HOW THE WEST GREW RICH, by Nathan Rosenberg and L. E. Birdzell, Jr. New York: Basic Books, 1986. Pp. 353. $19.95.

Many of today's most influential church leaders, if asked how the West grew rich, would reflexively answer, "by exploiting third world countries and confiscating a disproportionate amount of the earth's resources." Such habits of mind are frequently reflected in statements from offices of church and society, mission divisions and from the pulpit. In their splendidly written, organized and documented study, Rosenberg (an economist at Stanford) and Birdzell (an attorney and legal scholar) demonstrate that the conventional economic wisdom of present-day Catholic and mainline Protestant churches rests on a number of false beliefs: ones which, if acted upon, could and already are beginning to have most ominous consequences for the poor.

Although poverty has obviously not been abolished in the West, it has, nevertheless, been reduced to 30% of the population or less, depending on the individual country under examination. This is no minor accomplishment since the history of human life on this planet has been one of nearly uninterrupted misery. Over the past two hundred years, an increasing proportion of Western populations have become better fed, healthier and more financially secure. The authors explain why. The reason, in a word, is freedom—and especially, *economic* freedom. While other societies were moving toward central planning and control, the West chose to allow its economic enterprises to experiment, create, change, fail or succeed. The result has been an unprecedented outpouring of constructively channelled human activity and productivity. By and large, wealth has not been confiscated from the third world: it has been *created* in the West.

A number of other myths are also systematically refuted. For example, it has become customary in our churches to condemn the aggressiveness and acquisitiveness of post-feudal capitalists while ignoring their moral creativity.

> But the inescapable fact is that the merchant class evolved a moral system suited to life in highly organized enterprises. In no other way could the enterprises that went beyond family and organized such ventures as colonization, foreign trade, and canal building (and, later, railway building) have found the institutional loyalties essential to carrying out their economic functions....The very contempt in which the clergy and the older aristocracy held the rising merchant classes could only have encouraged the merchants to develop a code of honor pivoting on scrupulous care in timely payment of debts and on loyalty to superiors. Somehow, appreciable numbers of people with money (those who invested in corporations) [came] to believe that others (those who directed and managed corporations) were honest, diligent, and could be trusted....(125-126)

It is also fashionable to point to work life in early factories as evidence of the frequently

dehumanizing effects of capitalism. The authors observe, however, that the alternatives were worse. Early factories could only attract workers because pay there was above the poverty level and conditions better than any alternative in the agricultural sector. Rosenberg and Birdzell also demolish the popular attempt to characterize the American economy as one dominated by oppressive multi-national corporations. Such massive corporations are a relatively recent phenomenon and account for only about one-third of manufacturing employment. The American economic system is better described as consisting primarily of young, small businesses which create most of the new jobs in the U.S. In 1979-1980, for example, about three-fourths of the new jobs in the country were created by small enterprises less than four years old.

How about competition? Is it not true that competition in capitalist societies de-

means human interaction? Not according to our writers, who point out

> that it eliminates obsolete forms of economic activity, clearing away the underbrush or, if one prefers, burying the economically dead. This function is not to be taken for granted: consider the difficulty experienced by the political sphere in getting rid of programs that are obsolete or that have simply failed. (276)

One of the more sinister ideas finding its way back into ecclesiastical economic discourse involves the setting of wages and prices according to some slippery religious standard of alleged "justice." Such was the case, of course, in the middle ages, a period of widespread, grinding poverty and gross exploitation of the poor; and a period (not coincidentally) when the church had significant influence on the economy. Such antiquated views ignore the fact that free capital and employment markets are the best option for setting "just" prices and terms—systems in which buyers and sellers, employers and employees, willingly and freely negotiate and consummate deals only when all parties are reasonably satisfied that the terms are "just." Queues, coercion, oppression and poverty seem to be the inevitable historical result when free markets are not permitted to prevail.

In demanding a more active role in "humanizing" Western economic systems, some church leaders may simply be operating from a mindset similar to the one that gave rise to an old English law requiring men carrying red flags to walk ahead of early automobiles. Other leaders, however, are advocating ideas that could have far more serious effects. Although Western economic systems have provided the best hope for the continued reduction of poverty in the world, some are looking elsewhere for their models and, under the rallying cry of a "preferential option for the poor," are embracing ideologies that history has shown could leave nearly everyone destitute and powerless. The stakes are immense, and if Rosenberg and Birdzell, together with a growing number of other informed scholars are right (and the evidence suggests they are), the church must be redirected before it helps lead the West and the rest of the world to economic ruin.

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THE POLITICS OF COMPASSION, by Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1986. Pp. viii & 132. $8.95 (paper).

Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer's latest book can, in many respects, be considered a sequel to his earlier book, *Hunger for Justice* (Orbis, 1980), not least of all because world hunger continues to be one of the issues which gives focus to his work. More generally, however, what unites the two books is Nelson-Pallmeyer's conviction that the Christian faith necessitates a passionate response to critical social problems. Such faith is itself informed by a liberated theology which understands that "salvation, redemption and baptism have historical consequences" (21). What comes through more clearly in his latest work is what has been described in much Roman Catholic Latin American theology as the "preferential option for the poor." In Nelson-Pallmeyer's words, "Christians in North America, particularly those who are relatively affluent or comfortable, will understand the message of Jesus only if we let the poor be our teachers." Similarly, "we can seriously hope for a world with more justice and less hunger only if we understand history, economics and theology from the vantage point of the poor" (3-4).

