

In his recognition that the origins of Mark have to do with the fall of Jerusalem rather than the imprisonment of Peter in Rome at the time of the Neronian fire in that city, Kee keeps company with Norman Perrin, to whom the book is dedicated. I would agree that Mark fits better the apocalyptic mood fired up by the events around Jerusalem. Kee, however, parts company with Perrin when it comes to Mark's Christology. Perrin saw the Gospel as a theological attempt to replace a half-adequate *theios aner* Christology by a higher Christology of the cross. The aim of the evangelist, according to Perrin, was to make the miracle tradition subservient to the Passion. Kee follows Carl Holladay and rejects the notion that there ever existed a *theios aner* Christology in the early Church, as proposed by Achtemeier, Koester, and others. Mark reflects a community engaged in the Gentile mission, but it is not engaged in a Christological dispute about a *theios aner* which would have been palatable to Gentiles. The theological center is not Christological, but apocalyptic, and even the miracles have to be seen in that light.

Perrin was strongly influenced by W. Wrede's interpretation of the messianic-secret motif. For him the *Wredestrasse* had become the *Hauptstrasse*. Kee sees the Gospel reflecting more directly the "life-world structures" of an apocalyptic community, and completely rejects Wrede's interpretation of the secrecy motif, even conceding that "an understanding of the secrecy motif is rightly presented [by Wrede] as essential to an understanding of Mark" (p. 167). Wrede is charged with having failed to see that the secrecy motif is not a unit, and having included as elements of the motif parts of the Gospel that have nothing to do with secrecy about the Kingdom or Jesus' messiahship. After discarding the irrelevant materials, Kee finds five different kinds of secrecy sayings or narratives (pp. 169-172). But Kee's classification fails to convince this reviewer, and the conclusion to which he arrives as to the role of the secrecy motif is even less convincing. That the secret is that Jesus had to die with a view to the resurrection (which the evangelist fails to report) seems far-fetched. It would seem to me that the secrecy motif may be better explained in reference to the apocalyptic setting of the Gospel.

Kee's studies in Mark are full of valid insights, and his observations on the problem of the gospel as genre, and the style and structure of Mark will make his colleagues rethink seriously the issues involved. His application of the sociology-of-knowledge approach turns out at times to be quite fruitful. But I must confess that I cannot overcome a deep uneasiness when comparisons are made between "cargo cult" communities in the South Pacific of the twentieth century with Christian communities in Palestine or Syria of the first. Melanesia may have isolated, back-water communities unaffected by the currents of civilization moving freely under the auspices of the *pax americana*. Whether the same may be said of Palestine or Syria at the time of the *pax romana* has not yet been established.

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Metzger, Bruce M. *The Early Versions of the New Testament: Their Origin, Transmission, and Limitations*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1977. xix + 498 pp. \$17.50.

The author has placed NT textual critics in his debt by this masterful treatment of the early versions of the NT made before A.D. 1000. Only one with the background and knowledge of the many languages involved and with control of the bibliographical material for this subject area could have produced a book manifesting such expertise and reliability.

The book is divided into two sections, the first dealing with the early eastern versions and the second with the early western versions. In the first section the following versions are treated: Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Georgian, Ethiopic, and minor versions such as Arabic, Nubian, Sogdian, and Caucasian Albanian; and in the second section the following are treated: Latin, Gothic, Old Church Slavonic, and minor versions such as Anglo-Saxon, Old High German, and Old Saxon. For each of these versions, a short history of the beginnings of Christianity in that language area is provided, followed by a list and description of the earliest manuscripts and printed editions, and a discussion of the translation base, the textual affinities, and the limitations of the language in representing Greek. The last is written by experts in the respective language areas.

Metzger's work updates Vööbus's *Early Versions of the New Testament* (Stockholm, 1954) and again makes accessible material which has been difficult to obtain inasmuch as the latter work has been out of print for some time. Metzger also adds material not found in Vööbus's treatment. This includes coverage of additional versions (Old Church Slavonic, Sub-Achmimic, Middle Egyptian, Anglo-Saxon, Old High German, Old Saxon, Nubian, Persian, Sogdian, and Caucasian Albanian) and the especially helpful section on the limitations of the languages in representing Greek. This latter is indispensable in evaluating whether a difference in the reading is a real variant or is simply due to the limitation of a language. In dealing with versions, the text critic must always be aware of this situation and of a group of variants such as transpositions and use of synonyms which cannot be definitely determined as variants.

Metzger's material is better organized than Vööbus's, since he divides the versions into eastern and western, while it is difficult to see the rationale for Vööbus's order. Metzger also appears to be more objective in his treatment of areas where there is no clear consensus. Since Vööbus has been more personally involved in research in some of these areas, it is understandable that he would be more subjective in favoring his positions.

It would have been helpful to the less linguistically trained person if words not in Roman script (other than Greek) had been transliterated and translated, as, e.g., on p. 97. While this has usually been done, it is not consistently carried through; translations are normally Latin, and in one case for some unknown reason the translation is German (p. 248). The translation should be either Greek or English.

This publication will be a useful volume not only for the text critic but also for the philologist and church historian.

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Odom, Robert L. *Sabbath and Sunday in Early Christianity*. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1977. 304 pp. \$12.95.

Robert L. Odom is already well known for his scholarly work on the Sabbath and Sunday in ancient times, particularly through his major book, *Sunday in Roman Paganism* (Washington, D.C., 1944). He has also dealt with "The Sabbath in A.D. 1054" and "Vettius Valens and the Planetary Week" in articles in earlier issues of *AUSS* (*AUSS* 1 [1963]: 74-80, and 3 [1964]: 110-137). The present volume deals with the weekly Sabbath and Sunday as worship days in early Christianity down through the time of Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea, in the fourth century A.D. The presentation, Odom tells us, "unfolds the historical facts in their chronological order, and the data used for the purpose are drawn mainly from primary sources" (p. 10).