

Book Reviews

Reviews Editor: Victor Hayes

Sati: Historical and Phenomenological Essays.

Sharma, Arvind, (with Ajit Ray, Alaka Hejib and Katherine Young)
(Foreword by M. N. Srinivas) Delhi:
Motilal Banarsidass, 1988. xvii + 129 pp.
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The word *Sati* ('suttee' is an Anglicization of the Sanskrit) refers both to *the Hindu woman*, just widowed, who is being consumed alive on the funeral pyre of her husband and to *the rite* itself, the act of so-called "self-immolation" (pp. xv, 75). The word 'Suttee', Sharma tells us, came into use in 1787 and has the same double reference as *Sati*. The complexity of the subject is well grasped from an inspection of the eighty entries under 'Suttee' in the index.

One doesn't have to be a scholar of Hindu tradition to imagine the horror of concrementation. For most of us, each one of the untold thousands of women who were burned alive is a mind-numbing witness to the power of ideology. A man, need it be said, was not required to climb onto his deceased wife's funeral pyre, place his dead wife's head on his lap and be burned alive. It was life and re-marriage for men. (Cf. n. 113)

Many Westerners will have read Mary Daly's moving and fighting account of Suttee as one of the major expressions of "the Sado-Ritual Syndrome" (see her *Gyn/ecology*, 1978, pp. 107-133). Daly is strongly influenced by Katherine Mayo's powerful *Mother India* (1927), and mentions some of the controversy it provoked (*Gyn/ecology* p.

127). However, Daly doesn't appear in the Indexes to Sharma's book, or in the 150 item bibliography (though Eric Sharpe does, if he can recognise his first name on p. 119). And, while Mayo is mentioned in the Bibliography and in two obscure (second hand?) footnotes (n. 79 and n. 87), her significance is kept obscure. Ajit Ray's contribution, however, sees *sati* as a local development of a wider ancient custom behind which may be discernable "the jealousy of men over women". (p. 56. Cf. pp. xi, 59f)

Arvind Sharma has a strange liking for little essays of two or three pages. Hence his nine assorted "chapters" take up only 50 pages (about one-third of the total number). His first chapter, however, is more substantial, as are two essays by Ajit Ray, and one by Alaka Hejib and Katherine Young. There is also a Foreword by N. M. Srinivas and 30 pages of Endnotes (363 of them!). Some of the Endnotes deserve inclusion in the text, but some of the "chapters" (eg 5 and 7) are brief and inconsequential enough to have been Endnotes. The book does lack a coherence and organisation that would normally be provided by single-authorship, but Sharma tries to make a virtue of "repetition". He says it's "inevitable" and even "desirable". It isn't.

To read all the essays is to find answers to most of our spontaneous questions, eg, Why did (how could) the widow do it? How could family and friends have gone along with it? Who should have the credit for the abolition of the rite? How did the custom arise? and what's really behind it anyway?

In chapter 1 Sharma looks at Western reactions to *sati* going right back to Greek accounts of the spectacle in the 4th century BC. Some Greeks were moved to pity, some to exuberant praise, while others described the custom as savage and inhumane. Such Western reactions - a mix of admiration and condemnation - continued down into the 19th century, to the events that lead up to abolition. (pp. 6-10)

In the 19th century, the depth of feeling and incomprehension among many missionaries was extreme. William Carey, for example, tried to stop a burning in 1799. When all his arguments failed, an utterly frustrated Cary exclaimed to the priests that it was "shocking murder". The priests replied that it was "a great act of holiness". (58) Soon after, Joshua Marshman anguished: "To have seen savage wolves thus tearing a human body, limb from limb, would have been shocking; but to see relations and neighbours do this to one with whom they had familiarly conversed not an hour before, and to do it with an air of levity, was almost too much for me to bear". (p. 60f)

It may seem somewhat perverse to worry about who should get the credit for the abolition of *sati*. The book recognises, of course, Lord Bentinck's action in 1829, but it also makes out a case for Rammohun Roy (chapters 9 and 11), for the missionaries (chapter 10), and for the indigenous tradition (in various chapters).

