

of both laymen and scholars interested in the literary history of the Bible.

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Martyn, J. Louis, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel*. New York: Harper and Row, 1968. xi + 168 pp. \$ 7.00.

The book deals with the origin of the Fourth Gospel. Martyn's intention is to trace a completely new path on a terrain already marked by several criss-crossing footsteps. The key to success in this journey is to recognize that the author of this Gospel created a literary genre of his own "quite without counterpart in the body of the gospels" (p. 21). The purpose for devising this new technique was to demonstrate that the life of Jesus is being relived in his disciples and that therefore his disciples should take courage under persecution. The foundation is theological, but the theology has two historical *points d'appui*, one in the life of Jesus, designated *einmalig*, and one in the life of the disciples, designated contemporary. The way in which this was done was by means of *dramatic expansions* of miracle stories (specifically two miracles of healing: the lame man and the blind beggar) which no longer are true to form, according to the model established by *Formgeschichte*.

This means that reading the Gospel, Martyn sees two sets of actors playing identical roles on two separate stages. The primary historical foundation for this approach Martyn finds in the story of the blind beggar who "plays not only the part of a Jew in Jerusalem healed by Jesus of Nazareth, but also the part of Jews known to John who have become members of the separated church because of their messianic faith and because of the awesome Benediction" (p. 41). Martyn develops a rather lengthy argument to establish the historical reference of Jn 9: 22 in the contemporary level. Here a characteristic in the argumentation of the book is clearly made evident. There is nothing new in arguing that the threat to put out of the synagogue anyone who confessed Christ is not a reference to the Jewish ban (either as *גויסה*, *גודי*, or *שמחה*), but rather should be understood in terms of the rewording of the 12th Benediction done at Jamnia by Samuel the Small under the auspices of Gamaliel II. Moore, Simon, Barrett, Foerster, just to name a few, have so argued.

But Martyn wishes to recreate the exact historical circumstances which permitted this Benediction to be used in order to discover members of the synagogue who had a divided allegiance. Thus while dropping disclaimers profusely along the way, he advances with a sense of certainty not quite warranted by the evidence he himself provides. The author introduces new steps in the argumentation by: "strongly to suggest" (p. 17), "appears to be highly probable" (p. 39), "The further step . . . *may* have been taken. . . . And if that be true"

(p. 48, italics his), "a rereading of chapters 5 and 7 impress one with the possibility . . . Therefore," (p. 48), "We may therefore suggest—and I emphasize that at the present juncture it is a tentative suggestion" (p. 51), "the suggestion is all the more attractive because it goes a long way toward solving other problems as well" (p. 58), "I do not want to press this suggestion too far" (p. 59), "we must exercise extreme caution in suggesting" (p. 64), "A number of answers are possible, and dogmaticism is clearly out of place here. It may be however . . . that is precisely what I am suggesting" (p. 68), "Nevertheless, we must consider the possibility" (p. 69), "we may proceed with reasonable probability" (p. 101), "But if we are correct in identifying . . ." (p. 105), "Apparently, therefore, we are able to identify with reasonable probability" (p. 107), "and that means, in all likelihood" (p. 116), "From this affirmation we may perhaps conclude" (p. 118). And by this means of conveyance Martyn arrives at the conclusion that the masterful theological step of creating the two-level drama was taken for the sake of the concept of the Paraclete.

It was in this way that theology informed the story. Further, and more explicitly, disclaimers are given by Martyn concerning his whole enterprise. The reader is assured that John did not intend his readers to analyze the *dramatis personae* in the way Martyn has done it (p. 77); therefore, a certain tension is to be expected between Martyn's analysis and John's intentions (p. 129). This reviewer must confess to have found this tension. But the question that presses at such times is whether any (or all) attempt at *Redaktionsgeschichte* is not bound to be based on a series of probabilities which mysteriously become certainties. One must confess also, however, that having examined this series of probabilities has been a rewarding exercise. The basic insight that John reflects the struggles between the church and synagogue towards the end of the first century is here given a definite configuration. The validity of the insight is not to be questioned, but that of the configuration here outlined is.

On the matter of style, I found Martyn distracting with his predilection to categorize the work of others. Articles or books are either "brilliant" (p. 11), or "fascinating" (p. 25) or "superb" (pp. xvii, xxi, n. 5; 33, n. 65), or "classic" (p. 65), or "excellent" (pp. 68, n. 108; 103, n. 163), or "remarkable" (p. 68, n. 109), or "extremely valuable" (p. 86, n. 137) or "a model of careful research" (p. 95, n. 147), or a "balanced treatment" (p. 101, n. 160). Surely if the author is quoting the work of another for support he must have found it to be all these things. Finally, let me point out three typographical slips. On pages 39 and 40 "be" has been left out of two sentences which now in part read respectively: "he would excluded from the synagogue" and "somehow excommunicated from the synagogue." Page 97, n. 152, as the previous line makes clear, should read Meeks'.