Schleiermacher's positions off the surface of his texts. The book will be a significant resource for readers in search of a sense of the intensity and internal complexity of the young Schleiermacher's grappling with the dynamics of individual formation, interpersonal relationality and social context. No one who reads this excellent book with understanding will be tempted by an oversimplified Schleiermacher afterwards.

doi:10.1017/S0036930620000423

Paul Silas Peterson, *The Early Karl Barth: Historical Contexts and Intellectual Formation 1905–1935*

(Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), pp. xiii + 474. €114.00.

Stephen J. Plant

Trinity Hall, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK (sjp27@trinhall.cam.ac.uk)

Paul Silas Peterson's intention to present Barth 'in his socio-political, cultural, ecclesial and theological contexts from 1905 to 1935' (p. 1) is admirable. English-language scholarship in particular has tended to neglect the early Barth and to abstract Barth's theology from the contexts it emerged from and addressed. Peterson is also right that Barth scholarship can tend towards 'primarily "affirmative" and "heroizing" perspectives' (p. 401) that would benefit from more critical control. The task thus laid out is as daunting as it is potentially valuable. Daunting because the volume of Barth texts that must be scrutinised (they occupy nine pages in Peterson's bibliography) and the sprawling body of secondary literature (a further thirty-one pages) is so overwhelming. Valuable because, with Barth particularly, it is 'necessary to integrate historical analysis into theological reflection' (p. 401).

The book's structure is straightforward. After a scene-setting introduction, there are four chapters covering sequential periods. Chapter 1 deals with Barth's student years, his year as editorial assistant in Marburg, his first pastoral ministry in Geneva and his ten years' pastorate in Safenwil. Crucial here is Barth's vexed relationship to socialism. Chapter 2 covers 1919–31, years beginning with the publication of *Romans*, and Barth's 'translation' to Germany and to university teaching. Chapter 3 (for me the most tightly focused chapter, and for this reason also the best) deals with the so-called 'Dehn Case' (1931–2), in which a Reformed theologian with religious socialist convictions became a target of Nazi bullying, but to whom Barth appears to have been reluctant to offer public support. Chapter 4 deals with the rise of Nazism and the early years of the Third Reich and with Barth's response (1932–5).

Chapter 5 begins to tease out issues thrown up by earlier chapters. It is here, and in the conclusion, that Peterson becomes more explicit in articulating his perspective on Barth's evolving views. Peterson argues that between the dialectical theologians (Barth included) and National Socialism there are 'similarities in the style of communication, their authoritarianism, decisionism, anti-liberalism, anti-rationalism and anti- or trans-historicism' (p. 365). On the 'Jew problem' Barth is said to have drawn 'upon anti-Semitic resentments, (presenting the Jews as "*fremdartig*") and views of the Jews as

not capable of assimilation' (p. 375). Barth is perceived to have changed gears through Expressionism and post-Expressionism to the New Objectivity, and from there to have taken an 'anti-historical turn' (p. 389). His emphasis on alterity is expressed theologically in authoritarian terms of obedience and submission. He is seen by Peterson from the 1910s through the 1930s to have shown 'a deep incongruity with the modern liberal traditions' (p. 404). When prodded to speak or act on political matters, Barth showed indifference and 'ultimately sought to make peace with the National Socialist political order' (p. 414). He was less concerned about totalitarianism than capitalism. In sum, according to Peterson, the early Barth is not a pretty sight.

Peterson is not off the mark on some matters. Barth himself later acknowledged that he had signally failed to act on behalf of Jews, and his comments on (e.g.) Africans are patronising and offensive. But elsewhere, there are several problems with Peterson's approach. He has a tendency to make interpretation of evidence, and on occasion the evidence itself, fit around his argument. Take the claim – made to support the argument that Barth shared sympathies with *völkisch* German nationalism – that 'after becoming a professor in Germany in the early 1920s, Barth eventually became a German citizen' (p. 3): it is not true. A visit to the Barth Archive would have easily turned up the letter from the Minister for Science, Art and Education (25 July 1925) that makes plain that Barth continued to decline German citizenship, for all that he made use of a German passport when travelling on university business. In itself that point may be a detail, but it illustrates Peterson's willingness to bend facts to his narrative. In a similar way Peterson not infrequently implies guilt by association (e.g. since he was born in 1886 Barth must have belonged to the *Frontkämpfer-Generation;* since he was associated with dialectical theologians he must have shared all their illiberal views, etc.). There is slippage between terms and concepts: Barth's well-known opposition to liberal theology somehow, in ways that are never fully explained, equates to political opposition to liberalism and to the Weimar Republic