Clearly the British jurisdiction had a problem: to be in favour of religious toleration seemed to leave them effectively condoning murder and suicide. (p. 51). But having chosen to abolish *sati*, says Srinivas, they "hogged" the credit, which "annoyed - and continues to annoy - many Indians". (x) (Srinivas points out that "the Tantrics denounced *sati* in strong terms; Akbar and some Maratha chiefs fought against it; and Albuquerque abolished it in Goa in 1510". (x))

A new twist occurred after 1857, says

Sharma, when *sati* came to be used as a moral justification for Indians to submit to British Raj. The argument ran: Horrid rites like *sati* prevailed in India. These were stamped out by the British. If the British were now to leave India, there would be a relapse into barbarism. It was in the British interest then to "sensationalise" *sati* and "monopolise the credit" for having abolished it, playing down any role that Hindu scholastic opinion and Hindu government had taken against *sati*. (p. 10f)

The missionaries get their due from Ajit Ray in chapter 10. He credits them with "keeping the issue alive in the conscience of the people in both India and Britain", and "helping indirectly to organise that Hindu response for abolition which played an important part in the termination of the rite". (p. 64). Srinivas, however, thinks the role of the missionaries was equivocal. They may have been moved by compassion for the victims of *sati* but they also wanted to show that Christianity was superior to Hinduism and held the solution to the many social ills of the Hindus. (ix)

The indigenous attitudes toward *sati* are dealt with in chapter 2, which points briefly to "a fairly persistent tradition" of indigenous protest against *sati*; in chapter 6, which examines the scriptural evidence that could be adduced in defence of *sati*; and in chapter 4, which argues that by the mid seventeenth century the role of the Brahmans had changed from that of dissuasion from the commitment of *sati* to that of persuasion and perpetration! Of Sharma's other contributions, chapter 3 is a rather contrived statement that admiration and condemnation towards *sati* cross cultural lines, and "Chapters" 5 and 7, each two-pages long, probably should have been footnotes.

Still on the question of indigenous attitudes, Ray points out that Bentinck's action was supported by a strong native response ("sweeping over the country") in favor of abolition (p. 55). But he shows also that in the first half of the 19th century

there were not only opponents but advocates of *sati* and, in addition, a great "silent majority" of the uncommitted. This silent majority was "indifferent" to the arguments of the *opponents* of *sati* because of an insensibility which comes from "witnessing from your youth the voluntary burning of women among your elder relatives, your neighbours and the inhabitants of the surrounding villages, and by observing the indifference at the time when the women are writhing under the torture of the flames". (p. 54, quoting Rammohun Roy; cf. p. 65)

On the other hand, public indifference to the arguments of the *advocates* of *sati* was due, in Ray's view, to "the impact of the liberal tradition of medieval India - that of Ramananda, Kabir, Dadu and Nanak - which questioned the validity of meaningless ceremonialism in religion and denounced the autocracy of the priests". (p. 54)

In the final chapter, Hejib and Young adopt a phenomenological approach, exploring *sati* in its religious setting. It's the most absorbing paper in the collection. The authors realise that this approach could place them in an invidious position by creating the impression that they are trying to justify the custom when today's humanistic values and feminist perspectives arouse only strong feelings of condemnation. But, as the authors put it, they want "to understand what was Hindu about *sati*, for stripped of the adjective Hindu, *sati* was nothing but a suicidal act or homicide". (74). This last chapter makes Sharma's whole book important reading.

— Victor C. Hayes,
South Australian College: Sturt Campus

*Religions and Comparative Thought:
Essays in Honor of the Late Dr. Ian
Kesarcodi-Watson*

Edited by Purusottama Bilimoria and Peter Fenner. Sri Satguru Publications, Delhi: 1988, xxiv, 459 pages, IRs 285.

On the 12th of May, 1984 Ian Kesarcodi-Watson, who had been teaching in the Department of Philosophy at La Trobe University since 1974, died at the age of 45. In remembrance of him a group of 28 of his friends and colleagues have contributed articles which have been edited and published by Purusottama Bilimoria and Peter Fenner in a volume entitled *Religions and Comparative Thought*.

As is appropriate for a scholar with very broad interests in the fields of Indian studies, philosophy and comparative religion, the book contains articles covering a wide range of topics. There are, for example, comparative discussions of Indian and non-Indian religious traditions like N. Smart's "The Convergence of Religions" (pp. 247-256) and M.J. Charlesworth's "Australian Aboriginal Religion in a Comparative Context" (pp. 257-263) as well as essays in philosophy, some comparative like J.L. Shaw's "Singular Existential Sentences: Contemporary Philosophy and the Nyaya" (pp. 211-240) and some wholly within one school of thought like "On the Concept of Vastu in the Vaisnava-sahajiyā Tradition of Medieval Bengal" by G.A. Hayes (pp. 141-149).

Others, like P.M. McKibbin's "The Personalities of Prakṛti - Keys to a Feminist Predicament" (pp. 265-284) and P. Fenner's "A Therapeutic Contextualisation of Buddhist Madhyamika Consequential Analysis" (pp. 319-351), examine Indian concepts in the light of contemporary secular issues. Still others, such as "Unravelling the meanings of Life?" (pp. 407-459) by R. Sylvan and N. Griffin are more difficult to categorise but not less interesting for that.

