

generation and by no means blameless on all of these counts, but concluding ultimately that 'What is interesting is not how Lewis reflects the views of an era but how he qualifies or undercuts them in obedience to the demands of a narrative or a spiritual imperative or both' (p. 46).

At the heart of the book Williams is at his best when exploring Lewis's drawing of Aslan as a character. His exploration of the theme of freedom with regard to the human self in the face of the divine is worth dwelling on and reading more than once: 'The orderliness of a world focused on the self is doomed to be disrupted by grace; and we can't appreciate quite what Aslan is about unless and until we see him in action against this kind of order' (p. 52). Williams grasps a key fact that many critics of Lewis fail to see – Aslan is positioned by Lewis as a rebel against an established order. As Williams puts it for Lewis: 'The truth of God is found in rebellion against oppressive clichés of the world' (p. 51). We also encounter the extraordinary and unsettling intimacy of Aslan's interactions with humans, which Williams describes as almost erotic although he underscores that nothing inappropriate for a children's book is ever there. The powerful force of Aslan's presence, his physicality and his intimacy with those who are loyal to him are brought to our attention as Williams writes: 'Remember that Lewis is constantly trying to get us to sense afresh what it is *like* to be confronted with God' (p. 56).

There is a fascinating section in the book on the concept of truth: we are reminded of 'The Silver Chair' where the children are about to give in to the idea that the Lion is a fantasy and that the underworld is the only reality. Only Puddleglum resists and cries, 'I'm on Aslan's side even if there isn't any Aslan to lead it.' Rowan Williams here explores Lewis's commitment to objective truth within the broader context of 'those who cling to it without hope of reward or vindication' (p. 62). It is a revealing commentary by the Archbishop on truth and gives us insight into Lewis's exploration of faith, truth, doubt and reason as well as hints of his own.

The reader's journey leads us to engage with Narnia but ultimately with what Lewis is doing as he writes, which is to show us 'that the traditional Christian world view does not entail some kind of emptying out of familiar material reality in favour of a ghostly substitute: it is this world which is so often a ghostly substitute for the real thing because of our own fear of what is real' (p. 119). Somehow this brings us back to the personal nature of *The Lion's World* – 'The reader is brought to Narnia for a little in order to know Aslan better in this world' (p. 144). In *The Lion's World* that is exactly what happens: Lewis's writings are a platform enabling us to scale greater heights in imagining and even encountering God.

Amy Orr-Ewing
Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics

Stephen G. Parker Tom Lawson, *God and War: The Church of England and Armed Conflict in the Twentieth Century* (Farnham and Burlington, VT: (Ashgate, 2012)), pp. x+239. ISBN 9780754666929.
doi:10.1017/S1740355313000144

This is an ambitious volume of nine essays which try to cover aspects of the Church of England's understanding of and involvement in armed conflict through

the course of the twentieth century. It begins at the turn of the century with the Boer War, and concludes with the military interventions in the Gulf and in Kosovo in the 1990s. In his wide-ranging essay on the Boer War, particularly as this affected the clergy of the Diocese of Winchester, Mark Allen shows that the Church of England was more subtle in its response to the war than might have been expected and was very far from being blindly supportive and jingoistic. His local study confirms many of the findings of my essay on a similar theme ('Theological Responses in England to the South African War, 1899–1902', *Zeitschrift für neuere Theologiegeschichte/Journal for the History of Modern Theology* 16.2 (2009), pp. 181–96) which forms his starting point. This chapter is followed by another impressive essay by Stuart Bell on the Church and the First World War, which provides a useful summary of past work on the subject as well as pointers for further research. Bell's essay seeks to understand the responses of the Church in context rather than through the lens of the kind of rhetoric of 'Oh! What a lovely War': Bell offers a useful overview of both church history and theology, especially the idea of a suffering God so passionately maintained by chaplains such as Geoffrey Studdert-Kennedy.

Stephen Parker addresses a different set of issues in his essay on 'Reinvigorating Christian Britain' where he discusses 'The Spiritual Issues of the War, National Identity and the Hope of Religious Education' in relation to the Second World War and the issue of compulsory religious education in state schools. From a different perspective, Andrea Harris addresses Sex and the Church, particularly in relation to sexually transmitted diseases, which were regarded by many as a symptom of national moral decline. The Moral Welfare Council, for instance, produced pamphlets charting the terrible emotional traumas and desires suffered by the young people serving their nation, some of whom were 'tortured by masturbation' and 'crazy with homosexual desires' (p. 89). Many – including Archbishop William Temple – felt that the only way out of such depravity was to reawaken a sense of obligation towards God. What was quite extraordinary was the level of ignorance about sex, as well as a reluctance among the Church and the Ministry of Health to offer practical advice on how to avoid disease. One Mass Observation interviewee is reported to have said: 'I suppose that's the influence of the bloody Church. I think the Ministry of Health ought to set it aside and take the thing seriously' (p. 97). It was not until the 1960s that sex education came to be regarded as acceptable in school classrooms (rather than in the lavatories).

Philip Coupland's essay discusses peace activists and visions of reconstruction during the Second World War, focusing on the complex political views of such characters as Maurice Reckitt of the Christendom Group, as well as the opposition to war that came from supporters of fascism, which had a modest number of supporters among Anglican clergy. Sometimes a nostalgic romanticism seemed to prevail over the realities of politics, although for the most part the Christendom Group supported the sorts of activities that led to the Malvern Conference of 1941 with its call for a welfare state and the creation of a more egalitarian England. The next essay, by Dianne Kirby on the Cold War, is a wide-ranging and solid piece that tackles the Anglican hierarchy's response to perceived Soviet aggression, and its use of Cold War rhetoric. In an excellent essay, Matthew Grimley charts the role of Anglicans within the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, and notes Christopher

Driver's accurate assessment of what he called 'a strange form of inverted nationalism', 'a belief that Britain was still so great a power, that, if it unilaterally disarmed, the world would have to take note' (p. 164). It took the nation, like its church, a very long time to wake up to the decline of its perceived status of invulnerability.

Cliff Williamson then discusses the Church of England's role during the Falklands War. Although the main thrust of the account is accurate, especially in the role taken by Robert Runcie, the essay is littered with factual errors: Canon John Collins is called 'Dean of St Paul's', Geoffrey Paul, suffragan bishop of Hull, is called Geoffrey Hull, and Hugh Montefiore is said to have been 'suffragan bishop of Southwark' when Runcie was appointed archbishop in 1979, when he was already in Birmingham (and he was suffragan bishop of Kingston in the diocese of Southwark before that). Even more inaccurate is the claim that the indefatigable Donald Soper was the 'first Wesleyan bishop to sit in the Upper House' (p. 170) which would have surprised him as much as anybody else. The final essay by Peter Lee brings the collection almost up to date with a discussion of military intervention after 1989, with a good case study of the different reactions to the Gulf War of 1991.

Overall, this is a worthwhile volume that adds a great deal to our understanding of the role of the Church of England through a century of unprecedented conflict. It is a great pity that there are such large numbers of elementary grammatical errors, for instance, where commas are used in place of full stops. There are also a few elementary errors in the use of ecclesiastical titles and the like: at one point the Anglican Communion is called the 'Anglican Community' (p. 132). That said, this is a valuable and important volume which helps in the reappraisal of the role of the Christian Churches in time of war.

Mark Chapman
Ripon College Cuddesdon