

In general, as is perhaps inevitable with a book of this format, the lack of development in the discussion of ecology is likely to disappoint the reader. An editorial policy of minimal annotation also deprives the reader of a context for the passages, and the translations are not always easy to follow. It is very encouraging to be reassured that 'green' themes are now an integrated part of Catholic moral and social teaching. However, this volume goes little beyond the well-known encyclicals in explaining exactly what that means.

MARGARET ATKINS OSA

THEOLOGY AS SCIENCE IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY GERMANY: FROM F.C. BAUR TO ERNST TROELTSCH by Johannes Zachhuber, *Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2013, pp. xii + 318, £75.00, hbk*

Is theology a science? Since the question first emerged in the 13th century, the answer has remained problematic. Today it seems that, for most academics, theology cannot claim to be a science and should therefore be excluded from the world of the university. How should theology respond to this challenge? In order to answer this question, it might be helpful to look into the past and to examine the debate about the scientific status of theology at a high point of this debate, and this is without doubt the theological debate in nineteenth-century Germany. It is the merit of Johannes Zachhuber, Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, to present this exemplary debate and its leading protagonists to an English-speaking audience.

Zachhuber starts with a short description of the context of this debate, starting with the question of theology as a science in general, but mainly with regards to the specific situation of German theology at the beginning of the 19th century, as part of the secular universities and challenged by the philosophical climate in Germany after Kant. With this background Zachhuber shows the development of 19th century Protestant theology in Germany from Friedrich Schleiermacher, whose *Brief Outline for the Study of Theology*, first published in 1811, presented a concept of theology as 'positive science', via the Protestant Tübingen School with their leading protagonist Ferdinand Christian Baur, to the theological project of Albert Ritschl and his school. Zachhuber concludes with Ernst Troeltsch, who marks the transition from 19th century theology to the 20th Century, with the new beginning of Karl Barth, whose 'dialectical theology' is a bold response to the question of theology as a science and its problems in the theological models of his predecessors.

The general problem regarding the question of theology as a science in the 19th century is not so much the development of the natural sciences, but of a critical science of history, whose methods changed biblical theology and church history. By using the critical methods of the secular sciences, the historical disciplines of theology were able to keep their academic status in the university, but by doing this they distanced themselves from the systematic and doctrinal approaches to theology. The criterion that distinguishes a science really as scientific, was increasingly seen as the 'presuppositionlessness' (*Voraussetzungslosigkeit*) character of 'objective' scientific research. According to Zachhuber, it was David Friedrich Strauss, who claimed first this ideal of objectivity in theology; this ideal ultimately became characteristic of the Protestant Tübingen School. According to Zachhuber, there are two ideals of theology as a science, which exist side-by-side in the 19th century. First, the idea of theology as a consistent and systematic science, which integrates the historical and systematic parts of theology in a single unified discipline, and secondly theology as the 'presuppositionless' study of religion, proceeding according to the modern

scientific ideal of objectivity. The historical-critical method also becomes the scientific standard for theology, and all attempts to reconcile Christian faith and historical methods had to try to integrate the results of the historical studies with the theological framework of Christian faith. Ritschl, who argued against this ideal of objectivity in theology, was concerned to revive a more idealistic synthesis of history and theology. Zachhuber's present work, however, demonstrates that the background of the theological and philosophical synthesis of Baur and Ritschl is not, as many theologians think, the concepts of Schleiermacher and Hegel, but the idea of history and science according to Schelling's concept of history as the process of the self-revelation of the absolute. Nevertheless, it is obvious to Zachhuber that all attempts to synthesize the different positions in theology fail in the praxis of theology itself, because the historical-critical method had come to dominate the study of church history. But these approaches to church history are in general a-theological, claims Zachhuber.

So the question emerges of why church history remains a part of theology. This is a question, according to Zachhuber, which has not changed since the 19th century. Indeed, Zachhuber is able to show that the problem of theology as a science is still relevant today. He himself calls in the end for a concept of a non-foundational theology, which abstains from verifying its propositions by an outside institution and which interprets as theological hermeneutics the internal content of Christian faith and communication in a systematic way. Zachhuber's idea of theology is, in this sense, the result of the discussion of the 19th century and the separation of comparative studies of religion on the one hand from theology as internal hermeneutics of Christian faith on the other.

In the end I have only one slightly critical remark, which concerns the almost total lack of references to the parallel development in Catholic theology in the 19th Century. It is, of course, understandable that the author had to narrow the focus of his work and that he restricted his research to the Protestant Tübingen School and its successors. But when Zachhuber writes that before Ritschl only the Reformed theologian Johannes Cocceius (1603 – 69) uses the concept of the Kingdom of God as the central principle of theology, he obviously forgets Johann Sebastian Drey, who is using the idea of the Kingdom of God exactly in this way as the central idea of theology as a scientific system in his *Brief Introduction to the Study of Theology*, published for the first time in 1819. The parallels between both traditions at this time, like for instance the influence of Schelling's philosophy on the idea of theology as a science, are indeed remarkable. It would be a worthwhile project to compare the developments of both models of theology as a science in Germany. This outstanding work of Johannes Zachhuber has, however, laid the ground for such a project from the Protestant point of view, and every attempt to develop the academic debate on this subject must build upon this remarkable piece of research.

CARSTEN BARWASSER OP

METAPHYSICS AND GRAMMAR by William Charlton, *Bloomsbury*, London, 2014, pp. 234, £19.99, pbk

Responding to the logical positivists' denigration of metaphysics in the 1950s, Alex Oliver recently commented that 'the show is over and serious metaphysics flourishes once more' in Anglo-American philosophy, but went on to add that there remain 'serious unanswered questions about its methods of inquiry.' William Charlton suggests that the answer to this methodological question is grammar – that grammar provides a sound basis on which to build metaphysics. In doing so,