Organising such a varied wealth of

material was clearly a problem for the editors in that they could have ordered the articles according to several different areas of interest. They have chosen to group the articles under three headings: Eastern Philosophy and Religions, Cross-Cultural Studies in Philosophy and Religion and General Philosophy and Religion. Such an arrangement is reasonable though it does have the effect of leaving some articles separated that might have better been placed together. For example, the three articles on the Bhagavadgita, G.M. Bailey's "An Essay on the Bhagavadgita as an Impediment to the Understanding of Hinduism" (pp. 113-122), E.J. Sharpe's "The Bhagavad Gita and the West" (pp. 289-292) and "On Not Having Regards for Fruits: Kant and the Gita" (pp. 353-367) by P.A.E. Hutchings and P. Bilimoria, are placed some distance from each other with one under the first of the headings and the other two under the second.

Since there would not be space in a review for a discussion of each of such a large number of articles, attention will unfortunately have to be confined to the salient points of a few of them in order to give an idea of the character of the collection as a whole. In his Introduction (pp. ix-xiii) to the volume, G. Bailey provides a moving and intimate view of Ian Kesarcodi-Watson's career and work. P. Masefield's "The Origin and Development of the Preta in Early Buddhism" (pp.47-69) is a careful and fascinating description of the relationship of Vedic ideas of sacrifice to the plight, according to two Pali texts of the spirit, or *peta* of the deceased individual who has been remiss in his or her almsgiving. "Buddhist Thought Reflected in East Asian Landscape Art" (pp. 71-86) by L.R. Oates outlines the blending of ideas from Indian Buddhism, Taoism and Shinto in the formation of Zen aesthetics as seen in landscape gardening and the tea ceremony. D.R. Templeman's study of Buddhist Tantric hagiography (pp. 87-100) uses examples like the biography of

Krsnacarya, who underwent a spiritual change while retaining his arrogant personality, to explore the way in which the hagiography of a religious tradition must be viewed as far as possible from the inside if it is to be accurately understood. M.D. McLean's "Ramakrishna: the Greatest of the Saktas of Bengal?" (pp. 151-172) looks at the Bengali mystic Ramakrishna in relation to the Vedanta of his follower Vivekananda and the Sakta devotionalism of his eighteenth century precursor, the poet Ramprasad Sen. Finally, there is "The Purpose and Christology of the Fourth Gospel" (pp. 387-406) by J. Painter, an interesting examination of the doctrines of the Son of Man, the Son of God and the *logos* as set forth by John.

Religions and Comparative Thought is both a valuable collection of articles on religion and philosophy and a worthy tribute to a man of learning and passion.

— R.K. Barz,
Australian National University

Aboriginal Australians and Christian Missions: Ethnographic and Historical Studies.

Swain, Tony and Deborah Bird Rose (editors)

Adelaide, Australian Association for the Study of Religions, 1988. 500 Pages \$29.9 (order from SA Government Printer, 282 Richmond Road, Netley SA 5037

At last, a wide-ranging collection of studies on Christian missions in Aboriginal Australia! Christian missions were at the forefront of change and their impact has been enormous but far from uniform; they have been hailed as saviours of the Aboriginal people and denigrated as agents destructive of Aboriginal culture. Whilst undoubtedly both views may be correct, a systematic coverage of the issues is long overdue and the editors must be

congratulated for bringing together such a diverse range of studies. There are thirty three contributions in this volume. Who would have thought there were so many studies of Aboriginal missions and yet, even so, whole areas of the topic have been omitted.

The volume is organised in four parts and, given the diversity of the subject, it is not surprising to find that some sections fit together better than others. Nevertheless the organization into sections has made quite surprising sense of the material and co-ordinated it into manageable groups.

The first section entitled *Perspectives: Comparative, Philosophical and Reflective* offers a broad overview of the role of Christianity as "the hand-maiden of Europeanization" (p 53).

The editors say in their introduction that two assumptions underlie the book and form the organizing principles around which the collection is based. One is that Christian missions "had an immense impact on the lives of Aboriginal peoples in Australia" (p 1) and secondly that Aborigines "responded to the mission presence in a coherent, reasoned and intelligent manner" (p 2).

The first section is intended to be a more removed and philosophical approach than that taken by the specific studies which follow. Although the editors had intended that this section would stand back and be able to "highlight the diversity of opinion" (p 5), it in fact largely describes the failure of Christian missions in theological terms and their success as the bearers, indeed initiators, of cultural change.

