

the Nazi myth appealed; thus Hitler's attendance and endorsement. It was also, however, a product and symbol of Catholic devotion the Nazis tried to undermine as a competitor for the hearts of the German people. To further complicate matters, as Waddy observes, the play's text and dramatic rendering made comprehensible Hitler's anti-Semitic interpretation, thereby demonstrating the uneasy place of Christianity itself before Nazi atrocities.

Waddy's understanding of the people of Oberammergau leads her to contest Daniel Goldhagen's depiction of the German people in the Third Reich as Hitler's *Willing Executioners* (Knopf, 1996). While she may be right to challenge Goldhagen's harsh judgement – and she is not alone in doing so – she may at times be too muted in her critique of Oberammergau's citizens. She may also exaggerate the case in her tendency to equate opposition to Nazi religious policies and sensibilities with resistance. Still, in the light of Nazi totalitarian ambitions, any dissent could be a form of confrontation.

Oberammergau in the Nazi Era is unabashedly a micro history of a Bavarian Alpine village with a unique identity. It greatly enriches our understanding of a village famous for its vow to perform the Passion Play, but also of the complexity of life in the Third Reich, and how local commitments and traditions could limit the effectiveness of Nazi rule. Yet, as Professor Waddy is careful to note, while the people of Oberammergau may not have been Hitler's willing executioners, neither were they overly active or vocal in their opposition. In this Oberammergau shared in the guilt of the rest of Nazi Germany.

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Benjamin D. Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. xv+334. \$88.00.

The Bodies of God beautifully outlines the debate which emerged in the Hebrew Bible between texts which assume a fluid notion of divine embodiment and selfhood and texts which emphasise instead divine unity of body and self. Sommer begins by showing how, in the ancient Mediterranean world, gods were imagined as possessing bodies, whether such bodies were material or merely had form without substance. There were, however, opposing conceptions of divine embodiment. He identifies a fluidity model, according to which gods could be present simultaneously in various kinds of bodies at multiple sites, both in heaven and on earth, and a non-fluidity model, according to which gods were only capable of having one body, either in

heaven or in a particular location on earth. Within the fluidity model, deities were conceived as having fluid selves, so that a single deity might fragment into several local manifestations and multiple deities might overlap. The non-fluidity model emphasised instead unity of self.

Sommer demonstrates in several chapters that JE texts in the Pentateuch and some other biblical material – like texts from Mesopotamia and Canaan – utilise a fluid model, while Priestly and Deuteronomic literature – like classical Greek literature – operate instead within a non-fluid paradigm. The former portray an angel or divine messenger as a manifestation of Yhwh and conceive of Yhwh as potentially present in a wooden pole, desert shrub or stone stele. Priestly literature imagines Yhwh as present on earth but only in a single location, at the centre of his people and hidden within a protective cloud. Thus, Priestly texts follow a locomotive model of sacred space, in which there is a sacred centre which travels, sometimes to peripheral spaces. Deuteronomic literature portrays Yahweh as resident in heaven, with only his name attached to the central sanctuary in Jerusalem. In subtle ways, then, the Deuteronomic approach undermines the temple's sanctity while also affirming its uniqueness as a fixed sacred centre. A final chapter traces the legacy of biblical debates over divine fluidity in early Christianity and within various periods and strands of Judaism. An appendix summarises the case for normative Israelite monotheistic monolatry in the pre-exilic period.

Attention to three critical trajectories would refine the arguments Sommer advances here. First, the work of several scholars over the last fifty years has raised the possibility that the Priestly material in the Pentateuch was not composed to stand independently of JE but was from the beginning intended to incorporate earlier non-priestly material as part of a single composition. If so, one must reckon more fully with the ways in which P includes and transforms fluid notions of divinity. In this regard, Sommer's treatment of the several layers of the Ark Narrative is more compelling. Second, over the last fifteen years it has become clear that ancient Mediterranean family religion existed independently of monarchic religion and had its own emphases and forms. This distinction has implications both for thinking through the social context of the production of texts reflecting fluidity and for analysing the evidence for monotheism and monolatry in the pre-exilic period. Third, over the last twenty years, theoretical work on space by philosophers and geographers has had increasing impact on a variety of fields, including biblical studies. Attention to this spatial turn within the humanities would clarify the Priestly and Deuteronomic approaches to sacred space which, as Sommer recognises in two chapters on the topic, strain the theoretical framework for sacred space normally deployed in biblical studies.

The Bodies of God is a most welcome addition to debates over the development of ancient Israelite religion and of Judaism and Christianity. Its chief contribution is the identification of the distinction between fluid and non-fluid notions of divinity as a taxonomical polarity separate from the differences between monotheism and polytheism and between immanence and transcendence.

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Jonathan Norgate, *Isaak A. Dorner: The Triune God and the Gospel of Salvation* (London and New York: T&T Clark, 2009), pp. 234. £65.00 (hbk).

The author offers a thorough analysis of an 'innovative' (p. 4) theologian who is committed to ecclesial traditions 'without gravitating towards mere doctrinal repristination' (p. 223). His goal is to examine the effect of the doctrine of God on soteriology, especially in Dorner's *System of Christian Doctrine*, SCD (vol. 2, p. 1886). For this purpose, he asks if 'the gospel of salvation' is coherent with 'the essential being of the triune Godhead' and meets 'the demands of divine justice without detriment to the divine compassion or love' (p. 46). As an academic discipline, Dorner's theology strives for 'scientific certitude [about] the object which is given in, though not determined by faith' (p. 149). Here, Norgate sees a tension between the elaboration on the 'soteriological content' of the Christian faith and the demonstration of its 'necessary truthfulness' (p. 39).

Chapters 1–3 scrutinise the foundational doctrine (*Fundamentallehre*) in SCD, which develops the concept of God as absolute personality and as triune. The link between the two aspects is God's ethical being and reliability: as 'God is in Himself, so He also reveals Himself' (SCD, vol. 1, p. 446). Moreover, the reason for creation is God's spontaneous love for a possible but not yet actual other. Dorner uses the idea of divine self-existence, or aseity, in order to affirm the distinction between God and creation: God 'has of Himself absolute fullness of life', while human beings are 'destined to godlike participation in the divine attributes' and share a 'receptiveness for God, which longs for His self-communication' (SCD, vol. 3, p. 306). The act of creation 'may be described' as necessary in relation to 'God's essential being as holy Love' and in 'full consistency with His ethical essence' (p. 61). God can do as it pleases God, but what pleases God is not arbitrary.

The overall purpose of the world is 'to attain perfection through a process of ethically free obedience' (p. 72). This process will lead to communion