

of college and seminary students. For this reason, Aune has not included highly specialized items or foreign language material. Despite these limitations, the bibliography, which is often insightfully annotated, is quite extensive. Most readers, of course, will look in vain for some favorite piece among the nearly one thousand entries. The user may find access to specific items either by referring to the topical outline or by checking the author index.

However, this book is more than a bibliography. In fact, Aune lists two additional purposes: (1) He wishes to offer "a relatively complete outline of the modern critical study of Jesus and the Synoptic Gospels" (p. 1), and (2) he also defines, describes, and critiques "the various critical methods which have been applied to the study of Jesus and the Synoptic Gospels" (ibid.). The definitions of critical methods and research categories are brief but accurate. This feature of the book should be quite helpful to both beginners and more advanced users.

The publishers have attempted to hold down the cost of production of this volume by computer typesetting. However, this is accompanied by some annoying details. The numbering system associated with the rather intricate outline is not easy to follow. Some headings are missing, e.g., Redaction-critical Studies of Luke (p. 39). At times, headings are difficult to distinguish from the rest of the material. Also, one may quarrel with the categories into which some items have been placed. For instance, Aune has put material on the parables in two different places. The book contains numerous typographical errors, which hopefully the editors will eliminate in the planned updates and revisions.

All who study and teach the Synoptic Gospels and who do research on Jesus will welcome this bibliographic study guide. Specialists will find it incomplete, but it should prove useful to pastors and students at all levels.

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Belo, Fernando. *A Materialistic Reading of the Gospel of Mark*. Trans. by Matthew J. O'Connell. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1981. xiv + 363 pp. Paperback, \$12.95.

Every "bourgeois exegete" should read *A Materialist Reading of the Gospel of Mark*. This is not because Belo has anything substantially new to contribute to the study of Mark, but rather to see how bourgeois conclusions can be set into the framework of Marxist philosophy.

Viewing Mark through communist eyes is an interesting exercise, though Belo makes it more difficult than it needs to be. On the other hand, when he wrote his book he may not have anticipated the laborious task Marxist terms and philosophy present to a bourgeois capitalist. The book really needs to be read twice—once to become familiar with the terms used and the general direction in which Belo's ideas move, then a second time in order to allow a penetration into what Belo is saying.

Part I sets forth a series of 54 hypotheses that Belo uses to interpret Mark. These hypotheses, although claimed by Belo to be original with him, are rooted in Marxist philosophy. They define various modes of production and consumption. (Capitalists who think they alone have a passionate interest in "production" and "consumption" will discover that communists are aware that society cannot function without these capitalist ingredients.) Terms that are used in the hypotheses and throughout the work are defined here. Part I deserves to be read twice even if the rest of the book is not, for this section supplies the key for understanding what is said in the following sections.

Because Belo's primary aim is to present a political reading of Mark, he briefly reviews the socio-political structure of Israel, from its beginnings as a collection of tribes that lacked social classes through the monarchy to first-century-A.D. Palestine. Depending heavily upon Gerhard von Rad, Belo presents two theses: (1) Two distinct systems are found in the legislative texts of the OT, a system of pollution and a system of debt. The system of pollution belongs to P, and debt to E and D. (2) These two systems were synthesized during the subasiatic monarchy, resulting in a class struggle.

After "exegeting" Mark in Part III (which is nothing more than identifying the various "codes" that Belo sees as being present in the text), an explanation is given of his exegesis. The conclusion is that the text of Mark is rooted in the pollution/debt system of Israel.

Originally, the text of Mark was rooted in the debt system, Belo claims, and this identifies Jesus as a true revolutionary who wished to change the social formation of not only his people, but the world. However, Jesus' followers were disturbed by the abrupt termination of his work because of his murder. In the development of Christology and soteriology, this murder becomes a death, by a theological negation of the murder, which involves the development of Jesus' predictions of his coming demise. This negation enables the church to spiritualize the message of Jesus and the cross; and as a result, "the future salvation of the elect" in the kingdom no longer is a physical salvation from the socio-political elements of the Roman world. Jesus' murder, "instead of being a failure," now becomes a spiritualized "saving work" (p. 278).

However, all is not lost through the death: "The resurrection of Jesus is affirmed as following upon His murder" (p. 295). What is the point of a resurrection if Jesus simply grew old and happily died the "good death"? His resurrection becomes meaningful only in view of his murder, for it becomes a liberating act that breaks with society. "*The resurrection can only be the fruit of insurrection*" (p. 295). But to place this resurrection within the context of theological negation is to impose a reading of the pollution system upon Mark's text, and this negates the debt system upon which Mark was originally written.

In concluding his study, Belo makes an interesting observation. There is a new generation appearing who claims to be Marxist *and* Christian. "The claim to be both Marxist and Christian implies that the claimant has leaped over the wall that separated the two, just as in their day Paul and Mark leaped over the wall of hatred that separated Jews and Pagans" (p. 297).

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Berger, David. *The Jewish-Christian Debate in the High Middle Ages: A Critical Edition of the Nizzahon Vetus*. Judaica, Texts and Translations, 4. Philadelphia, Pa.: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1979. xviii + 422 pp. + 164 pp. of Hebrew text. \$20.00.

The *Nizzahon Vetus* ("Old Book of Polemic") is a late thirteenth- or early fourteenth-century anthology of Jewish arguments directed against Christian doctrine, practice, and exegesis, probably written by a German Jew. In this impressive publication, David Berger not only provides a highly readable English translation of the Hebrew text (here edited with critical apparatus), but also a useful introduction surveying the nature of the Jewish-Christian debate in the Middle Ages, describing the social, political, and economic contexts of late medieval polemics, and briefly discussing the evidence for authorship, provenance, and dating of this important and highly aggressive example of Jewish disputation. Throughout the introduction and in his detailed commentary on the text—which reveals a commanding knowledge of both the Jewish polemical literature and standard medieval Christian exegesis—Berger never fails to inform and to discuss issues central to both Judaism and Christianity.

As Berger notes, medieval "Jews were convinced that some of the central articles of faith professed by Christians were not only devoid of scriptural foundation but were without logical justification as well . . ." (p. 13). Christian trinitarian arguments were especially attacked as being irrational. Other Christian beliefs and practices were scrutinized as based