The volume commences very fittingly with an *Elegy* in Yir Yoront by Jack Bruno, a senior Aboriginal man who lived much of his life at the Mitchell River Mission in northern Queensland. In this study of religious change it places very clearly the importance of Aboriginal religion. "The Ancestors set down the world as it is" (p 13). Unfortunately it is one of only two Aboriginal contributions and it comes first by way of background rather than being

central to the theme of the book.

An overview of the whole complex subject is given by Burridge who places the book into a clear perspective. "As with any other faith, from a cultural point of view Christianity seems to offer poisons with its nectar" (p 29). This is because "missionaries brought to Aborigines not just a foreign faith which might have been as acceptable to them as to anyone else but a faith in foreign cultural wrappings" (p 24).

The third contribution is a refreshing, personal look at a Catholic mission in the Kimberley region by Alroe who describes himself somewhat proudly as a "failed missionary". He introduces at this early stage in the book the two sides of the missionary-Aboriginal equation, namely that Aborigines depended upon the missionaries but equally true is the fact that missionaries depended upon the Aborigines. "Strehlow suggested that traditional Aboriginal communities survived because of the missionaries. I think his paradox may need reversing. The Kimberley missionaries were, and are, very adaptable parasites that depended on the survival of their host for their continued existence" (p 41).

The government welfare cult has now replaced the missionaries but even more so in clear biological rationality, it depends upon the continued poverty and powerlessness of Aborigines for its existence. The Berndt team provides, as usual, a study of considerable depth drawn on long years of intensive field work. They show how mission aims remained constant even across quite wide sectarian differences. "The basic intention was to change the socio-cultural systems *and* the individual lives of the people with whom they worked" (p 45).

The last contribution in this overview section is by Tonkinson who draws on his field work at Jigalong to reflect on the all pervasive role of missionaries as agents of change irrespective of who the individuals might be. But he shows that such a view

by itself is an inadequate model of change. Thus he raises the two way process of change in which Aboriginal people attempt to develop an "empowering symbiosis" (p 71).

Part II is a substantial contribution covering the history of nine different missions. As such it provides a very good coverage on a case study basis of mission history in Australia. The historical perspective suggests that early missionaries were much less tolerant of Aboriginal cultural and religious views than those who followed later.

The diversity of viewpoint as well as region makes this section a comprehensive study of the historical perspective. In Tasmania, Plomley says, "Christianity had entirely failed them" (p 99). Green on the other hand describes certain missionaries as the only people putting out a loud "cry for justice and equality" (p 172). He describes the work of people he calls "exceptional protestant missionaries in Western Australia" (p 156). Stockton evaluates the outstanding commitment of some "maverick" catholic missionaries who were largely deserted by their church. "They were driven by a passionate zeal for a people" and "often lacked the church support they deserved" (p 209). The article by Edwards and Clarke is a very good source of reference on Uniting Church missions across Australia looking at both the problems and the perceived successes.

Part III also contains nine contributions and clearly it is impossible to comment on all of them. These are detailed case studies of particular missionaries placed in some kind of social context. The division between Parts II and III is not at all clear since all contributions in these two sections are descriptions of individual missions and missionaries and none can be appreciated outside the social environment in which they were acting.

Willis makes a very important contextual point when he says that the exchange between missionaries and Aborigines "took place within the context of

attempted patronage by the missionaries and selective acceptance by the Aborigines" (p 319).

The final paper in this section by Bell returns to the more general discussion and as such is not well located in this case study section but nevertheless makes good critical reading.

The last section contains some very interesting material and should not be ignored because it comes at the end of a long book. I thoroughly recommend use of the book as a reference source and therefore it is not necessary to read it all through at once. This last section commences with some of those wonderful Captain Cook stories which abound in Northern Australia. This is the second of two Aboriginal contributions to the book and as such offers a refreshing and different perspective. But something of this other view is also glimpsed in Deborah Bird Rose's chapter entitled *Jesus and the Dingo*.

This section sums up the varied patterns of social change that occurred as a result of missionary enterprise amongst Aboriginal people in a myriad of settings.

Overall the book spells out clearly that change was far from uni-directional and that the Aboriginal role in that change is seldom appreciated. The editors recognize that there are noticeable gaps even in such a comprehensive collection. Unfortunately the Aboriginal view, so essential for a balanced appreciation, is miniscule and there is virtually nothing on religious roles of Aboriginal women. Maybe a second volume will address these issues?

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The University of Adelaide

The World's Religions

Sutherland, Stuart, et al, eds.

Boston, Mass.