A second problem is that Peterson appears to have a tin ear for Barth's frequent use of irony. Take Barth's 1933 pamphlet *Theological Existence Today*: for Peterson it expresses 'a kind of pietistic inner understanding of the Word of God' (p. 277) that 'finds ways of endorsing the basic *völkisch* impulse of his time' (p. 285) and which was 'essentially trying to tolerate [the National Socialist state] and achieve a *modus vivendi*' with it (p. 290). Poppycock! Barth is laying irony on with a trowel, something Thomas Mann understood perfectly. On 29 August 1933 Mann wrote in his journal:

> Read this evening with extraordinary sympathy the pamphlet by Karl Barth: *Theological Existence Today*. What a fearless, brave and pious man! And how symbolic, how not-merely-theological is everything that he says! His ironic courtesy towards the German *Führer* is really amusing.

If Peterson were right about *Theological Existence Today*, it is hard to see why the Nazis banned it months after its publication, just as if Peterson were right concerning the extent of resonances between Barth's thought and German nationalism and anti-liberalism, it is hard to fathom why he was sacked and kicked out of Germany.

Peterson's take on Barth's political response to the rise and ascendency of the Nazis is also puzzling to me. Oddly for someone aiming to integrate history and theology, he seems unwilling to listen sympathetically to the good *theological* reasons why a Reformed theologian might hold back from intervening in matters that involved

politics. For Peterson, Barth exhibits indifference, quietism or pietism; it is even hinted that Barth is reluctant in order not to draw attention to his irregular domestic situation. But it is crucial to keep in mind that Reformed theology insists the authority of the state – any state – comes *from God*, and that therefore the circumstances in which a theologian would be justified in challenging the state are exceptional. With hindsight it is clear what Barth should have been writing in the 1930s, but these were dark times when there was insufficient light to see clearly.

I hope this book is widely read: I learned a great deal from it. But, as Bertolt Brecht counselled later generations inclined to judge the many failures of Nazism's opponents, it is to be hoped readers may think of Barth 'with forbearance'.

doi:10.1017/S0036930620000125

Marie-Odile Goulet-Cazé, *Cynicism and Christianity in Late Antiquity*

(Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2019), pp. xvii + 278. $75.00.

Judith M. Lieu

Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK (jml68@cam.ac.uk)

This is an English translation of a 2015 book (*Cynisme et christianisme dans l'Antiquité*, Paris, 2015; a German translation was published in 2016) by one of the most significant authorities on Cynicism in recent years. Since then, Marie-Odile Goulet-Cazé, Emerita Director of Research at the CNRS, has also published a collection of eighteen essays which will be indispensable for those wishing to study further the sources, nature and history of Cynicism and her approach to them, *Le cynisme, une philosophie antique* (Paris, 2017). The volume reviewed here will be of particular interest to those interested in the cultural and intellectual background of Jesus and of the early traditions about him, as well as in the philosophical environment of the patristic period up to Julian. It is the former group who probably inspired the genesis of the book: particularly since the 1980s there has been a steady stream of scholarship which has argued for affinities between the Jesus movement and Cynic styles of discourse and practice, especially in Galilee where a number of Cynics are connected with Gadara and its environs. This has been associated in particular with North American scholarship, including some representatives of the Jesus Seminar, but also John Kloppenborg, who provides a foreword for this volume; in the UK the most well-known proponent has probably been F. Gerald Downing.

The first substantive part of the book (pp. 4–107) provides an authoritative account of the history and distinctive principles of Cynicism from its origins in the fourth century BCE to the imperial period; the problems of the sources, and of the identification of the core or defining characteristics of Cynicism, in particular concerning the balance between philosophical principles and deliberately provocative lifestyle, are discussed with clarity, as too are the debates as to whether Cynicism developed in different