

such influences as economics and technology in society and styles and forms in the arts.

The only point of major disagreement among the authors is whether Schaeffer was a presuppositionalist—following the tradition of Cornelius Van Til—in his apologetic method. On the one hand, Ruegsegger argues that he was not a presuppositionalist and Lewis states that his approach “was a nontechnical version of the verificational method” (p. 86). On the other hand, Pinnock finds him inconsistently moving back and forth between presuppositionalist and verificationalist methods. The issue is not merely academic, for it addresses the question of how one is to “speak”—to use Schaeffer’s word—Christianity in the unbelieving twentieth century.

This volume is a valuable corrective for those who have uncritically accepted Schaeffer’s arguments, and it increases our understanding of an important influence upon the recent history of conservative American Christianity. By pointing out the flaws and limitations of Schaeffer’s work, however, these essays also remind us that what he was attempting to do was a task that needed—and still needs—doing. Hopefully other Christians with greater learning and precision of thought and expression will carry on Schaeffer’s efforts to relate Christian truth to the intellectual and social needs of modern man.

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Steinmetz, David C. *Luther in Context*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986. xiii + 146 pp. \$25.00/\$7.95.

David C. Steinmetz, already well known for his scholarly contributions regarding Johann Staupitz and Luther, has put us in his debt by another significant publication contextualizing Luther. *Luther in Context* consists of a series of ten essays, as follows: “Luther Against Luther,” “Luther and Augustine on Romans 9,” “Luther and the Hidden God,” “Abraham and the Reformation,” “Luther Among the Anti-Thomists,” “Luther and Hubmaier on the Freedom of the Human Will,” “Scripture and the Lord’s Supper in Luther’s Theology,” “Luther and Calvin on Church Tradition,” “Luther and the Drunkenness of Noah,” and “Luther and the Two Kingdoms.” The substance of five of these essays has previously appeared in print.

According to the author, “These essays are exercises in intellectual history. They try to cast light on Luther’s thought by placing it in the context of his theological antecedents and contemporaries” (p. x). “A thing is frequently shown in sharper relief,” he goes on to say, “if it is compared with something else similar to it but from which it differs in certain important respects” (ibid.). In presenting his material on the various topics, Steinmetz generally follows the style of selecting and summariz-

ing the views of persons who have dealt with the same topic as Luther. In quite a number of instances, a connection is made between Luther and the particular individuals inasmuch as Luther makes reference to having read those individuals' works. However, in a few cases it seems to this reviewer that the link has not been thorough enough to provide a genuine exercise in intellectual *history*, even though the material nevertheless elucidates aspects of the thought world of the time.

The topic of the first chapter, "Luther Against Luther," needs clarification. Here Steinmetz deals with Luther's *Anfechtungen*—most precisely those linked to Luther's concept of the confessional as connected with his "monastic struggle." Our author chooses Dietrich Kolde and John of Paltz as illustrations of what is entailed in the confessional. In assessing Luther's situation as compared with these forerunners, Steinmetz says it is clear that Luther "had little sympathy with Paltz's minimal program of attrition and obedience. Luther took his cue from spiritual advisers like Kolde, who stressed the importance of rendering satisfaction for sins over and beyond the penances assigned by the confessor, and who attempted to make a sincere and complete confession out of a disposition of contrition" (p. 7).

As fascinating and enlightening as all of the studies in Steinmetz's *Luther in Context* are, it is impossible in this brief review to survey them, except to make the general statement that the author has revealed an immense sense of both depth and balance in covering a rather wide variety of topics and details. Perhaps it can be mentioned, in addition, that the final chapter on "Luther and the Two Kingdoms" does not follow the usual method of presentation; rather it highlights, in rebuttal to Reinhold Niebuhr, the fact that Luther's discussion of the "two kingdoms" is more in the pastoral vein than in the arena of political philosophy.

The volume contains endnotes (rather than footnotes) and a fairly comprehensive index. As a compilation of essays prepared at different times, it lacks some of the unity that a volume by one author normally displays, but this fact is not unduly detrimental. Perhaps, however, a final chapter of general review and assessment might have been helpful.

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Stiebing, William H., Jr. *Ancient Astronauts, Cosmic Collisions and Other Popular Theories About Man's Past*. Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1984. 217 pp. \$18.95/\$9.95.

This book by W. H. Stiebing, Jr., a history professor at the University of New Orleans, critically reviews several popular theories and ideas that have gained wide currency among the general public. The popular concepts dealt with are the universality of the Deluge, Atlantis, cosmic catastrophism, ancient astronauts, the mysteries of the pyramids, and early