAH ed Brevard S. Childs *Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville, 2001. (The Old Testament Library). Pp. xx + 555. £35.00 Hbk.*

The publication of Brevard Childs' commentary reflects a major shift in recent Old Testament scholarship, not only with respect to the book of Isaiah, but to the Old Testament in general. Previously, commentaries on Isaiah followed the historical-critical or diachronic division of the book into First Isaiah (chs. 1-39), Second-Isaiah (40-55) and Third-Isaiah (56-66). Commentaries and studies examined each of these 'Isaias' separately, often with little or no comment about the potential relationship between them. To see something of this, one only has to consult *The Old Testament Library* list on the dust cover of this volume to see that Otto Kaiser covered Isaiah 1-39 while Claus Westermann covered Isaiah 40-66. In contrast Childs is concerned to treat the 66 chapters as a unified whole even though he readily acknowledges that it 'cannot be formulated in terms of single authorship' (p. 3). Despite what some might suspect, this is not due only to Childs's well known interest in the final or canonical shape of biblical books or to the current popularity of synchronic analysis of the Bible (of which Childs is critical). It is, as he acknowledges, also a response to the majority of recent diachronic studies of Isaiah which show a marked interest in how the book was shaped by redactors. This shift of focus from the earlier to the final stages of composition is gathering momentum across the spectrum of Old Testament studies and raises challenging questions about the relationship between diachronic and synchronic analysis.

Even though Childs's intention is to examine the book as a unified whole, he retains the classical historical-critical division outlined above. His aim however is to demonstrate the integral relationship between these three parts of the larger whole. At 555 pages, his commentary initially looks a formidable tome. But, when one considers that 286 pages are devoted to Isaiah 1-39, 150 pages to Isaiah 40-55 and 108 pages to Isaiah 56-66, it is, in comparison to the earlier volumes of Kaiser and Westermann in this series, remarkably compact. Perhaps only a scholar of Childs's calibre and breadth of knowledge could have undertaken such a task and executed it so well. He demonstrates throughout that he is conversant with contemporary as well as past scholarship. Selected bibliographies are provided for each section of the book and each unit discussed, there are concise introductions to each section, and at strategic intervals a summary of his understanding of the text to that point (cf. for example p. 49 for his summary of Isaiah 1-5). Childs also provides 'a few probes' (p. 5) on the impact of Isaiah on the New Testament and Christian tradition but acknowledges this is too vast a topic for a commentary of this kind to tackle in any detail.

Nevertheless, there are some shortcomings, perhaps determined by the