Much of Nelson-Pallmeyer's work is informed by his experience as a co-director of the James Mayer House of Studies in Managua, Nicaragua. He is admittedly not one of the poor whose vantage point he seeks to represent; but he argues the need for North American Christians to develop a "politics of compassion" that can indeed respond to critical social problems. The thrust for compassion is a biblical mandate, rooted more specifically in the "biblical logic of the majorities" which values sufficiency, equity and the well-being of the poor as the key elements in any economic arrangements that can claim to be just. With the vantage point of the poor and the fundamental need for

compassion thus identified, NelsonPallmeyer develops a number of themes in six relatively short, easy-to-read chapters.

It is in attending to the reality of the poor that God's call to compassion is to be heard. Compassion in response to God's call seeks expression in institutional forms as well as in the individual conduct that is exemplified in the biblical story of the Good Samaritan.

The second chapter presents the case for the kind of liberating theology that undergirds and informs compassionate action. Liberating theology takes seriously the biblical witness in which God's concern for history and the well-being of the poor is clearly demonstrated. The emphasis on the vantage point of the poor thus represents the continuing commitment of God and God's people to the poor as has been the case throughout history.

The next three chapters describe what a politics of compassion means with respect to three vital issues of our time: world hunger, the political, military and economic crisis in Central America, and the arms race. In the final chapter, the politics of compassion is related to the necessity of hope. Only if it is rooted in hope will a politics of compassion be authentic enough and strong enough to lead to concrete action. Nelson-Pallmeyer concludes by identifying a series of particular actions that can begin the process of conversion from indifference to caring, from disengagement to compassionate justice.

There is much to commend this book for use at the congregational level. It draws on facts and figures to describe the reality of the selected issues but it is not excessively technical. The

references to the author's own experience give immediacy and freshness to the presentation. As anyone who is aware of the current debate about government policy in Central America can well imagine, the author's perspective will not be universally accepted but it is a well articulated and clearly stated one that, in the judgment of this reviewer, tries to avoid being doctrinaire or blind to opposing viewpoints.

In discussing the Nicaraguan situation, Nelson-Pallmeyer notes:

> It is certainly possible to find fault with the Sandinistas in terms of their original encounters with indigenous peoples, management of some aspects of the economy, and in other areas. However, ideologically-charged accusations of totalitarian Marxism-Leninism are absurd. (78)

What Nelson-Pallmeyer does well is to encourage North American Christians to examine how we view the kinds of issues that he lifts up before us and how we give expression to our faith with respect to them. His critique of United States foreign policy, for example, suggests that we much more easily subscribe to economic development based on the logic of capital than on the logic of sufficiency, equity and well-being for the majorities. What often follows then is a United States military policy designed to protect corporate economic interests.

It is difficult, of course, to do justice to the realities of such complex issues as those treated by Nelson-Pallmeyer in such a brief book. Occasionally, therefore, what is asserted needs to be argued with more detail than is possible. For example, the judgment that "the values, assumptions and workings of the capitalist system are so hostile to biblical values that capitalism must be judged a fatally flawed system" (55) could benefit from more analysis than is offered here. The work of Robert Benne in his book, *The Ethics of Democratic Capitalism* (Fortress, 1981) provides an alternative viewpoint and the discussion that could ensue by juxtaposing the contrasting viewpoints might be a helpful discussion to have in the congregation.

Likewise, the complexities of political life do not easily lend themselves to the kinds of changes that would in fact represent a greater degree of justice in our social structures. Thus, while it is true that "just one-third of President Reagan's proposed military *increase* for 1985, could have lifted every American child out of poverty" (100) it does not follow that such a reallocation of resources would actually have resulted in such an accomplishment. Any social political issue is more complex than that and we ought not think that a politics of compassion is a simple matter easily achieved.

But, Nelson-Pallmeyer knows that better than perhaps most of us. That is why his challenge is so strong and presses us

at the number of levels that it does: from developing an appropriate theology to proposing concrete actions to embrace. It is a challenge for each of us, especially North American Christians.

> The experience of the poor unlocks the meaning of scripture; the logic of the majorities judges the validity of economic systems; the well-being of the poor serves as a guidepost for those who seek to embody a politics of compassion in the midst of concrete historical struggles for social justice. (116)

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TOWARD A CHRISTIAN ECONOMIC ETHIC: STEWARDSHIP AND SOCIAL POWER, by Prentiss L. Pemberton and Daniel Rush Finn. Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1985. Pp. 256. $12.00 (paper).

