

the Old Testament high priest was only the shadow, as his entrance into heaven is the fulfilment and supersession of the annual entrance of the high priest into the inner sanctum at *yom kippur*. The author of this epistle says explicitly that Christ *resembles* Melchisedek (7:3), a fact which Professor Hanson does not successfully account for. Similarly in *John*; the two texts in which Christ is represented as present in the Old Testament *in persona* (8:58; 12:41) are not typical but rather part of a representation which, though deeply true, will lead to the exaggerated and at times misleading way of speaking which we find in Church writers such as Mellito and Irenaeus. If we systematically applied Professor Hanson's principle throughout we should have no way of denying that, for example, since John uses the words of the Septuagint account of Isaac carrying the wood for the sacrifice when speaking of Jesus carrying his cross (Jn. 19:17 = Gen 22:6) then it must have been Jesus who was led out to be sacrificed by Abraham.

For the Christian, Christ is present not only in the Old Testament but in all history right from the creation (see Heb. 1:2). He is, however, present in a special way in the Old Testament since this has meaning (for the Christian) only as a Christ-process and because God was from the beginning, reconciling the world to himself through Christ (2. Cor. 5:19), which means that the End is present at every point along the line. This, however, is not what Professor Hanson means when he speaks of the Real Presence of Christ in the Old Testament. It would seem better to begin from the New Testament view of sacred history in its continuity and discontinuity and follow this up

with a clearer definition of different exegetical methods used in the New Testament. In this context both the value and the limitations of the author's approach would emerge more clearly.

Cardinal Bea explains in the Foreword that he was approached by some bishops during the Council who were worried about Form Criticism and wanted of him 'a brief, clear and easily understandable expose' on the subject. Those who have ever had anything to do with the Cardinal will not be surprised that he acceded to this request though an exceedingly busy man, and it would be churlish to complain that the results shows evident signs of haste as in the treatment of the relation of the form to the content of a literary unit (p. 28) or in the description of demythologization (I) as an extreme kind of Form Criticism (p. 43). One is surprised rather that so much relevant material has been crowded into such a small space.

The circumstances in which this little treatise or pamphlet was composed do not, however, provide any excuse for the English version which is not only translation-English of the worst kind (examples: 'exposed' for 'expounded', 'the very value' for 'the value itself', 'a sermon registered on tape') but at times ludicrously inadequate ('let him be damned!' for 'anathema sit', 'the cradle in which the Gospel message was born and grew') and, what is worse, misleading ('legend' is not what the Form Critics mean by 'Legende'). There is at least the 1964 Instruction in passable English in an appendix, but sixteen shillings is a lot of money to pay for that.

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SYNOPSIS DES QUATRE EVANGILES by P. Benoit and M-E Boismard *Editions du Cerf*. 42 Fr.

LES EDITIONS DU CERF and the Jerusalem Bible people have done it again. P. Benoit and M-E Boismard have produced a *Synopse des Quatre Evangiles* and it is, predictably, a superb piece of work. One way of making such a synopsis is to seek behind the text of the four gospels a single narrative, a 'Life of Christ' and to present on the same page the parallel passages that refer to the same event or discourse. This was, for example, the method of Pere Lagrange whose synopsis of the Greek text was translated into French in 1927 under this same title. There are several obvious disadvantages to such a procedure. In the first place it imposes on the reader the editor's views about the order of events: are we, for example,

with Lagrange, to put all four passages about the cleansing of the Temple towards the beginning as John does or towards the end following the synoptics, or are we, like Tischendorf to put only John's account at the beginning and only the synoptics' later on. In the second place, and more importantly, this method distorts the actual literary structure of the Gospels themselves. It suggests that one evangelist has got an event in its 'right' place and the others have got it wrong. Lagrange, for example, in the case quoted, refers in a footnote to 'St Jean, témoin oculaire' in support of his view that the synoptics have put the cleansing of the temple in the 'wrong' place. Nowadays we do not think we can judge the Gospels by

reference to some hypothetical narrative lying behind them. This is not, of course to deny that there was an historical Jesus in whose life events, including miraculous activities, occurred in a definite order; it is merely to say that we probably cannot reconstruct a chronological biography and that even if we could it would not be relevant to assessing the Gospels. What governs the position of a story in the Gospel of St John is the literary structure of the whole Gospel.