G.K. Hall and Company, 1988. xiv + 995 pp. US \$75.00 cloth ISBN 0-8161-8978-1.

Quite simply, "the aim of this book is to offer a survey of the world's religions" (p 3). To achieve this the editors, all from King's College London, have compiled a fifty-eight chapter handbook of nearly 1000 pages. The chapters are gathered into six parts; religion and the study of religions (four chapters), Judaism and Christianity (fourteen chapters), Islam (thirteen chapters), Asian religions (thirteen chapters), traditional religions (eight chapters) and new religions (six chapters). Clearly the volume is, if nothing else, encyclopaedic in coverage.

Each part except the first opens with an introductory chapter by the section editor — absolutely essential given the rather nondescript general introduction by Sutherland. The parts then consist of a series of geographically, temporally or topically specific chapters as appropriate; thus Part 5 on traditional religions has chapters on Shamanism, Australian aboriginal religion, Melanesian religions, Maori religion, African traditional religion, North American traditional religion and Latin American traditional religion.

Each chapter is by a different, usually British, specialist — although the ubiquitous Peter Clarke is responsible for ten per cent of them. The rather nondirective editorial policy is reflected in the wide variety of styles and approaches used in these chapters. Some are exemplary for their clarity, precision and unpretentious style (eg, Frend on early Christianity), while others (e.g., Barrington-Ward on modern Christianity) are frustrating in their failure to present a full picture of their topics. Most of the chapters include all too brief suggestions for further reading, many of which overlook key works (e.g., no Buber in the modern Judaism chapter). Few authors

have bothered to footnote their chapters, and works cited in chapters are not listed in the suggested further readings. The index, while lengthy, is not overly ambitious and omits a number of topics and cross references that would assist the enquirer.

This is not to say that the work is unredeemable. In fact it provides a great deal of useful information that cannot be found in any other single volume. Worth special mention are the chapters on traditional and new religions that tend to be overlooked in such compendia; equally valuable are the discussions of generally neglected segments of mainstream religions — Chinese and Indian Christians, North American and Chinese Muslims, etc. What the collection lacks in overall reference apparatus and editorial direction is offset by its unpretentious and straightforward approach to the various religions. The general introduction does not clearly specify the intended audience, but the tone and content of individual chapters suggest that upper secondary, large public and basic undergraduate library collections might want to find room for *The World's Religions* on their shelves.

—G.E. Gorman
Charles Sturt University

Australian Religious Studies: A Bibliography of Post-graduate Theses 1922-1986 (Sydney):

Bentley, Peter, comp. and ed.

National Catholic Research Council, 1988, vii + 100 pp. A\$6.50 pap. ISBN 0-949347-02-7 (available from ACBC Secretariat, GPO Box 368, Canberra 2601).

This bibliography lists 661 theses and dissertations presented at fifty-two tertiary institutions (twenty-nine of them overseas). To be eligible for inclusion these research presentations "must contain an aspect of religion with an Australian

component or orientation". Religion, says Bentley is "broadly defined and includes not only Church based studies but studies of other religions and works about the contents and nature of religious beliefs and attitudes." (p 11).

Thus, masters degrees of many kinds (including a "Master of the Built Environment" — which sounds like a creature from Raiders of the Lost Ark), doctorates in all shapes and sizes (including research for the Doctor of Ministry (D Min) which some years ago replaced the BD) and even something called a "Tinline Thesis" all come under Bentley's scrutiny.

While all this sounds most impressive one wonders why Bentley should concede that "it is quite possible that some theses have been inadvertently excluded from this bibliography", when even a cursory online search of *Dissertation Abstracts International* would show a number of overseas theses and dissertations with Australian content that have been omitted. Still, the compilation is a good start and one hopes that some appropriate body (AASR or ANZTLA perhaps) will fill the void left by the NCRC's demise.

Following the Introduction (which says nothing about the choice of 1922 as a starting point), Acknowledgements and Abbreviations, the bibliography is arranged under fifteen broad subject categories (eg, "aboriginal studies", "Jewish studies", "ministry in the church") which are further divided as appropriate (fourteen subdivisions under "education", for example). Each entry consists of entry number, researcher, title, degree, date, awarding institution — all one needs to know. Brief abstracts or keywords would have been useful in the case of such titles as "Attitudes toward authority among tertiary students in South Australia", which appears under "other" in the sociology of religion section. An author index concludes the work. The only major organizational complaint is that the subject subdivisions are not listed with the main

subjects in the contents page, which makes it more than likely that one will overlook potentially useful subject areas.