> Economic life in the United States needs fundamental change. Millions live in poverty and unemployment and are locked out of our system. Millions more are underemployed or have no employment opportunities other than deadening and dehumanizing ones. Even many who are successful believe they are little more than gears in a machine too large to influence. Christians, whether locked out or successful, have the responsibility to establish a more just and human network of economic relationships. (167)

While many Christians would sympathize with the sentiments that something is drastically wrong with our economic system, few of us can respond effectively because we lack a basic understanding of economics or sociology. We can do little more than offer a theological lament and a half-hearted individual response to the problem.

Those who enjoyed Pilgrim's *Good News to the Poor* or Ellul's *Money & Power* will appreciate this offering by Pemberton and Finn. What first attracted me to this book was its strong identification of stewardship as a justice issue. Its strength lies in its two-part format of problem and solution. The authors combine their disciplines of economics and sociology to both clearly define the problem and to offer a beginning solution that empowers and leaves one feeling encouraged and ready for the task that lies ahead.

The problem according to Pemberton and Finn is that the operating norms that govern the economic behavior within society today have changed from the norms that were prevalent within the biblical community of faith. Thus the first task is to identify the operative norms of a Christian economic ethic which is rooted in Holy Scripture. That is followed by a careful analysis of how the norms have changed throughout history so that one is fully aware of the vast discrepancy between a Christian economic ethic and the ethic at work in society today. To do less than that we run the risk of mistaking our own personal positions for a truly Christian position.

Central to this biblical ethic is the place of community within the Old Testament. Serving God cannot be separated from acts of justice within that community. The authors find two role models who carry out that ethic in the New Testament in the persons of Paul and Zaccheus. Paul is in the role of "Forgoer," one who gives up all for the sake of the Gospel, while Zaccheus is in the role of a "Steward," one who shares a significant proportion of their gifts with others in need.

According to Pemberton and Finn there are six background assumptions from scripture and two ethical principles that form the foundation of a clearly Christian economic ethic. The first principle is that one must be either a forgoer or a steward! There is no other choice if one is to claim a Christian ethic. The second principle is just as challenging as the first. That is that the poor and oppressed have a just entitlement to a portion of the resources of the wealthy. The authors argue from the background assumptions from scripture and quote extensively from the

Church Fathers to build a solid case for their position.

Having established what they consider to be a basic Christian economic ethic the authors move on to show how this was corrupted down through history. Primary focus is placed upon John Locke and Adam Smith, two of the most significant shapers of our modern economic operative norms which supplanted the biblical norms of long ago.

Locke challenged the biblical norm that recognized all property as a gift from God over which the steward possessed only limited ownership. This was replaced by a norm that held that, when one's personal labor was mixed with the gifts of nature, then those gifts became one's own personal property over which no one has claim. This undermines the responsibilities of the steward and ignores the just entitlement of the poor. A second operative norm from scripture challenged by Locke was the notion that no one had a right to more of the earth's resources than they could rightfully use without spoilage. Locke held that with the introduction of money, which does not spoil, there no longer existed any restraint upon the accumulation of wealth. With the passing of this norm a long biblical tradition that warned against the love of money was swept aside, to be replaced by a norm that valued and rewarded the accumulation of ever greater amounts of capital.

It remained for Adam Smith to use these new norms in formulating an analysis of the economic forces at work which produce new wealth and hopefully end poverty. The key to wealth according to Smith lies in the division of labor, moving to exchange, and on to self-interest. His analysis was so powerful that his arguments are still the primary ones used by defenders of capitalism today. By tracing economic development from the industrial revolution to today Pemberton and Finn lead us to see that self-interest, even an enlightened self-interest, has resulted in an ever-growing number of people being locked out of sharing in the prosperity of the nation. Any system that increasingly denies benefits to an ever-growing number of people needs to be modified.

The authors conclude part one by saying:

> Badly needed here is a dialogue between economics and ethics. All too often economists dismiss proposals for more ethically responsible policies as naive and inefficient. All too often ethically attuned citizens either feel impotent in their lack of economic knowledge or, what is just as bad, simply ignore it. (112-113)

The second half of this book opens the door for that dialogue to take place.

One of the vast differences between ancient and modern times is that we in the modern world have learned that social institutions can be changed. In our democratic process we have come to feel that people not only have a right but also a duty to seek out the best forms of government and social process available to them. As a result of this we see that government can and does intervene in the economic marketplace. Thus it is important for Christians to address the current social institutions and to evaluate whether or not they ought to be changed for the greater good of society.

It is a fundamental premise of this book that, from the point of view of a Christian ethic, the current economic status of our society needs to be changed. The authors acknowledge that

this point of view is analogous to the problem of slavery in the last century. Even in the church not many people yet see the moral imperative for change. Nevertheless, they continue to state their case in very convincing terms.

Using the language and science of the economist Pemberton and Finn review the five basic themes of scarcity, the market, efficiency, property, and self-interest, and indicate for each theme where Christian values and ethics should intervene.

This is followed by a thorough discussion of individual versus social justice. In the world of economics there are times when individual justice and social justice are at odds with one another. What may be just for the individual (an underdeveloped nation's landowner producing a cash crop for export) may not be just for the "common good" (the need for the populace to feed itself). It is here that a Christian sense of community must speak to our American sense of the individual. It is also here that the so-called free marketplace is most troubled and the need for change is most apparent.

