in the field is enough to justify its appearance. Scholars now think differently from Nock, whether this relates to specific areas like Mithraism, whose study has been greatly revised by new discoveries, or more generally about 'paganism', or in relation to Nock's understanding of 'paganism' as marked exclusively by praxis. From a more methodological context, his work sits uneasily in a landscape marked by identity studies and the literary turn. In her helpful introduction, Clare Rothschild mentions some of these points as well as giving a *précis* of Nock's book. She notes that it is impossible to gauge its ultimate significance but intriguingly suggests that its wider context was the First World War and the troubled 1930s when a kind of post-Nietzschean atheism had the upper hand and the agnostic Nock called upon people to have a conviction. This comment partially chimes with that of E. R. Dodds and Henry Chadwick found in their jointly written obituary of Nock in the *Journal of Roman Studies*, where they noted that for Nock religion meant 'feeling – a refusal to admit meaninglessness and helplessness and a like refusal to admit that man has the power to solve his own problem' (*JRS* liii [1963], 168–9). In addition to such semi-biographical readings of the book more could perhaps have been made of its place among the so-called *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule*, which sought to contextualise Christianity within the wider religious world of the ancient Near East. Nock mentions some of its luminaries in his text and endnotes, and his work, as Rothschild briefly notes, reflects some of the concerns of that disparate school; and yet in many ways he eschewed some of its more commonplace conclusions, not least on the place of mystery religions or a pre-Christian gnosis in the history of Christian development. The reprinting of this classic work is not only important, I would suggest, because of what Nock tells us about nearly a thousand years of religious history, but for what it tells us about some of the scholarly (and cultural) tendencies of the time.

PETERHOUSE, CAMBRIDGE JAMES CARLETON PAGET

The rise of the early Christian intellectual. Edited by Lewis Ayres and H. Clifton Ward. (Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte.) Pp. xiv + 272. Berlin–Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2020. £79. 978 3 11 06T0755 0

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As the editors of this volume inform us in their introduction, 'intellectual', as a term that refers to a caste of people, or a self-conscious group, first appears in France at the end of the nineteenth century and has had a complex history subsequently. In broad terms, then, it is a modern concept, with all the difficulties which that potentially has for its application to a much earlier period, in the case of this volume, broadly the second century. And yet, with a necessary health warning, it can be heuristically useful when applied to a period when Christianity was beginning to attract to itself educated individuals, who sought to discuss the fundamental ideas of their movement within a set of known philosophical and cultural categories. In seeking to negotiate a place for Christianity within such a landscape, 'intellectuals' took up often complicated positions in relation to inherited ideas; and did so from a Christian setting where, as the editors indicate, membership of the

community was not defined by academic achievement, 'and as possessors of a truth revealed through the person of Jesus, early Christian intellectuals seem to have felt empowered both to engage ancient learning, and yet reject its pretensions where necessary'.

The volume consists of nine essays. Tobias Nicklas wonders whether it would be appropriate to call the author of Revelation an intellectual, arguing that it would on the basis of signs of his educated background, seen in his linguistic skills, his knowledge of Scripture (and even of Greek literature) and his complex use of intertextuality, but that he shows no interest in what Nicklas calls 'intellectual discourse'. (In this respect he might seem like a typical apocalypticist, whose commitment to learning of sorts has been recognised by many scholars, including Gerhard von Rad.) Stephen Carlson discusses Papias's well-known preference for a 'living and lasting voice'. He situates the term within ancient discussions about the value of speech when compared with written records, noting that oral tradition was valued because it could supplement and explain the written record. Matthew Crawford, in one of the most interesting contributions, shows how Tatian and the Celsus of Origen's *Contra Celsum* are involved in the same conversation about what one might term 'cultural genealogies' but reach diametrically opposed conclusions, in which Tatian affirms the truth of Barbarian Christian discourse over the demonically-inspired Hellenic culture, and Celsus affirms the superiority of Greek culture, while decrying the derivative and paltry nature of Christianity. While Crawford eschews taking any position on literary dependence, he helps illuminate the shared intellectual topography of two apparently very different writers. Three essays then follow on Clement of Alexandria, to some Christianity's first intellectual, and certainly a man whose range of literary and philosophical reference seems distinctive in relation to Christian thinkers who preceded him. Matyáš Havdra shows how Clement and his successor, Origen, both affirm Christianity as presenting a set of doctrines for the intellectually less advanced, and as a means for the intellectual to advance to something akin to independent thought. Matyáš shows how this kind of discourse has its parallels in thoughts about learning in the medical tradition, as represented by Galen. Benjamin Edsall, in an essay on Clement and the Catechumenate, both shows how the latter has no obvious parallel in pagan or Jewish institutions or organisations, and how Clement, who entered a Church of which the Catechumenate was a part, integrated ideas associated with it as these concerned the dissemination of a basic Christian faith with ideas related to a philosophical account of the Christian life. In an interesting discussion of Clement's view of the Christian Gnostic, Edsall shows how a simpler (associated with the Catechumenate) and a more complex faith remain organically related to each other. Gretchen Reydam-Schils addresses Clement's understanding of the relationship between Stoicism and Platonism in his exploration of the concept of 'becoming like God'. She shows how it is difficult to differentiate between Platonism and Stoicism in Clement's thinking on this matter, in part because such differentiation was not in evidence in the wider culture of which he was a part, and Clement's own Christian project, in spite of its heavily Platonic aspect, meant that cooption of Stoic ideas could be undertaken without a sense that these or Platonic ideas needed to be juxtaposed. Lewis Ayres's essay on Irenaeus' use of the 'Rule of faith/truth' both describes its