Any library supporting postgraduate research in religion or theology will want this initial guide to Australian research degrees in these areas. Perhaps it can be updated with regular supplements in an appropriate journal pending a revised edition.

— G.E. Gorman
Charles Sturt University

A Scholar's Guide to Academic Journals in Religion

Dawsey, James M.

ATLA Bibliography Series, 23 Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1988. xxiii + 290 pp. US\$32.50 cloth ISBN 0-8108-2135-4 (available from James Bennett Library Services).

This timely and useful guide to 530 journals that publish articles in religion and theology is based on a questionnaire survey of the journals' editors, with additional information taken from the journals themselves and from Ulrich's. Nowhere does Dawsey indicate his criteria for inclusion, and it is painfully apparent that Australia and New Zealand figure only peripherally, with no mention of *Compass*, *ARSR*, *ANZTLA Newsletter*, *Phronema*, etc.

That negative note aside, this compilation does provide excellent guidance to those journals that are listed, although, inevitably, editors' names may not be quite current. The journals are arranged in thirty-three subject areas (e.g. "ethics and religion", "sacred music", "religion in Africa"), and each of these sections concludes with cross references to titles in other sections which provide some coverage of the subject. This is a particularly useful feature, as perhaps fifty percent of religious studies serials are

multi-subject in focus and fit neatly into no single subject category. My own preference would have been for a single alphabetical listing of titles and a detailed subject index. The existing index of journal titles leads only to the numbered main entries and not also to the cross references, which is somewhat limiting.

Each of the main entries provides, when known, the following information: title, editor, editorial address, subscription information (but not subscription address), subject focus, audience, submission requirements and selection process, where indexed. Accompanying the main listing and description of journals is a list of abbreviations, compiler's introduction (but no sample entry), three quite vapid contributions on writing and getting published (pp. xvi-xxiii), an appendix of style manuals and the journal index.

Especially for the "new chum", Dawsey has provide excellent guidance on what journals publish and their evaluation criteria. This should improve one's chance of getting published, which is a main intention of the work. But even veterans will find this useful as a reminder of long forgotten, or perhaps even never considered, journals from around the world and reflecting a wide range of religious traditions. Still, the main drawback is the limited number of entries in the face of an ever increasing body of serial publications. Accordingly, one strongly encourages both publisher and compiler to consider a major expansion in a subsequent edition, with revisions published quinquennially.

One lovely typographical error cannot pass without comment: St. Mark's Canberra appears as "St. Mark's Cantena" - a subconscious reflection on the banana theology propagated by *St. Mark's Review*?

— G. E. Gorman
Charles Sturt University

Introduction to the New Testament

Koester, Helmut

2 Vols. Berlin: Walter De Gruyter and Company, 1987. Price not reported, pap. ISBN 0-89925-351-2 (vol. 1) ISBN 0-89925-352-0 (vol. 2)

First published in German in 1980, the two volumes in this paperback English edition are titled *History, Culture and Religion of the Hellenistic Age* (vol. 1) and *History and Literature of Early Christianity* (vol. 2). They have been translated by the author, correcting errors and omissions noted in Plumacher's detailed review of the German edition in *Gottingsische Gelehrte Anzeigen* 233 (1981): 1-22.

As one might expect of Koester, an eminent student of Bultmann, his two volumes are a monument to the historical-critical method in the sense that they unflinchingly place early Christian literature within its proper context of the history of religions. This is clearly implied in the work's stated purpose: "my primary concern is to present the history of the early Christian churches, since it seems to me that the student of the New Testament must learn from the outset to understand the writings of the earliest period within their proper historical context" (p. xix). To achieve this Volume 1 discusses the Hellenistic age under six headings: historical survey (5 chapters); society and economics (7 chapters); education, language and literature (4 chapters); philosophy and religion (4 chapters); Judaism in the Hellenistic period (3 chapters); the Roman Empire and Hellenism (6 chapters). Volume 2, again in six parts, covers sources for the history of early Christianity (4 chapters); from John the Baptist to the early church (3 chapters); Paul (4 chapters); Palestine and Syria (5 chapters); Egypt (3 chapters); Asia Minor, Greece and Rome (3 chapters).

Each chapter is extremely readable and presented in straightforward, uncluttered language; both features are generally not found in theological works translated from

German, as students are well aware. Footnotes are not provided, which will frustrate some, but there are bibliographies with each chapter and chapter section. These bibliographies have been updated and revised somewhat to suit the needs of anglophone readers. In addition a list of often cited titles appears at the end of the work, along with a glossary and indexes of early Christian writings, subjects and authors. All of this endmatter, along with the preliminary Preface, Introduction and list of abbreviations, is identical in the two volumes. Only the contents pages differ, when in fact the entire list of contents could well have appeared in both volumes. To appeal further to students there are a number of charts, maps and half-tone illustrations scattered through the text, although these are largely unremarkable.

