

timate responsibility for all and of having a mission to all mankind. The Church would become once again the People of God made up of Christians.

Congar's hope for the future of the Church and his awareness of the complex background of the present ecumenical epoch are clearly reflected in all seven essays. His historical approach is extremely successful. His remarkable openness is demonstrated in almost every chapter. But it is not to be mistaken for vagueness or uncertainty. He deeply believes in the efficacy and the ever-present reality of the Holy Spirit, but he also stands firmly in the midst of the Roman Catholic Church. This is not a question of pride with him, but of honesty and loyalty to the special vocation his Church has received. Almost every chapter reflects his basic and courageous concern: To what extent will Catholicism be open to ecumenical exploration? How far can it go in surmounting the consciousness of being adequately the Church in order to concede that the Church transcends all ecclesiastical institutions and structures and exists to some degree in all Christian communions?

It is perhaps inevitable that in such a volume as this there should be some overlapping of material, even in citations (see pp. 31, 47-48). The reviewer would like to have found an attempted analysis from so well-qualified a critic of the changed situation *since* the end of Vatican II. He also regrets that we are not told the date and original setting of each of the seven essays here included. Cross references to other articles and books by Congar would have helped the interested reader to have a better opportunity for understanding the author's thinking.

This volume is worth reading. It contains a mixture of old and new. It is an appropriate Roman Catholic introduction to a subject which has become increasingly interesting and important throughout the Christian world.

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RAOUL DEDEREN

Eberhardt, Walter, *Wege und Irrwege der Christenheit von der Urgemeinde bis zur Vorreformation*. Berlin: Gemeinschaft der Siebenten-Tags-Adventisten, 1968. 438 pp.

This book consists of 21 chapters dealing with Christian history from its beginnings to the 15th century (pp. 7-281), followed by extensive notes (pp. 282-391) and other tools of various sorts (pp. 392-438).

All major aspects of church history of the period are touched upon in the main text. The author reveals good mastery of facts, and includes many interesting details and sidelights; he even treats such subjects as "The Bible Among the Germans" (chapter 8) and "The Orthodox Church and Islam" (chapter 13). As implied in the title of the book,

however, his material has been presented with a certain theme in mind. The presentation itself leaves one with the impression that the "Great Church" is usually characterized by apostasy and the "Sects" by reform. His efforts to tie history to prophecies of the book of Revelation, such as the seals and trumpets, further reveal the tenor of his work.

Although this book provides a fairly good general coverage of Christian history from the early church to the period just prior to the Protestant Reformation, the account is sometimes too sketchy and disjointed. There is a tendency to treat developments in isolation rather than to weave them into a cohesive whole. One example among many which could be furnished is the discussion in a section entitled "The Blood of the Christians is Seed" (p. 20). Here the story is briefly told of the martyrdoms of Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin, and Blandina, without any apparent effort to give a picture of martyrdoms as a whole or to explain how or why the blood of Christians should be described as "seed" by Tertullian.

Occasionally, the sketchiness of the account may leave wrong impressions. When, for example, was the Mediterranean cleared of pirates—during the time of "The Roman Peace" (p. 10) ? ! Sometimes a generalization may leave, or lead to, a rather questionable conclusion; as, for example, that in the period prior to A.D. 250 one of the important factors in the growth of the church was the baptism of unconverted people (p. 21). Membership increase on this basis may have been very significant in a later period, but should hardly be thrown back to this era. Or in any event, a generalization of the kind the author has made should probably be balanced by a discussion of the rather long process by which people were made ready for church fellowship, as well as by mention of the fact that decisions to become Christians were frequently made at great personal sacrifice in a society which was at this time still generally hostile to Christianity.

In this book there are at times also inaccuracies in providing the historical data themselves, though such inaccuracies are surprisingly few for the amount of detail covered. One example is the choice of 30 B.C. rather than 27 B.C. for the beginning of the principate of Augustus (p. 9).

The section of notes following the main text reveals a fair acquaintance with German sources, though mainly in the category of general rather than specialized treatments. Furthermore, the author ignores the rich literature available in other languages. A better acquaintance with scholarly literature would have guarded him against certain interpretative pitfalls, such as his erroneous conclusion connecting sabbath-keeping among the Waldenses with the term "Insabbati" (pp. 247, 382).

The helps in the final portion of the book include a useful glossary (pp. 392-398), index (pp. 399-409), chronology of the period of Christian history covered (pp. 410-423), and bibliography (pp. 424-431), as well as a detailed table of contents (pp. 433-438). A pocket

inside the back cover contains three maps of the Christian world relating to the period treated in the text.

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KENNETH A. STRAND

Hunter, Archibald M., *According to John: A New Look at the Fourth Gospel*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1968. 128 pp. Paperbound \$ 1.65.

This is a deceptive little book. It has been written in the very intimate tone ("if you compare . . . you may well come to the conclusion . . ." p. 114) of a father who teaches his little children the Sabbath School lesson with some sophistication. But what is given to the innocent neophytes is sometimes not quite right. The book at one and the same time wishes to be a report of current research in Johannine studies in order to show "some remarkable and encouraging turns" (p. 9), and also to present "a new look" with some arguments of its own ("if our arguments are sound . . ." p. 88). But what Hunter presents as new arguments of his are old arguments of someone else, and what he considers settled questions he sees in that way because they have been placed within the wrong framework. He caricatures the position of scholars who are referred to as "them" (p. 29), and then finds support in other scholars who, from different perspectives, happen to agree in one general point with what he wishes to say. These he refers to as "our scholars" (pp. 30, 47).

Wishing to argue that the Fourth Gospel is "a quarry for historical facts," Hunter goes through the traditional paces, including the questioning of the historical value of Mark (pp. 63, 114). Thus if K. L. Schmidt noticed discontinuity in the narrative of Mk 1:13, 14, this is taken by Hunter to mean that "we need not hesitate to fill it [the gap] with the traditional material we have been studying. The general probability of a traditional preliminary Judean ministry of Jesus, we may fairly claim, has been established" (p. 59). The importance of establishing "general probabilities" is, however, never defended. Rather it is assumed that what has been established is the historical trustworthiness of the Johannine tradition. Whereupon by some loose handling of the word *fact*, facts of the tradition are made to be facts of history (*pace* the attempts at making distinctions on p. 74). But still when confronted with the account of the changing of water into wine, Hunter suggests that "St. John is giving us here a dominant theme of his gospel" (p. 76).

In his analysis of the parables and the sayings of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel, Hunter has no difficulty in finding a "true Dominical *obiter dictum*" here and there. Not quite satisfied with that, he also wishes to use the sayings and parables to find out the way in which the mind of Jesus operated (p. 84). But for this process he sets up straw men or straw texts from the OT, as when he says, "Despite Jülicher,