

Landeen. William M. *Martin Luther's Religious Thought*. Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1971. [vi] + 218 pp. Paperback, \$2.25.

A book dealing with a subject on which numerous works are already available is justified if it brings a new perspective, if it adds new or rarely discussed material, or if it is designed to reach a wider or different readership from that of similar works. Landeen's book on Luther's religious thought succeeds in all three respects, and is indeed a welcome and worthwhile contribution to the existing Luther literature. The fact that this volume is written by a careful and competent scholar of recognized standing in the field enhances its value and importance all the more.

The first several chapters carry Luther through his early experience as a monk, his Wittenberg lectures on the Psalms (1513-15) and Romans (1515-16), and his great "discovery" relating to Rom 1:17. Landeen places the so-called "Tower Experience" about 1518, rather than earlier as many scholars do. He premises that Luther's autobiographical statement prefaced to the 1545 Latin edition of the Reformer's works should be taken at face value; Luther's recollection of an item so significant in his career could hardly have been misplaced in his reference to it as occurring *after* he had lectured on the epistles to the Romans, Galatians (1516-17), and Hebrews (1517-18) and was returning to interpret the Psalter anew (which he began to do early in 1519). This point, plus Landeen's general reasoning on the matter (including reference to Luther's declining emphasis on Augustine), seems cogent.

In a footnote (n. 2 on pp. 50, 51), Landeen reviews various positions regarding Luther's "discovery," and includes an observation that there "may have been even a series of discoveries." Indeed, Luther's son Paul, as well as the Reformer's early biographer Melancthon, may not necessarily have been completely in error in placing the discovery prior to Luther's visit to Rome in 1510-11, for Luther was precisely the kind of person who would continually arrive at deeper revelations of truth—"renewed discoveries," as it were. I believe that Landeen has expressed well Luther's "Tower-Experience" grasp of Rom 1:17 as representing the "capstone in the spiritual arch which he had been building" (p. 45). It is interesting to note that Jared Wicks, *Man Yearning for Grace*, reaches a very similar conclusion to that of Landeen regarding the time of Luther's "discovery," but on quite other grounds (my review of Wicks' book appears on pp. 223, 224, below).

In subsequent chapters of his book Landeen covers briefly, but still fairly comprehensively, Luther's thought on the following: "God," "Christ," "Holy Spirit," "The Church," "The Word," "Baptism," "Lord's Supper," "Predestination," "Faith Alone," "Sanctification," "Reason," "Ten Commandments," "Law and Gospel," "Moses," "Sabbath," "Man in Death," and "Resurrection and Judgment." Some of these topics are treated more extensively in other works, but Landeen's scholarly approach, eminently readable style, and brevity, coupled with ability to get quickly to the crux of the matter, make *Martin Luther's Religious Thought* a worthy reference volume on even such topics. However, certain of the later chapters—e.g., "Sabbath" and "Man in Death"—deal with subjects not so frequently treated in books

about Luther's theology. The inclusion of such topics lends an added valuable dimension to this particular publication.

The various chapters in Landeen's book are well documented, and a bibliography (pp. 215-218) concludes the volume. This book will be found useful by lay readers as well as scholars in the field, not only as a well-written authoritative narrative but also as a helpful reference tool.

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Langholf, Volker. *Die Gebete bei Euripides und die zeitliche Folge der Tragödien*. "Hypomnemata," Heft 32. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971. 172 pp. Paperback, DM 35.00.

This monograph, a dissertation accepted by the university of Hamburg in 1968, is a highly technical study of prayer in the dramas of the Greek poet Euripides and a contribution to the complex dating problem of the poet's tragedies. This is the first detailed and comprehensive study of the prayers in the dramas of Euripides. For this reason alone one needs to congratulate Langholf. Aside from this, Langholf's study is a first in investigating prayer in Greek religion in the last few decades.

The author employs an "unusual" methodology (p. 6). He avoids the method of the comparative interpretation of prayers from different pieces of different periods, because the "comparative interpretation" appears from the start to be unfeasible. The method is the (quasi-)statistical one. It is said to have the advantage of enabling a verification. An appendix (pp. 152-165) gives an analytical list of prayers and prayer-like materials in Euripidean dramas which aids the reader in his own verification. The purpose and aim of Langholf's work is to prove that there is a development in the religious views of Euripides. This has been denied by A. J. Festugière (1950) and F. Chapouthier (1955).

A definition of prayer has considerable bearing on a systematic and precise statistical investigation of the 220 passages in the Euripidean dramas which contain or deal with prayers. Prayer is very broadly defined as "the speaking to gods or divine beings" (p. 9). The content of this speaking is disregarded. The difficult problem of the dates of the sequence of the respective tragedies has a direct bearing on the question of religious development. Langholf follows on the whole the chronology of E. B. Caelde (1941) which is based on a study of the trimeters in the plays and which has been supported more recently by G. Zuntz (1955) and K. Matthiessen (1964).

The main part of this study (pp. 21-101) deals with observations on the praying persons, their religious and psychological condition. The beings to whom prayers are offered are Zeus, Apollos, Artemis, Hermes, Athena, Dionysus, Aphrodite, Hera, and Earth, among others. The basic types of address are investigated as well as the forms of requests. Detailed attention is given also to the dramatic function of the prayers.

The final part of Langholf's work seeks to summarize his findings in relationship to the broad realm of phenomena which have been called "the irrational" (pp. 102-141). It has long been recognized that religion is one