What stands out most clearly in this commendable text is its comprehensive treatment of early Christian literature (both canonical and non-canonical) in chronological sequence. This is perhaps most strikingly visible in Chapter 7, "Sources for the History of Early Christianity"; as any weary biblical studies lecturer knows, nothing is more likely to put students to sleep than discussion of the New Testament canon, textual and form criticism, etc. Yet Koester manages to convey the essential information in a manner that is both refreshing and accurate. Furthermore, he is quite free of any discernable bias, allowing students to reach decisions for themselves about interpretive matters. Accordingly, Introduction to the New Testament is recommended without reservation as an ideal text for advanced undergraduates, for better theological students and for any library requiring a solid reference handbook on the New Testament and its milieu.

—G. E. Gorman
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The Oxford Movement and Its Leaders: A Bibliography of Secondary and Lesser Primary Sources.

Crumb, Lawrence M.

ATLA Bibliography Series, 24. Metuchen, N.J.: American Theological Library Association and Scarecrow Press, 1988. xxviii + 706pp. US\$62.50 cloth ISBN 0-8108-2141-9

Appropriately, the compiler trained for the priesthood at Nashotah House, America's one strong educational link with the Anglo-Catholicism that emerged from the Oxford Movement (OM) that is the subject of this extensive bibliography. Crumb clearly has a passionate love affair with the OM and all that it represents- for only such passion could sustain one during the long hours needed to collect, analyze and organize the information that constitutes the core of this 5688 item bibliography.

In the bibliography Fr Crumb lists books, pamphlets, chapters, articles, theses, manuscripts, microforms and tape recordings related to the OM. Major primary sources have been excluded, but coverage of secondary materials published between 1829 and 1987 is as comprehensive as possible. A Preface outlines the scope, arrangement and content of the work; an Introduction, though a bit sophomoric, gives a useful summary of OM for those who know little about it. This is supplemented by a chronology and 'lineage' of the OM. A list of abbreviations concludes the frontmatter, and two appendices ("Bibliographic ghosts" and 197 editions of and commentaries on Newman's *Apologia* plus three indices (of authors, periodical titles and subjects) follow the bibliography. Entries in the bibliography (pp 1-552) are arranged chronologically to provide a history of the Movement; Crumb himself must describe the further arrangement with years. "Entries are arranged as follows: first, books and other separately-published items, arranged by author; next,

chapters in books (including articles in encyclopaedias), arranged by editor (or, in some cases, by title); finally, articles in periodicals, arranged by periodical title" (p xi). Truly! In the last category, periodicals, Crumb has followed an absolutely diabolical practice of citing the journal title only in the first entry, then using "same" for all succeeding entries from the same journal. In at least one instance this results in forty entries (5034-5075) from the same journal; imagine how it feels to go back through an endless litany of "same"! This is one of the bibliographically most inept compilations it has been my misfortune to review, and the ATLA should feel quite ashamed for having the title in its otherwise commendable series.

One questions this choice of arrangement, surely users would find it far more acceptable to search through alphabetical author entries within years. Equally unfriendly is the lack of running heads and a failure to introduce any variations in the typeface used to produce the camera-ready copy. Despite these numerous shortcomings the compilation has some positive features aside from its thorough coverage. In particular Crumb has been careful to cross reference entries wherever possible, and there are many scope notes to indicate the content of items. The indexing is also very thorough, especially the choice of terms in the subject index; but note again the unbelievably obtuse policy decision "only the first appearance of a work is cited; see that citation for cross-reference to later appearances . . ." (p 659).

One must conclude that, because there is nothing so comprehensive on the topic, this work will fill a genuine gap most adequately in terms of its coverage. But do take several Panadol before trying to use it, and attach a health warning for your library users. Crumb belongs in all specialist theological collections, and in other libraries with a healthy hatred of users.

—G.E. Gorman,
Charles Sturt University

Reforming Religious Education. The Religious Clauses of the 1988 Education Reform Act.

Cox, Edwin and Josephine M. Cairns, The Bedford Way Series. London: Kogan Page (in association with The Institute of Education, University of London), 1989 ix + 101 pages. Nine pounds, paper, ISBN 1 85091 898 8. (Available from Kogan Page, 120 Pentonville Rd, London N1 9BR.)

