

ethical attitudes around; how then do these affect the reader and effect a change in his or her own view of the world? From a literary-critical point of view, is there a dynamic in such story telling, and if so, where does it lie? Much attention has been given to this problem as it bears on the Gospel parables; in addition to the writers mentioned above as representing a literary approach, others such as Robert W. Funk (*Language, Hermeneutic and Word of God* [New York, 1966]) and Amos N. Wilder (*Jesus' Parables and the War of Myths* [Philadelphia, 1982]) are examples of scholars who have dealt in depth with this concern. Such research, then, poses questions for further comparative study of Gospel and rabbinic parables. How do the rabbinic parables "work" on the reader? Does their alignment with conventional wisdom mean that they are less effective? Or is the analysis of Gospel parables made by Christian literary critics based on a prior faith commitment, which is the real source of the dynamic, rather than on any inherent element or technique in the parable itself? David Stern, in particular, has addressed these questions in several studies (see, for instance, his remarkable essay, "Jesus' Parables from the Perspective of Rabbinic Literature," in *Parable and Story in Judaism and Christianity*, ed. Clemens Thoma and Michael Wyschogrod [Mahwah, NJ, 1989], 42-80).

The book is attractively printed and remarkably free of typographical errors. One notes, however, several instances where the opinions of other scholars are cited, or quotations are given, without bibliographical references (e.g., pp. 96, 100, 111, 112, 157, 198, 199).

This is a valuable book. It fills a serious lacuna in the growing body of materials available in English for a better assessment of the thought world of the first centuries of the Common Era, and it is written without confessional bias. No other work gives as direct access to rabbinic parables. The book deserves a place in the library of every scholar, rabbi, or pastor who is concerned with ancient Palestinian Judaism—the spiritual world in which historic Judaism had its birth, in which Jesus taught, and from which the Gospels sprang.

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EARLE HILGERT

Neyrey, Jerome H. *Paul, In Other Words: A Cultural Reading of His Letters*, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1990. 262 pp. \$19.95.

Neyrey takes as his basic premise that Paul was socialized "as a Pharisee's Pharisee" and that "in his most basic understanding of the cosmos Paul never ceased viewing the world as a Pharisee" (p. 223). As a consequence, his symbolic universe is one structured in terms of "purity," the Pharisaic code word for "order." To establish the boundaries within which

God's order obtains, society has established rituals, which make crossing the boundary possible, and ceremonies, which help to maintain order within. A study of Paul reveals that he is more concerned with rituals than with ceremonies. According to Neyrey, "Paul's most characteristic activity" is making boundaries (p. 87).

In his explorations of the language of the body in 1 Corinthians, Neyrey makes some rather important observations about the language of tolerance and intolerance in Paul. The rest of the book deals with the notion of sin as that which pollutes or makes impure, and evil as that which seduces or bewitches. The final chapters deal with Paul's being accused of witchcraft at Galatia and Corinth.

Recognizing the importance of recreating the historical context of the biblical materials has made dependence on other disciplines a *modus operandi* of biblical studies. Cultural anthropology may indeed have much to contribute to an understanding of the social world of early Christianity, just as Semitic linguistics, archaeology, and innumerable other disciplines have been doing all along.

Admittedly, Neyrey shows here and there a nuanced view of some Pauline texts, but the number is small. Moreover, the exegesis brought into the discussion in order to fit the cultural models, provided almost exclusively by Mary Douglas, is quite often forced. Is self-control, for example, Paul's "dominant virtue" (p. 195)? Does it argue that for Paul, when using the symbol of the body, the most important consideration is "control"? Does the impact of Christ's resurrection have anything to say about Paul's socialization and his language of the body? Does Paul argue that the covenant with Moses is obsolete on account of the temporal priority of the covenant with Abraham? He may have thought so on account of the apocalyptic finality of the cross of Christ. Is the issue in Rom 9-11 whether God's activity is orderly or disorderly? Perhaps the issue is whether God's election is static or dynamic; order or disorder may be seen in both.

Paul's relations with the Jerusalem "pillars" is a prime example of social relations which may be illumined by cultural anthropology. But here Neyrey proves most unconvincing. Does Gal 2:11-14 show that in his confrontation with Peter, Paul "resorts to name calling" (p. 200)? Since Paul does not appeal to Jerusalem in order to settle the crisis in Galatia, Neyrey considers that "implicit in this stance is Paul's sense of his own weak authority in Jerusalem" (p. 201). Paul, according to Neyrey, depended on the Jerusalem "pillars" for his legitimacy (p. 199). Does Gal 2:1-10 show a Paul who "lays his gospel before the Jerusalem leaders expressly for the purpose of receiving their commendation" (p. 193)?

Paul clearly was a child of the Hellenistic Age and was socialized as an apocalyptic Jew. Therefore he did not think in post-French Revolution, individualistic terms (p. 43). He clearly understood the cosmos in radically dualistic terms. He believed in the immediate agency of evil beings and

thought in terms of a chain of being, an intellectual fixture of that time. We already knew all this. Are we supposed to think that Paul was different from Josephus, who believed in the efficacy of oaths, curses, and adjurations, even if Paul and Josephus are quite different in that the first refers often to Satan and the second never does? Neyrey's claim that Paul's witchcraft accusations are "impervious to us" because "contemporary biblical criticism simply is not capable of understanding these verses" is, it seems to me, a bit pompous. Neyrey seems to be overly self-conscious about what he is doing. This attitude reveals itself in unnecessary apologetics (pp. 215-217) and some immodesty, as when he announces that his book is "a major contribution" to the quest for the *Sitz im Leben* of the Pauline letters (p. 19). Anyone wishing to see how symbolic anthropology is being used by NT students may find this book useful. As a contribution to Pauline studies, it makes a rather minor impact.

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HEROLD WEISS

Owens, John Joseph. *Analytical Key to the Old Testament*. Vol. 1: Genesis-Joshua (xi + 1020 pp.); vol. 4: Isaiah-Malachi (xi + 941 pp.). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1989. \$34.95 each.

Among the many tools for the study of the Hebrew Bible, this new instrument will be noticed by both students and teachers, but not necessarily for the same reasons.

Students will be delighted and relieved, because for the first time they will have access to a tool that will guide their steps into the Hebrew Bible. "Each word of the entire canon" and "each form" is analyzed and identified by reference to a standard Hebrew-English dictionary (BDB) or grammar (Gesenius-Kautzsch-Cowley) and translated (RSV or literal rendering when judged necessary). Owens' achievement is enormous and deserves admiration. Henceforth, the student using this work will be exempted from the painful process of analyzing and parsing and will be free from the risk of error. Students will heartily recommend this book to each other.

The Hebrew teacher, however, will hesitate even to mention the work, for this "too helpful" tool may encourage the lazy student to avoid learning *why* a word has been so analyzed. In Hebrew grammar, just as in mathematics, the student who knows the answer but does not understand "why" is suspect and should not be rewarded.

The information given in the *Analytical Key* should not be considered as the final word, either on grammatical form or meaning. A mechanical approach to the text does not do justice to the complex nature of language. Certainly Owens is aware of the problem of mechanical analysis, since he