continuities with language about Christian boundaries but also shows how such a concept reflects actual pagan philosophical debates. Against this background, and contrary to the usual emphasis of discussion of this subject, Ayres argues that the rule of truth should not be conceived as a fixed verbal formulation but rather 'as a way of marking boundaries of belief and establishing an epistemological foundation for movement from the catechetical faith toward "appropriate" non-Gnostic intellectual speculation'. In such a view of matters Gnostic thinkers are seen as quite influential upon the development of some Christian intellectuals. Azzan Yadin-Israel's contribution shows how a decline in the importance among Christians of ideas of prophecy and oral tradition reflect similar phenomena both in rabbinic literature and the wider pagan intellectual world, though Papias's interest in oral tradition approximates to a similar concern among the Tannaim. In the final essay of the collection, Francesca Schironi shows how Eusebius' so-called *Gospel problems* reflects, in a skilful and sophisticated way, well-known hermeneutical rules from the Alexandrian tradition of 'Questions and Answers'.

Inevitably, a volume of this kind is somewhat of a medley. The term 'intellectual', which is problematised both by Christoph Markschies in his brief preface, and by the editors in their introduction, never in fact receives an agreed upon definition and is barely discussed as a concept by any of the contributors. Exceptions in this regard are Tobias Nicklas and Azzan Yadin-Israel. Both broadly endorse the view that, to quote the latter, here quoting Stefan Collini, an intellectual is a person of advanced learning. That seems to be, to some extent at least, the working definition of most of the contributors; and no one really engages with any of the difficulties highlighted by Christoph Markschies in his prefatory comments, where Weber's ultimately negative views on early Christianity's relationship to the intellectual are discussed. Related to this matter of definition, it might have been helpful in this context to have had one essay dedicated to a discussion of some of the categories in the ancient world which could be thought to approximate to our term intellectual, such as the 'pepaideumenos', so important for the so-called Second Sophistic, or, perhaps more controversially, the 'sophistēs'. Such an essay could have been agenda-setting in some way and given the volume more shape than it in fact possesses, and allowed matters of Christian intellectual self-presentation, insofar as there was such a thing, to have been addressed in the way they are not in this volume. That said, certain themes do recur within the book, some of which reflect current trends in the broader study of late antique Christianity. In particular virtually every essay, in interestingly different ways, portrays the Christian intellectuals they discuss as reflective of trends within a wider pagan and sometimes Jewish world. Here, answering a question posed by the editors in their introduction, Christianity can look more like a movement within the Hellenic tradition than one which simply draws upon it (a distinction which some might see as overly simplistic), and this might be thought to be true even in a case like Tatian's, where Christians are seen as barbarians superior to the demon-inspired world of the Greeks. But some might think that this takes insufficient account of the distinctively Christian adaptations of such a tradition, however these are conceived. In this context it might have been useful if the editors had provided an afterword in which the question of whether there was such an entity in antiquity as 'the Christian intellectual', here conceived not simply in terms of a

Christian who happened to be an intellectual, but an intellectual tradition which was somehow distinctively Christian, had been addressed.

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Josephus, Paul, and the fate of early Christianity. History and silence in the first century. By F. B. A. Asiedu. Pp. xviii + 351. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books/Fortress Academic, 2019. £80. 978 1 9787 0132 8

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In this intriguing book, F. B. A. Asiedu argues that Josephus' reticence about Christianity (what J. B. Lightfoot once described as his 'stolid silence'), especially as this relates to Paul but to other matters as well, is deliberate. Such deliberate silence is evidenced elsewhere in Josephus' *oeuvre*, sometimes in contexts relevant to Christianity (his almost complete failure to say anything substantive about Caiaphas, who was the longest-serving high priest in the period following the deposition of the client king, Archelaus), and sometimes in contexts which are not so (his failure to say much that is substantive about the Flavian period, in particular the 'terror' associated with Domitian, which plays a significant part in the works of Tacitus, Pliny the Younger, Dio of Prusa and Plutarch; and his failure in the *Contra Apionem* to address directly the critics of Jews in Rome, like Martial, whom Josephus must have known, and his decision to associate such criticism with figures from Egypt, all of whom were dead). The latter examples add weight to the idea of Josephus as someone who intentionally omits things (he knows, after all, of other historians who have done the same, as he records at the beginning of his *Contra Apionem*), while also contributing to a less than flattering picture of the former general and author, who emerges, *inter alia*, as self-serving and crassly insensitive to the fate of his own people under the Flavians (aside from his account of the triumph in 71, he barely addresses their fate in Rome or more widely in the empire). Josephus' deliberate silence about Christianity, supported by direct and indirect evidence, is explained, so Asiedu contends, by his desire to exclude Christians from membership of the Jewish people, in spite of the fact that he knew Christians like Paul to be Jews and was conversant with the Jewish character of Christianity as witnessed in a document like *1 Clement*, which demonstrates the significant and confident presence of Christians in Rome, possibly in the *Transtiberim* area, where the Jewish community of Rome was located. Josephus' silence is the equivalent of an historical ostracism, excluding 'the Christian Jews from the archive of Jewish life in the first century'.

These are the bare bones of a carefully argued thesis. Asiedu succeeds in making a good case for the deliberate silence of Josephus about Christianity. Some of the arguments are well known; others are not. Asiedu is convincing in positing likely knowledge of Paul, not simply because Paul was a well-known Pharisee and a contemporary of Josephus' father, and Josephus had himself been a Pharisee, but also because Paul was known to people known to Josephus, including the Herodians and Agrippa II, Drusilla and Berenice, and had himself caused a disturbance in Jerusalem at a time when people were sensitive to such things. In this context he makes much of the response of the authorities to Jesus ben Ananias in 62,