

their country, seem dated and localized by the very specificity in time of their references. Although I found the essays valuable, the kind of "aha" experience of suddenly seeing the Bible and theology through a new lens, which the first reading of Kosuke Koyama gave me, never came.

These limitations, however, should not stop the flow of books such as this. Evangelical Christians in the West need such volumes more than they know, probably even more than non-Western peoples need to write them. I urge Dyrness, Zondervan, and their allies to write and publish and not grow weary in well-doing. I also urge Western Christians caught in the strait jacket of a one-culture theology to read, learn, and watch their world grow.

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Frend, William H. C. *The Archaeology of Early Christianity. A History.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996. 412 pp. \$39.00.

W.H.C. Frend seems to thrive on formidable literary projects. His magisterial, 1022-page tome, *The Rise of Christianity*, is now nicely complemented by this study, which details how much of the hard, archaeological evidence on the early church was first discovered. Professor Emeritus of Ecclesiastical History at the University of Glasgow, Frend is also well known for his *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church*, as well as his monographs on Donatism and Monophysitism.

In this latest work, he charts the history of Christian archaeology from Helena, the mother of Constantine, and her search for the "true cross" in Jerusalem, to the latest twentieth-century discoveries. En route to the modern world, Frend exposes the roots of archaeological science in the Renaissance, the early field surveys by area travelers, the nationalistic impulses (starting with Napoleon) and theological biases that colored some of the methodology and results, and, in particular, the widespread regional successes of Christian archaeology in the Mediterranean lands, Western Europe, and even central Asia.

As in the case of "biblical archaeology," the expression "Christian archaeology" must be properly interpreted. It does *not* mean archaeology so slanted that the excavator searches for—and finds!—artifacts of only Christian interest. Scientific archaeology must aim solely for the subterranean truth—whatever the find. Nevertheless, the *area* of the dig will usually presume some specialized interest. One does not, for example, look for Aztec artifacts in Mesopotamia! Accordingly, there need be no apology for "Christian archaeology" as such, especially in view of the numerous instances Frend cites of partiality at Christian *expense*, such as those excavators who demolished Christian strata in their hurry to reach classical levels.

How to structure this book must have been a problem for Frend. His approach, it seems, could have been topical or chronological, and he opted for the latter in his general arrangement. At times, I wish he would have chosen a topical structure instead. It would have been so convenient to learn *all* the history of Christian archaeology at a given area across 1700 years: Rome, for example, or Corinth, Philippi, Antioch, or Carthage. But that would have defeated the saga of

how archaeology in the individual areas responded to the general pressures in each era from Roman Catholic or Protestant apologetics, Western European nationalism and imperialism, or specific sponsorships. In this "areas vs. eras" dilemma, Frend probably chose the better way, even if this compels the reader to revisit familiar sites again and again to witness archaeological progress across the centuries.

To anyone well acquainted with biblical archaeology, Frend's reportage may at first seem somewhat unbalanced. Except for recent discoveries in Israel and Jordan, the "Holy Land" seems to get short shrift in these pages, and the great William Foxwell Albright, for example, is not even mentioned. It must, however, be immediately recalled that Frend's theme here is the archaeology of *early Christianity*, which is, of course, predominantly postbiblical.

As if to compensate for any such omission, Frend includes a *massive* amount of material on North African Christian archaeology, not only because Frend himself was active in digs there, but because the Christian West must never forget how powerful and active Christendom was in that area prior to the Muslim onslaught. The same, of course, applies to Asia Minor, whose Christian archaeology is also admirably reported in these pages.

The greatest finds in all the Mediterranean lands—and their finders—are well described in Frend's facile prose, as well as the most important Christian archaeological discoveries and discoverers in France, Germany, and England. The vignettes of the giants in the field are vivid, and the way they responded to the influences impinging on them from time and circumstance are memorable indeed. As indicated, various engines often drove archaeology in times yore: religious triumphalism ("Catholic" archaeology in the Roman catacombs to "prove" the claims of the Roman church or Protestant criticism to "disprove" them), German radical criticism that questioned everything, European nationalism that wanted to superimpose the flag over every find, or an aggressive neoclassicism that prioritized whatever was pagan over whatever was Christian.

Fortunately, most of this has been surmounted in current scientific archaeology, but Frend does identify one large cloud remaining on the horizon. "The main threat," he writes, "comes from the population explosion of the present century and the ever-expanding and destructive infrastructure needed to sustain it" (p. 387). When rivers are dammed or cities expand, ancient sites are destroyed, and international salvage projects have not always succeeded in rescuing them.

This appropriate warning is typical of the good sense that underlies all these pages. Once again, W.H.C. Frend has taken a broad topic, surveyed it with meticulous care for detail, and then presented it in a form that will engage any reader, lay or professional.

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Fuller, Daniel P. *The Unity of the Bible: Unfolding God's Plan for Humanity*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992. 508 pp. \$24.99.

The question of a center or many centers as a unifying theme for biblical theology has long been debated. It is in this context and from an evangelical