The remainder of the book deals with how to empower Christians for action so that they are not dependent upon "either powerless, abstract ideals (mere talk about love and justice) or powerless, unstructured individual actions."

Pemberton and Finn offer us an insightful analysis of the current economic situation and its underlying operating

norms that keep it functioning. They also present us with an alternative Christian economic ethic, and equip us with skills that can begin to replace the existing norms and values with ones that are more in keeping with the ethics of faith. If you are concerned about the rights of the poor, this is a "must read" book.

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REBECCA'S CHILDREN, by Alan Segal. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986. Pp. 207. $19.95.

The last decades have witnessed dramatic alterations in our picture of the first century. The discovery and publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the material from Nag Hammadi in Egypt, and new archaeological data have forced scholars to generate new imaginative constructions of the decades crucial to the birth of Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism. We are now beginning to see more synthetic works that seek to put various pieces of the puzzle together. Such a work is the little volume by Alan Segal.

One of the perennial difficulties in literature on the first centuries of our era is that scholars are often specialists in only one religious tradition. Jewish scholars with expertise in the rabbinic corpus frequently have little knowledge of or interest in the New Testament or the Church Fathers. Students of early Christian literature have correspondingly inadequate mastery of the intricacies of Mishnah and midrash. Segal, professor of Jewish Studies at Barnard College, is a rare scholar with solid credentials in both fields. His dissertation on rabbinic polemics against

heretics who believed in two powers in heaven required mastery of Christian as well as Jewish literature. He is thus well-suited to argue the thesis of his book, namely that Rabbinic Judaism—the type of Judaism reflected in the Mishnah and the Talmuds that came to dominate ensuing centuries—and early Christianity not only developed during the same period but that their births must be understood in relation to one another. The two religions are like Rebecca's children, born from the same womb however different they may appear.

The book establishes a setting for the birth of early Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism by tracing the history of Israel between Empires (Alexander's empire and that of the Romans) and offering a helpful glimpse of society at the time of Jesus. Those with limited knowledge of the period will find his brief comments on the Essenes and the Pharisees and messianic beliefs clear and helpful. His studies of Jesus, Paul, and the Rabbis are suggestive and provocative. His view of Paul is particularly interesting. On the one hand, Paul must be understood within Jewish tradition; on the other, the radical experience that changed Paul from the gospel's opponent to advocate (which can only be understood as a conversion) fundamentally altered his understanding of the Torah in a way that could not be accommodated within extant forms of Judaism. Segal takes issue with scholars like W. D. Davies and Krister Stendahl who tend to view Paul the convert as a Pharisee still, albeit one who believes Jesus to be Israel's Messiah. He grasps some of the radicality in Paul that E. P. Sanders has also demonstrated in his two books on the Apostle. Segal has already prepared a major work on Paul that will appear in print in a year or so, a work that will deserve careful study by those interested in Pauline theology.

Readers of Segal's work will also profit from his expertise in the social sciences. Throughout the work he seeks to demonstrate the social function of myth and ritual and conflict. Conflict was necessary in developing a sense of identity; maintaining boundaries provided a means of self-definition. While Christian leaders and the Rabbis developed very different approaches to defining their respective groups, the goals of their intellectual enterprises were remarkably similar, as were the crises to which they were responding.

Segal approaches the task of sketching the origins of Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism as a student of the humanities. From the perspective of social science and historical studies, both religious movements can be understood as creative interpretations of a common religious heritage. These two innovative movements

emerging from first century Judaism managed to adapt to new situations and become "universal" religions, even though each tradition approached the question of the universal and the particular in different ways. Measured by criteria developed within the humanities, each tradition must be adjudged "valid." Christians and Jews are both Rebecca's children; polemics must be understood as part of a family fight about the birthright.

Believers in both traditions may be restive with such an assessment. Acknowledging a common heritage is not the same as declaring each tradition equally valid. Questions of truth cannot be reduced to historical development or social function. Nor does the book make that claim. What is crucial is that in the increasing conversations between Christians and Jews, the critical century in the development of both traditions be taken seriously. Caricatures by means of which Christians and Jews have understood one another have been nourished by false conceptions of a history that is now being rewritten. In an important sense, Christians have more

to learn than Jews. While it is true that Rabbinic Judaism was in part a reaction to Christianity, there were many other forces that shaped its history. For New Testament Christianity, on the other hand, reactions from the parent Jewish community were absolutely decisive for the development of tradition and the production of literature. It is possible, if somewhat inadequate, for Jews to understand themselves and their origins with little attention to Christianity. It is impossible for Christians to understand themselves without attention to their Jewish roots and to the inability of the majority of Jews to accept Jesus as Messiah.

For both religious communities, Christian and Jewish, Segal's book is a helpful and suggestive insight into our common origins.

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MATTHEW: A GOOD NEWS COMMENTARY, by Robert H. Mounce. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985. Pp. 292. $9.95 (paper).

Why a new commentary series? The Good News Commentary on the New Testament intends to provide volumes "informed by solid scholarship and the most up-to-date research,...biblically faithful and readily understandable to the general reader" (v). The choice of authors suggests that the target audience is conservative in approach to the Bible.