In order, therefore, to get a true 'synopsis' one must see a particular text first of all in the context of its own Gospel and secondly in comparison with parallels from the others. In a true synopsis, therefore, it should be possible to read each Gospel continuously from beginning to end without having to dart back and forth through the book. This was the method first used in the Synopsis of Albert Huck and it is the one followed by Benoit and Boismard. Of course it involves a lot of repetition. Matthew's genealogy, for example, occurs first at the beginning of Matthew (with the Lucan parallel alongside) and then it is repeated alongside Luke 3. With that typographical genius we associate with the Jerusalem Bible the *Synopse* makes it extremely easy to see which bits to skip in order to read a Gospel continuously – there is a heavy dotted line beside sections which are being repeated out of place as parallels to another Gospel. It might have been even better to have printed such passages in italic, but this is reserved for Old Testament quotation in the text. Typographically it is greatly superior to at least the 1936 English edition of Huck-Lietzman and of course it deals with St John whereas H-L does not. I believe the original Huck synopsis printed Johannine parallels in an appendix but later editions contented themselves with references. The great difference is that H-L uses a Greek text whereas the *Synopse* is in French. I suppose it would have made it too expensive if they had included an interlinear Greek text, the book is already large and costs about £3 (42 Francs), but it might have been worth it. (The only comparable work, K. Aland's *Synopsis Quatuor Evangeliorum* has only the Greek text.) The text used is basically that of the Jerusalem Bible though alterations have had to be made and the editors apologise for the 'sacrifice of elegance to strict literalism'. When there were not two French words available to represent slightly different Greek words this has been noted in the text.

The synopsis does not only contain parallels between Gospels, it also prints doublets within the same Gospel. Thus the pages are not restricted to four columns. There is even one case where in speaking of false Christs, Mark and Luke each have doublets while Matthew has engendered triplets with the result that we have seven columns on the page. Nor is the work restricted to the Gospels or even to the New Testament. Only the Gospels are printed in the columns but other New Testament texts occur in the footnotes together with a large number of varying citations to be found in the writings of the early Fathers and parallel texts from apocryphal writings. Thus, for example, Matthew 5.17 ('Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets . . .') has no parallel in the other Gospels; Huck Lietzman refers the reader to the apocryphal Gospels of the Ebionites and the Egyptians, the *Synopse* refers to these but also to the Gospel of the Hebrews, the Clementine Homelies, the Didascalia, Epiphanius, Tertullian and Marcion.

This book is not just for the professional scripture scholar (as witness its French text) it is a piece of equipment for the educated Christian who wants to study the theology of the New Testament: it is, in fact, tailor-made for the Newman Theology Study Groups. Most of these groups already use the *Bible de Jerusalem* as a standard text-book, the *Synopse* should double their effectiveness. Certainly every group should share a copy even if not every member can afford one immediately. The latest official news is that the English version of the Jerusalem Bible will be published next autumn, so I suppose it is useless to ask for this synopsis in the vernacular, but if we ever do translate it I hope the editors will seriously consider the inclusion of the Greek text. I should add that this book is merely Vol I Texts, we are promised in addition a second volume of commentary which will take each section (there are 376) and study the relation between and mutual interdependence of the four books, to trace the traditions behind them so that we can begin to see how the teaching of the Gospels began and developed.

Recently we have been hearing warnings against priests making their friends exclusively amongst the laity and visiting their houses too frequently. The simple fact is that very often they go there simply because they can find there people really interested in theology. If *Editions du Cerf* do much more of this kind of thing the dangers are going to increase. H. MC.C