

Broadhead's conclusions in this arena form an important contribution to understanding how Matthew's Gospel has generated and impacted upon differing communities characterised by distinctive identities.

BETHEL SEMINARY,  
SAN DIEGO

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*The Christian world around the New Testament. Collected essays II.* By Richard Bauckham. (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 386.) Pp. x+757 incl. 1 table and 1 map. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017. €259.978 3 16 153305 1

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Richard Bauckham is one of Britain's most distinguished New Testament scholars. Indeed it is easy to forget that he began life as a sixteenth-century historian (his first published monograph was entitled *Tudor apocalypse: sixteenth-century apocalypticism, millenarianism, and the English Reformation*) and was never formally a biblical studies student. The volume under review contains thirty-one essays written over five decades (the earliest dates to 1974, the most recent to 2014). As Bauckham indicates in his very brief introduction, the title of the volume, which recalls the title of a collection of Bauckham's essays of some six years ago (*The Jewish world around the New Testament*, Tübingen 2011), is meant to indicate that the essays are not limited to discussion of the New Testament. A large number, for instance, are dedicated to the investigation of so-called apocryphal Christian literature, in which Bauckham has been interested for many years. Some of these take the form of knowledgeable reportage, as in essays xxvi and xvii on apocryphal and pseudepigraphical literature, and non-canonical apocalypses respectively. Here we have helpful introductions to an array of familiar and less familiar texts. The majority are taken up with positing particular theses. Essay xxi argues for a date for the apocalypse of Peter in the time of the Bar Kokhba Revolt. Essay xxiv argues that the collection of works known as *The Acts of Paul* are a sequel to canonical Acts, a point which is further supported in the essay which follows in which Bauckham argues strongly against the view that the author of the *Acts of Paul* wanted to replace the canonical Acts. Essay xxix seeks to ask to what extent the early Christian apocrypha are imaginative literature. In the process of giving a broadly affirmative answer, Bauckham shows up similarities between some of these works and the erotic novel as well as emphasising the sense in which they can be seen to ape forms of rewritten Bible as these are found in well-known Jewish texts like *Joseph and Aseneth* or the *Liber antiquitatum biblicarum* attributed to pseudo-Philo. The essay contains interesting observations on the kind of audience which such works assume and firmly situates these works in the mid- to later second century.

While the section on the apocryphal literature might be of greatest interest to readers of the this JOURNAL, other essays will also attract attention. In essay vii, in response to Margaret Mitchell's broadside against Bauckham's claim that there is no evidence in patristic literature for a community-based view of the origins of the canonical Gospels in which she had cited many *testimonia*, which she saw as supporting a contrary view, Bauckham argues that while such *testimonia* evidence a

view of the text as written in a particular setting, there is no evidence that that setting was hermeneutically relevant to the way in which the text was written or subsequently understood. For Bauckham, then, such evidence does not contradict his view that the Gospels were written 'for all Christians'. Essay vii argues that Papias's *Exegesis of the Lord's words*, preserved in a very few fragments, probably had more to do with history than exegesis understood as interpretation of texts. Papias also features in essay v where Bauckham defends evidence in favour of Peter as a source for Mark's Gospel, especially as this relates to the well-known passage in which the man from Hierapolis asserts such a view (Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 3.39.14–16; see also essay iii). In essay xi Bauckham presents quite familiar evidence in favour of a relatively early date for the four-fold Gospel, and argues that certain characteristics of the Gospels determined their choice (literary genre as biographies; narratives which closely connect with the Old Testament narrative of the Gospels; deep commitment to Jewish monotheism; embeddedness of the narrative in a historical context that can be verified). Bauckham's conclusion on this subject stands in sharp relief to works which would posit a slower move towards agreement on the question of a four-fold Gospel and would endorse a less clear distinction between so-called canonical Gospels and other works; and his robust conclusions on this matter are reflected in his review of Francis Watson's *Gospel writing of 2014*, which constitutes essay ix.