Each volume in this series will follow the same format. A brief introduction surveys such matters as authorship and dating. There are scripture and subject indices and a list of works for further reading. The series is based on the Today's English Version (Good News Bible) which is printed in sections and followed by a running commentary. Brief end notes in each section deal with peripheral matters and mention resources on specific questions.

What does the reader find in the specific commentary under review?

One finds brief, insightful notes on grammar, vocabulary and even textual variants. The trained student will profit more from these, however, than the intended general audience. The frequent inclusion of transliterated Greek also aids the specialist but will likely cause confusion to others.

One also finds careful and insightful theological explication of Jesus' teaching. This is the strength of the book. Mounce is good on the parables, focusing on the message without being distracted by intriguing details of the story. In dealing with teaching sections such as the sermon on the mount, he maintains an appropriate tension between the assurance and admonition motifs.

Narrative sections are interpreted with carefully selected historical information but, again, without Mounce's being distracted by it. For example, the miracle stories are read for their statements about faith and about Jesus. Although Mounce touches the question of what actually happened, he does not take that, as such, to be the text's meaning.

Despite this refusal to be distracted from the message of the text, one must

also expect Mounce to defend the historicity of the material. "The position held throughout this commentary is that the text of Matthew is reliable and supplies us with a trustworthy record of

what Jesus said and did during his time on earth" (276). Though his position is usually defended with intelligence, there are some odd arguments. For example, scholarly disagreement "provides strong incentive" to accept verses as "a reliable account of what Jesus actually said" (162). Mounce is well aware that presuppositions influence conclusions on questions of historicity, but he says so a little too often and does not always see that this applies also to himself.

What you cannot expect from this commentary is a serious use of the methods of historical or literary criticism. Though Mounce constantly notes the opinions of contemporary scholars, many are quoted simply to be rejected. Even allowing for its brevity, the book too often simply dismisses positions without argument.

Because Mounce treats Matthew as a "trustworthy record of what Jesus said and did," the reader cannot generally expect him to make a distinction between Matthew's account and earlier traditions. He virtually reads the narratives as historical transcripts. Thus, though he recognizes Matthew as a collector and assembler of traditions, he rarely gives any attention to Matthew as theologian or author. Nor does Mounce struggle in his book with historical questions like the provenance of the Son of Man sayings or of claims for Jesus' divinity.

Mounce briefly explains the "synoptic problem" (186) but wants to have it two ways: both allowing the evangelists their individuality and suggesting that differences among them likely resulted from Jesus' using similar themes at various times in his ministry. There is a distinct tendency to harmonize differences—lists of apostles (90), sea crossing miracles (146), even the color of robe placed on Jesus by the soldiers (266). Where differences are acknowledged, as between Mt 13:13 and Mk 4:11-12, no conclusions are drawn (128).

Literary criticism is also neglected, both at the level of larger units and the whole, and within the smaller units. For example, though he gives favorable mention to Via's work on parables (128), Mounce seems uninfluenced by his methods.

Mounce's commentary cannot be said to have considered seriously all major historical and literary work on Matthew, but it stands solidly in the tradition of the grammatico-historical criticism which has long been used effectively by conservative scholars. As such, it is a good commentary.

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ANTHROPOLOGY IN THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE, by Wolfhart Pannenberg. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985. Pp. 552. $38.95.

Wolfhart Pannenberg is engaged in a pursuit which Christian theologians and apologists must take very seriously, even when they differ in strategies and understandings. The volume under review is not particularly easy reading; too frequently it wanders off chasing rabbits and nearly loses the scent of the fox. Even so, the book should be read, and the pursuit should be joined: The comments that follow here should be understood as impatiently sympathetic, with a cheerful bias toward the social rather than the psychological sciences.

Pannenberg's agenda is set in his opening sentence: "The understanding of the human being has increasingly played a foundational role in the history of modern theology" (11). The study presumes the "modern" understanding of God that begins in human experience rather than

in an understanding of nature. Part of the historical context is also the continuing privatization of religion and the need for a specifically Christian anthropology that can claim universal validity. "Without a sound claim to universal validity Christians cannot maintain a conviction of the truth of their faith and message," and therefore "Christian theology in the modern age must provide itself with a foundation in general anthropological studies" (15). Emphasize the "must." Even so, such studies, as they have developed largely independently of "the theo-

logical question," are not to be presumed neutral in relation to religion and therefore must be "critically appropriated." Pannenberg's is an explicit and bold interdisciplinary enterprise: "The aim is to lay theological claim to the human phenomena described in the anthropological disciplines" (19). Two main and broadly inclusive themes provide Pannenberg's bridge between traditional dogmatic anthropology and modern non-theological anthropological research—the image of God in human beings, and human sin. Using these concepts, Pannenberg develops what he calls "a fundamental-theological anthropology," in contrast to traditional dogmatic theology. He offers a study which "turns its attention directly to the phenomena of human existence" as investigated in various disciplines, and "examines the findings of these disciplines with an eye to implications that may be relevant to religion and theology" (21).

