

work is well documented and contains an extensive bibliography and indices of subjects, names, and Scripture references—all of which enhance its usefulness as a seminar and class text.

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RUSSELL STAPLES

Watts, Dorothy. *Christians and Pagans in Roman Britain*. London: Routledge, 1991. xiii + 302 pp. \$55.00.

It will probably be many years before a really satisfactory interpretation of the history of Christianity in Roman Britain is achieved. But the archaeology of the past twenty years or so has more than doubled our knowledge. Dorothy Watts, who is a lecturer in the Department of Classics and Ancient History at the University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia, has done an exhaustive appraisal of information currently available. Her bibliography of archaeological and secondary sources is sixteen pages long.

Previous authors have treated Christianity as a minority eastern religion in Romano-British history, and very few attempts have been made to distinguish any pagan elements in it. This was the author's reason for pursuing research in this area. Her investigation is enriched by the cooperation of those currently involved in archaeological projects completed but not yet in press and others still in progress.

The majority of the book deals with identifying evidence for Christianity in Roman Britain. In many ways it is like trying to imagine a picture when you have only a handful of the pieces of a puzzle and cannot know for sure that the pieces you hold even go to this puzzle!

Watts gives what little literary evidence there is about Christianity in Roman Britain and then spends the majority of her time describing archaeological evidence. She begins with the identification of Christian cemeteries. Up to now no certain Christian cemeteries have been identified from the Roman era. Watts establishes two very convincing sets of criteria, using internal and external evidence, which, when applied give us at least thirteen reasonably certain sites. Two of the criteria discussed were of special human interest. Infant or neo-natal burials in the cemeteries of Roman Britain are not encountered before the rise of Christianity, following the conversion of Constantine. (Roman law was strict in prohibiting burial inside the city walls, so, if the babies were not in the cemeteries, where were they? They were the only ones permitted to be buried within the city bounds, usually under the eaves of buildings.) Finding careful infant burials in a cemetery is not then a Roman custom, but a Christian one since it reflects Christ's care for the young. At this same period, graves began a west-east orientation, that is, with the heads towards the west. It is believed that this was so they would arise facing east, the direction from which Christ was to come again.

Watts next prepares a set of ranked criteria for identifying Christian churches. These, again, are divided into internal and external evidence, and twenty-six highly-possible sites are identified using these criteria.

The chapter on Christian symbols and inscriptions was fascinating. Watts discusses not only commonly accepted symbols, but presents rare ones, the recognition of which increases the recognition of Christian sites. Some of this may belong only to the realm of speculation.

At this point, eleven links between pagan religions and practices and Christianity are discussed, from the shape of churches to adopted and adapted symbols. Watts suggests that there are so many similarities that it is likely this had the effect of making Christianity fairly inconspicuous and therefore more acceptable to pagans. Christianity came to Britain as a Roman religion, and it seems to have been stronger in the more romanised areas. The latent paganism in the rural areas seems to have contributed to the disappearance of Christianity there during the Saxon period which followed Rome's withdrawal from Britain. The author states that the withdrawal of Rome from Britain precluded missionary effort since that was dependent on the patronage of the emperor and the protection of the Roman army, and, without these, success would have been impossible. I am unable to agree with her in this assumption.

Watts concludes her book by indicating areas for possible future research, including re-examination of material held in museums. Using her criteria for identification, she feels that many more Christian sites can be recognized. She is probably right.

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Winger, Michael. *By What Law? The Meaning of nomos in the Letters of Paul*. SBLDS, 128. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992. xiv + 236 pp. \$44.95.

What is the meaning of "law" in Paul? of the Mosaic Law? of the Old Testament? of the whole of Israel's sacred tradition? of law in general? Since none of the classical answers apply to all passages (for instance, where do you fit Rom 7:25, *nomos hamartias*?), Winger has explored in his doctoral thesis (Columbia University) a new way of determining the sense of this key term. His methodology (chap. 1) works on the basis of a "lexical-semantic" approach to terminology. His procedures for the analysis of meaning—dealing mainly with the differences between meaning, reference and assertion, and the problem of multiple meanings—are inspired on the models of C. K. Ogden, I. A. Richards, and particularly C. S. Pierce, departing slightly from J. Lyons' semantic distinctions, despite the fact that they would seem more useful.

In chaps. 2-4, Winger examines the components of meaning in *nomos* as used by Paul, through quite a comprehensive survey of lexicons, dictionaries, and scholars. His own investigation is based on key patterns of usage, namely paratactic and syntagmatic patterns, the use of *nomos* with genitive and with the article, compared with usage elsewhere in the NT and other literature.