Also of interest to readers of this JOURNAL are essays on the martyrdom of Peter in early Christian literature (a helpful review of relevant texts with a set of conclusions which, *inter alia*, posit that Peter was crucified in Rome during the Neronian persecution; unsurprising conclusions, but the end result of helpfully detailed discussion). Also useful are pieces on the Lord's day (essay xvii), and Sabbath and Sunday in the Post-Apostolic Church (essay xviii), again in part because they collate and comment upon a broad range of texts. Essay xix looks again at the question of an early Christian *kerygma*, beginning with the evidence of the speeches in Acts, but pointing also to later second-century sources, including the *Ascension of Isaiah* and Ignatius' letters, which show evidence of the same. Bauckham sees this material as implying that such a kerygma took a flexible form, being adapted to varying circumstances, but operating within specific constraints. The final essay (essay xxxi) is an intriguing study of the origins of the claim found in Hermias and Clement of Alexandria that the fall of the angels was the source of philosophy. Bauckham points up the relative popularity of the claim that pagan culture could be accounted for by the fall of the angels, described in Genesis vi, but the rarity of associating the latter with the origins of philosophy. The latter claim is only found in Hermias and Clement, in the former in a negative form and the latter a more positive one. Against this background Bauckham suggests that Clement might be reacting against Hermias.

This is a very helpful collection of essays, the content of which, inevitably, is difficult to summarise (in this context, it is interesting that Bauckham avoids a discursive introduction or conclusion in which the variant threads of the essays might be brought together – perhaps the threads are too variable to render such a task possible). The collection could be said to constitute a type of refutation of trends in recent studies of early Christianity in that by and large they favour a more conservative vision of early Christian diversity than has become more *de rigueur* in some circles. The contents of the canonical Gospels are not determined by the fractious

communities for which they were apparently written, but are texts crafted with a much wider body of Christians in mind, Christians who were part of an integrally connected 'ekklesia', rather than a fractionalised set of widely variant communities; their contents have their origin in eye-witness testimony; a four-fold Gospel is early and the selection of its texts are determined by what could be called traditionalist criteria, a position consistent with the view that a broadly agreed-upon Christian kerygma is evidenced early and persistently in Christian history; apocryphal Christian literature, by and large, does not stand in obvious tension or conflict with canonical texts but can, at least in broad terms, be understood as in continuity with the same. Continuity and unity, then, are more characteristic of the first- and second-century Christian Church; and such a case is argued in a thoroughly positivistic and conventionally historical way, with little reference to more theoretical approaches. Bauckham attributes positions opposed to his own to 'a postmodern cultural climate' and 'an agenda of radical pluralism' in which 'any authoritative norms of faith are perceived as restrictive and oppressive' (p. 237). Wherever one places oneself on the map of this continually evolving debate, we should be grateful to have a set of essays, which, *inter alia*, give erudite, thoughtful and exemplary support to one voice in the discussion.

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*The Gospel according to the Hebrews and the Gospel of the Ebionites.* By Andrew Gregory. (Oxford Early Christian Gospel Texts.) Pp. xvi + 344 incl. 19 tables. Oxford–New York: Oxford University Press, 2017. £115. 978 0 19 928786 4  
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The appearance of this edition of the so-called Jewish Christian Gospels, a term that the editor is not entirely happy with (hence its absence from the less than snappy title) is a timely one and provides the interested scholar with a solid and helpful starting point for his or her engagement with the subject.

Andrew Gregory, who boasts an expertise, *inter alia*, in the reception of New Testament writings in the second century, is ideally placed to edit such an edition. In a strikingly clear introduction, he makes plain the difficulties associated with the study of these texts, not the least of which is the fact that we have no independent manuscript of any of them – all are mediated to us through the hand of patristic authorities and with sometimes different titles. On the vexed question of the number of Jewish Christian Gospels, which has oscillated in the history of scholarship between two and three, Gregory opts for the former number, here citing with approval a number of arguments put forward by the Finnish scholar, Petri Luomanen, in particular his claim that Waitz's view that a Gospel with Gnostic-like overtones could not contain passages from the synoptic Gospels was false. The two Gospels are the ones which appear in the title of the volume – a Gospel of the Nazoreans, as proposed by Waitz many years ago, is dispensed with.

On many of the other preliminary critical issues, Gregory's conclusions are unsurprising whether these relate to the date of the documents under discussion (both are placed in the second century), their provenance (difficult to decide) or how to define the term Jewish Christian (rightly, Gregory wonders how, with so