Readers new to Pannenberg should probably not begin with this volume, beginning instead with *What is Man?* On the other hand, initiated readers will find themselves on familiar territory and hopefully willing to risk the danger of engaging too personally or critically with anyone of the many supporting and frequently provocative insights that make up the bulk of this relatively big book. Indeed, despite its bulk, the book carries forward an argument that is reasonably precise, and the reader should occasionally return to the Introduction for a reminder of the author's intentions. In a sense the book is exactly *not* a new argument as much as it is a testing of many of Pannenberg's previous contentions about the human person, about the significance of Jesus for life as we experience it, and about futurity, and I have in mind especially the volumes entitled *Revelation as History* and *Jesus—God and Man.*

The book develops Pannenberg's examinations in three major divisions, from "The Person in Nature," through "The Human Person as a Social Being," to "The Shared World." Chapter 1 ("The Uniqueness of Humanity") is a critique of philosophical anthropology, and finds the special place of humanity in the animal world to be "the result of a history in the course of which alone human beings attain to selfhood and their specific nature" (42). Chapter 2 ("Openness to the World and Image of God") is a critique of the traditional notion of the "Fall" and the beginnings of a more adequate modern concept of destiny in the writing of J. G. Herder. Chapter 3 ("Centrality and Sin") has much of its focus in the work of Kierkegaard as Pannenberg discusses consciousness, freedom, and the key concepts of identity and exocentricity.

This volume, or at least Part One just summarized, betrays some question about the author's intended audience. Presumably that audience is literate both in modern Western theology and broadly in the liberal arts. The problem is that in today's North American array of social and behavioral sciences, there is nothing equivalent to what Europeans call philosophical anthropology—except perhaps within theology. For a North American audience, therefore, Chapter 1 begins with the wrong question, and it ends where it probably should have begun, that is, in the claim that human uniqueness is in its history. The second chapter's grounding of

modern philosophical anthropology in Herder compounds the problem of audience, for it speaks to those who are in conversation with the main current of theology and philosophy of Europe. U.S. Lutheran (and probably other) clergy, while they have a good exposure to that current as part of their training, seem not to continue in any active conversation with it. The further difficulty of building on Herder is that the work is thus oriented toward and within a philosophical and theological tradition that is by definition pre-Darwinian. Herder is not to be dismissed, but the reviewer is persuaded that any truly modern philsophical/theological anthropology must include at the outset a treatment of current evolutionary thinking. Thus, the place to begin is not with Herder on language and history but with a contemporary sociolinguist such as Charles F. Hockett, for example, who begins his 1974 textbook-length essay on "Man's Place in Nature" with some elementary notions of astrophysics. To insist on this is, of course, to beg a methodological question which Pannenberg raised in his introduction, which he dis-

cusses again in Chapter 2, and which we dare not ignore, however we answer it: "whether a theologically neutral description of human reality can be accepted as objectively valid by Christian thought or whether, on the contrary, the actual relation to the divine reality must be judged to be constitutive for the special character of human beings and for their fulfillment" (50).

Pannenberg's further discussion of the matter is really the whole of Part Two, and he is always a careful and responsible thinker. Already, however, the potential reader should have noted that even though the book is purportedly a review and interpretation of modern empirical researches into human nature and behavior, it is in fact much more a review of interpretations of such studies, and much too frequently what is reviewed is at least a second degree removed from the actual studies. In some cases, the interpretation is not even based on empirical studies at all, at least in the modern sense, as in the case of Locke and Rousseau and several other socio/political theorists. Chapter 4 ("Subjectivity and Society") deals with the development of self-consciousness as fundamentally a social process and culminates in a critical appraisal of G. H. Mead's theory of the self. Chapter 5 ("The Problem of Identity") is concerned with developmental psychology, and works through some existentialist literature in the course of its discussion. Chapter 6 ("Identity and Nonidentity as a Theme of the Affective Life"), the longest chapter, develops the key concept of feeling, discusses alienation and guilt and the consciousness of meaning, and usefully provides a mid-course summary (see pages 265-266).

Chapter 7 ("Foundations of Culture") begins Part Three with a sentence that will provoke a bristling of protest from today's professional anthropologists: "The world that human beings share has never been a natural world" (315). Here, perhaps more than anywhere else in Pannenberg's pursuit, the reviewer must also protest, since one small word substitution would make a world of difference: the world that human beings share has never been a "neutral" world. Whatever the term, the issue is in Pannenberg's understanding of "culture" in relation to "nature." Earlier in the volume he asserted that "The question of the constitution of the social world as a cultural world may provisionally be left open" (162). This is simply untenable as North Americans use the key terms "social" and "cultural." In addition, and in defense of his understanding of the individual person, Pannenberg has gotten caught rehearsing a debate over the "priority" (318) and the "unity" (321) of culture that simply no longer concerns professional anthropologists. To proceed as he does to find that neither in social institutions nor in human

symbolizing capacities but rather in the human propensity and tendency toward play is the foundation and the unity of culture is to offer a largely extraneous argument. More to the point, Pannenberg seems to misunderstand or at least to seriously underestimate the extent to which biological processes and models underlie virtually all of contemporary sociocultural theory. Such theory is explicitly evolutionary, and presumes as axiomatic that cultures may well be studied without reference to how any individual bearers of that culture may think or feel. Pannenberg's summary dismissal of sociobiology is therefore both symptomatic and regrettable. This is not saying that individual humans are irrelevant to cultural studies but rather that Pannenberg's inquiry needs to maintain greater rigor in distinguishing between individuals and cultures.

