

links between Church and State are still strong, the beginnings of each national *symphonia* are worth pondering over.

UNIVERSITY OF BUCHAREST

MARIANA-ALINA URS

*Ferdinand Christian Baur und die Geschichte des frühen Christentums*. Edited by Marin Bauspiess, Christof Landmesser and David Lincicum. (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 333.) Pp. x+455. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014. €139. 978 3 16 150809 7; 0512 1604  
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This hefty volume collects fifteen contributions by German and British scholars (most of them associated with the universities of Tübingen and Oxford) hailing from diverse theological disciplines such as Systematic Theology, Church History, New Testament Studies and Practical Theology, on the work of Ferdinand Christian Baur (1792–1860), Professor of Church History in the Faculty of Protestant Theology at Tübingen.

U. Köpf reconstructs the vicissitudes of Baur's relationship with his disciple D. F. Strauss (pp. 3–51). After the publication of the latter's 'bombshell', his *Life of Jesus* (1835), relations between the two progressively cooled as Strauss came under attack from both some of his colleagues and the church authorities. It was, however, Strauss who in 1846 wrote a letter to Baur that seemed to mark a break with his revered teacher. However, throughout Baur's life the two remained in contact. Baur viewed Strauss as more of a radical critic of Christian dogma than a reliable and judicious historian whose task – according to Baur – should never confine itself to the work of critical destruction alone but must always rebuild and propose an alternative view. N. Slenczka (pp. 53–74) analyses the debate between Baur and J. A. Möhler, Baur's professorial colleague in the Faculty of Catholic Theology at Tübingen: whereas Baur viewed the 'Protestant principle' as effecting the liberation of the individual and the state from the tutelage of the Church, Möhler tried to strike a balance between modern religious subjectivity and the demands of the institutional Church: according to him religion means the integration of individual religious subjectivity into the collective subjectivity of the Church. Sin is consequently viewed as wrongly insisting on one's own individuality against the demands of this collective subjectivity (p. 61). M. Wendte asks whether Baur was indeed a Hegelian (as is often claimed) and gives a positive answer with, however, important qualifications (pp. 75–88): Baur's methods and working ethos were those of a conscientious historian; moreover, some of his historical idealism (the history of Christianity as the history of God's revelation, advancing in the dialectical process of thesis – antithesis – synthesis) may have drawn on other sources besides Hegel, such as Schelling. Consequently Baur should probably be characterised as a German 'idealist' rather than as a strict Hegelian.

In the following section nine contributions focus on diverse aspects of Baur's work: D. Lincicum analyses Baur's contribution to the *Einleitungswissenschaft* of the New Testament (pp. 93–105), A. Gersma Baur's contribution to the emergence of the 'Judaism-Hellenism dichotomy' (pp. 107–28) and V. H. Drecoll (pp. 129–60) the mutual interference between Baur's views of Christian Gnosticism and the religious philosophies of his contemporaries Hegel,

Schelling and Schleiermacher. C. Landmesser focuses on Baur as interpreter of the Corpus Paulinum (pp. 161–94), M. Bauspiess on his view of the Synoptic Gospels (pp. 195–225) and J. Frey on his exegesis of the Corpus Johanneum (pp. 227–58). R. Morgan, analysing Baur's New Testament theology, reminds us, *inter alia*, again of his considerable debt to Hegel (pp. 259–84). S. Alkier contributes observations on Baur's criticism of miracles (pp. 285–311). J. Zachhuber offers an acutely critical reading of Baur's *oeuvre* which yields a very interesting result (pp. 313–31): according to him Baur worked with an implicitly dualist model according to which the historian of Christianity conducts impartial historical research, only to supplement it, as a second step, by a theological or philosophical interpretation that has to provide 'meaning, values, teleology'. The problematical result is a 'dualism of fact and meaning'. Zachhuber points out that on this reading of Baur's *oeuvre*, the great church historian missed the most important lesson of Hegel's philosophy of history (pp. 329–30). The last section of the book deals with Baur's *Wirkungsgeschichte*. J. Carleton Paget offers a useful and very thorough overview of Baur's reception in Britain in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (pp. 335–86): it was at first sluggish (not least because few British scholars could easily read his professorial prose in the original German – so this is anything but a recent phenomenon), then, when after his death he began to be translated and read more widely, he was seen as more and more out-dated. Even those earlier scholars (such as J. Martineau) who sensed that he had something important to say were prone to prefer his methods to his results. A scholar of the standing of Lightfoot did take him seriously, only to subject his view to a most thorough criticism. In the twentieth century, the positive and complex appreciation of Baur's theological work by R. Morgan stands out, but his challenge was not taken up by other British theologians. D. Geese compares Baur with Harnack: both did not limit themselves to historical research but strove to grasp the principle or essence of Christianity. However, they came to radically different conclusions: Baur sees a continuous explication of the idea of Christianity in history, each stage of the development contributing to this process of explication. Harnack, on the other hand, conceives of this process as a story of decline: reference to the (ultimately ahistorical) essence of Christianity is meant to critique every actual historical realisation of Christianity (pp. 387–404). B. Weyel concludes this section with some reflections on possible impulses of Baur for the discipline of Practical Theology (pp. 405–24). Consultation of this worthy volume left this reader with the strong impression that whereas the more important problems with which Baur struggled largely remain with us, none of his more ambitious attempts at solving them could justly claim much attention today. There is some progress in historical and theological scholarship after all.

HEIDELBERG

WINRICH LÖHR