Britain today is Christian, Post-Christian, Multi-faith and Secular. All of these at once! A recent visit to several centres and conferences in England brought home to me the problems and opportunities schools are having with respect to the legal obligation to teach RE and provide daily Collective Worship.

The new book by Edwin Cox (Emeritus Reader at the Institute of Education, University of London) and Josephine Cairns (lecturer in charge of RE courses at the Institute of Education) is a concise and eminently readable account of the state of play. The subject will be covered more fully in a future Review, but for the moment this brief note.

The Cox and Cairns book is prompted by the need to examine the provisions of the 1988 Education Reform Act with respect to RE and worship in schools. The authors also helpfully relate these provisions to the historical situation that has produced them and to the educational and social situation in which they have to operate.

Cairns assesses the extent to which the provisions of the 1944 Education Act were handicapped by the fact that they were not entirely suited to the culture of the time, and asks "whether the new provisions are more realistic and likely to provide opportunities for a genuine education about beliefs and values". (Preface) Cox points out the ambiguities of the new Act and the problems and opportunities it will create for pupils, teachers, parents and others involved.

The Appendix contains reactions to the Act on the part of individuals from within

certain of the main belief communities; Christian, Hindu, Humanist, Jewish and Muslim.

In comparing/contrasting the situation in Australia and Great Britain, one sees interesting analogies as well as important differences. Hence, while the book will be of obvious interest and help to all teachers of RE in British schools, to headteachers, educational policy-makers, leaders of religious communities and the informed public, it will also be of interest to their Australian counterparts.

—Victor C. Hayes
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Religious Education and Human Development

Grimmitt, Michael

Great Britain: McCrimmon, 1987 \$50.00.

Michael Grimmitt's introduction to the public at large was through his first book, *What Can I Do in RE?* (1973) which advocated a dual framework involving what he called the existential approach and the dimensional approach.

His second major work was *RE and Humanisation* (1978) which had a great effect in Australia as it was given as a series of lectures at the seventh national conference of the AARE (1978) where the theme was "Decision Making for Life in Moral and Religious Education."

In his latest book, *RE and Human Development* (1987), Grimmitt presents a fully fledged rationale for RE and a complete curriculum based on that rationale. One can detect much of the basis of this book in his writings from 1978, but now, rather than a speculative look forward with help from the sociological and anthropological areas, we have a complex and detailed construction. The work is indebted to Hirst and Phenix, but also to Berger and Luckmann who see reality as a social construct. Grimmitt sees

his "process of humanisation" (a central concept in this book) as being compatible with the "Social Construction of Reality".

In the RE area specifically, Grimmitt has moved away from the dualism of existentialism and phenomenology. Now the two strands of his system are "Shared Human Experiences" and "Traditional Belief Systems" closely intertwined. "Shared Human Experiences", the "non-religious" strand, refers to the human "givens" of life. These "givens" are facts about human life which are constant, irrespective of culture and ideology. Holding beliefs is a "given", in the sense that we all do it, and it is not necessarily religious.

The "religious" strand, Traditional Belief Systems, has its base in Substantive Religious Categories (or key concepts in religion). Grimmitt identifies Human "givens", Substantive Religious Categories and core human values as the sources of his two strands. There is a dialectic relationship between these three sources. The human "givens" imply certain core-values (eg order, purpose, meaning) and act as a kind of value imperative. Core-values can be interpreted as spiritual values from the perspective of Substantive Religious Categories. (For example, the core-value of order, meaning and purpose is seen in the Substantive Religious Category of "Providence").

As far as course content is concerned, the Shared Human Experiences come through as Adolescent Life-World Curriculum and the Traditional Belief Systems appear as Religious Life-World Curriculum. Together they constitute the contribution of RE to the student's personal development.

In the second half of the book (some 120 pages) the author provides curriculum illustrations of this theory. He presents a spiral curriculum matrix formed from the application of the four organizing categories — family, local community, plural society and world-wide community — to five themes of particular significance

to human development; growing, celebrating, learning, acting and believing together. This matrix can be used to combine content from the Adolescent Life-World Curriculum and the Religious Life-World Curriculum.

This material contains more than 120 curriculum units suitable for use at secondary school level. They are drawn from Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism, and are flexible enough to form the basis of a five year course.

Possible problems will be the limited market for such an approach in Australia,

and the price of the book (\$50).

Nevertheless, the book is a challenge for anyone working in the field of RE and represents the mature thinking of a major theorist. Some may be daunted by the complexity of what Grimmit is proposing but, as usual, he maintains a steady supply of helpful diagrams and flow charts. I found detailed attention paid to the book very rewarding and it has provided me with a far stronger rationale for my own thinking about RE.

— Cliff Bowers
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