What Pannenberg lacks is an adequate theory of evolution. Yet, once again his methodological self-consciousness has anticipated the problem. In the subchapter on "Theology and the Religious Implications of Language," he writes:

> Theologians cannot, without prejudicing their own subject, simply attach themselves to this or that methodological approach that has been conceived for secular use. The secular understanding of a method must be subjected to scrutiny in relation to the (usually omitted) religious dimension of the realm of phenomena under discussion and must be revised in the light of this scrutiny. (390-391)

This is, in effect, the task Pannenberg has set for himself throughout his book on anthropology.

As a result I frequently had the feeling in my own reading of the book that Pannenberg was right but for the wrong reasons. Chapter 8, in its title, "The Cultural Meaning of Social Institutions," and especially in its first section, "The Concept of Social Institution," illustrates the problem. In the background is Talcott Parsons' theory of social action and in the foreground are Arnold Gehlen, Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann. Since neither Talcott Parsons nor "cultural meaning" is particularly current in North American discussions of social theory, Pannenberg's discussion tends to dissipate some of the reader's energies. The discussion is most positively assimilated if treated as illustrative, rather than definitive, of how a theologian engages with current scientific literature, and the task-to-be-accomplished is thus properly thrown to each reader. Purposefulness in human behavior, and intersubjectivity and the possibility of shared understandings of the experienced world, are ongoing critical concerns for all who would assess or interpret or theologize on the human species.

One would like to ask Pannenberg about so many of his thoughts and where he would take them if pursued in any of several particular directions. A case in point is his discussion of historicity. In the ninth and concluding chapter ("Human Beings and History"), Pannenberg contrasts the discipline of anthropology with the philosophy of history, and his own argument moves in the direction of defending what he calls "historicity." Historicity is an open-ended "exocentric" process, an understanding of which developed uniquely within Christianity but which in the modem world has been essentially secularized. In this process, as Pannenberg sees it, the fundamental question is one of conceptual (and temporal) priorities: "History is indeed made up largely of human actions, but by what means are the acting subjects themselves

constituted?" At this point it is appropriate to remember the title of the volume; it is in fact nearly descriptive of what the book proceeds to do, and I have had to struggle to keep the title clearly in my own view to remind me that the book is the one Pannenberg wrote, not the volume that I wish he had written. I remain somewhat disappointed that this is not the book that needs to be written for a North American audience. Still, the volume does conclude with some very provocative thoughts on "History and Spirit," and this reader, for one, hopes that Pannenberg continues his pursuit in the directions he seems to be pointing.

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EZEKIEL 1-19, by William H. Brownlee. Waco, TX: Word Books, 1986. Pp. xiii + 321. $22.95.

It was Brownlee's untimely death at age 66 in 1983 that set the limits of Vol. 28 of the Word Biblical Commentary at 19 chapters instead of at the more content-apropos 1-24. (Calvin, incidentally, died after completing 1-20.)

Brownlee's commentary is rich in scholarship but thin theologically. The bibliographical entries beginning each section vary from meager to ample and are up-to-date. The translations are fresh and supported with copious textual notes. The form/structure/setting, comment, and explanation sections are thorough. While the explanation segment always attempts to conclude with a New Testament or Christian application, this is much more a scholar's commentary than a preacher's.

The commentary in most details is excellent. When dealing with the riddle of the Cedar Tree in Ch. 17 or the saying on Sour Grapes in 18 Brownlee is at his scholarly best, analyzing and synthesizing in helpful and illuminating ways. Where he leaves many readers behind is in his historical/geographical approach to Ezekiel (and, of course, in those chapters which deal specifically with the locale of Ezekiel's ministry).

Brownlee does not adopt the Babylonian setting for Ezekiel's ministry. Formerly challenged in Ezekiel scholarship, the Babylonian locale has been largely reendorsed by the majority of modern scholars: Zimmerli, Greenberg, Craigie, Cody, Taylor, and even the textually very free Wevers. Instead, Brownlee dismisses

the traditional and canonically-stated Chaldean locale as "an improbable rationalization" (xxv). He then proceeds to read Gilgal for *golah* (exile). Ezekiel supposedly begins his ministry in Gilgal, that archaeologically elusive town in the Jordan valley, leads an exile to Egypt, makes a personal tour of all the foreign nations he castigates and returns to Gilgal where a view of the skeleton of Zedekiah's army prompts the Dry Bones vision of Chap. 37.

An improbable rationalization. It is brilliantly done, very provocative, challenging and instructive, and, as Lazar Wolf sings in *Fiddler on the Roof,* "It gives you something to think about." But it remains, on the whole, improbable.

True, references to Tel-Abib and the River Chebar are few. But that is what ancient documents leave us with: few clues. One might as well deny Ezekiel his name since it is mentioned only twice in the book.

As a scholarly commentary on the first 19 chapters of Ezekiel this book is a welcome addition to the growing literature on the prophet of the exile. As a theological commentary for preachers it only tantalizes. As a solid entry into the Ezekiel-locale problem it will remain at the edge of the discussion.

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CROSS-CURRENTS: INTERACTIONS BETWEEN SCIENCE AND FAITH, by Colin A. Russell. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1985. Pp. 272. $14.95 (paper).

Nearly a century ago the history of the relation of religion and science was related by J. W. Draper and A. D. White as a story of unmitigated conflict and perennial warfare. With Russell's *Cross-Currents* we see just how far the pendulum has now swung in the opposite direction. This history of the relation intends to show that modern science, "pursued in an ostensibly Christian culture, has acquired presuppositions that derive from biblical theology, and...has sometimes displayed the most remarkable conformity with the theological views of its practitioners" (17). In a well-paced account aimed at non-specialist readers, the professor of the history of science and technology at The Open University, Milton Keynes, England, draws economically on the growing body of literature that supports this thesis. The influence of R. Hooykaas is very strong here, and freely acknowledged; less obvious but nonetheless significant is the contribution of Marxist interpretation of the social conditioning of science. This combination of views makes for interesting, even provocative reading for persons looking for an alternative to both the anti-science position of Christian fundamentalism and the pseudo-religion of Carl Sagan's scientism.

Russell's favorite metaphor to characterize the history of the relation of science and faith is that of a river. Western science springs from the diverse sources in Greek culture recovered by Renaissance thinkers, he acknowledges, but the epochal flow down the slopes of the "Copernican watershed" was channeled decisively through the terrain of a "biblical ideology" developed during the Protestant Reformation. The elimination of a mythic conception of nature, the conception of nature as operating according to certain regular principles which are to be discerned only by means of an experimental method, and a heightened determination to develop control over nature's forces, were in Russell's view key features of a cultural context pervaded by the biblical view of nature as created by a sovereign God who imposed his will on the creation and gave human beings dominion over it. In the "deepening waters" of the scientific revolution, he admits, divergent theological currents to be located in the writings of the scientists include pantheism, deism, semi-deism, and human instrumentalism. But the theology most consistent with the presuppositions of the new science, he argues, is a radical Christian theism which sees God as "the immediate as well as the ultimate case of all phenomena in nature" (92-97).

Russell's account continues with the development of technology, the founding of geology, and the evolution controversy. Only with the latter do we reach

"troubled waters," he thinks. A "certain independence of mind" and the "moral courage" especially characteristic of Puritan and Nonconformist religion provided in the seventeenth century the discipline needed to keep the practice and application of science healthy. As to the eighteenth century, in the author's view there is "nothing inherently incompatible" between the natural theology espoused by pious rationalists of the eighteenth century and biblical theology, as long as the deistic tendency to downgrade revelation in favor of reason and otherwise restrict God's intervention in the world is kept in check by a vigorous revivalism like that of Wesley or Whitefield. And if Darwinism's triple challenge to religion, the attack on the concept of design, the destabilization of society, and mechanism, have as little basis in Darwin's own writings as Russell thinks, even the "troubled waters" of the nineteenth century may very well seem bridgeable by an "orthodox faith" which can either ask for a suspended judgement

until all the facts are in, or fail to find a conflict at all because of the conviction that "all scientific knowledge and theories, however useful, (are) somewhat temporary compared with what is clearly revealed" (174).

One suspects that Russell's thesis is itself in deep water at this point. The disengagement of science and theology achieved in the nineteenth century and especially important to Darwin himself removed from most scientists' writings the kind of theological material helpful to Russell's case. Russell's treatment of the emergence of the new physics in the twentieth century and the ecological crisis of today is especially problematic for this reason; he is hard pressed, indeed, to uncover in contemporary scientific literature much evidence for the ideology which he regards as biblical. The concluding chapters are something of a disappointing fishing trip.

A major deficiency of Russell's argument surfaces here. While he exhibits a desirable openness with respect to the definition of science, acknowledging that what constitutes science develops historically, a similar flexibility with respect to the definition of "biblical Christianity" is strikingly absent. His "biblical Christianity" is not surprisingly a very familiar Calvinistic Protestantism, and his argument concerning the interactions of science and faith really works well only in the cultures dominated by that tradition. Along the way he has argued that the romanticism of the nineteenth century was incompatible with the new science; but the tendency of that movement towards an "unbiblical" pantheism is surely as important a factor in Russell's evaluation of nineteenth century developments. No consideration is given to the panentheism of either a German Schleiermacher or an American Edwards, of course, since this book is about the history of science, not the history of theology. But one suspects that once the bar of Darwinism has been passed over on the way into the ocean of contemporary science, the history of the relation of science and faith requires something of the capacity for deep sounding that the work of such theologians represents. Russell's biblical ideology turns out to be river boat theology, poorly suited for exploration in the waters of twentieth century physics, biology and ecology.

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