

brings together current views on most major sociological and anthropological issues in Old Testament studies. The bibliographies which accompany each essay are a ready guide to further reading.

A word must be said about the production of the book itself. It appears to have been hastily put together and proof-read with the aid of a computer programme. The index gives authors (and one reference to M.P. Carroll (23) is under R.P. Carroll) but no subjects. The biblical index includes 2 Esdras and 1 Enoch. The bibliographies abound in typographical errors, especially misspellings of French and German words and names (the publisher Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht is presented 13 times as 'Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht', Vielhauer appears as 'Veilhauer' (271). Nor are the bibliographies consistent in their citations. The texts of the essays themselves have inexcusable typographical errors. The epigraph to Carroll's essay (from 1 Cor.) contains five incorrect diacritics (203). Some of the misspellings are 'verses' for 'versus' (22, 1.6), 'Isiah' for 'Isaiah' (161, 1.21), 'Weltenschauung' for 'Weltanschauung' (261, 1.3), 'suzereign' for 'suzerain' (330, 1.33), 'soley' for 'solely' (341, 1.31). Words are improperly divided; for example, 'themsel-ves' (31), 'ethnog-raphical' (208), 'comprehens-ive' (204). Transliteration of Hebrew is not thoroughly consistent (Jackson uses a different system from the rest), and also contains errors: one finds *aleph* for *ayin* (331, 1.31; 382, 1.10), *ayin* for *aleph* (382, 1.15), *ayin* for *shwa* (165, 1.8; 394, 1.45), three errors with *berit* (171, 1.34; 172, lines 6 and 9). On 373 a line has dropped out and another has been duplicated at lines 15 and 16. Some abbreviations in the bibliographies do not appear in the list of abbreviations (IDBS, 394, RHPR 180) as well as OAN (214) (and the list itself contains seven mistakes). One could note many more errors, which of themselves are insignificant, but, in view of their frequency, they leave the impression of a very poor job of copy editing. For £45 one is entitled to a more carefully composed work.

ALBERT PARETSKY OP

THE PRAXIS OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE. AN INTRODUCTION TO THE THEOLOGY OF EDWARD SCHILLEBEECKX, edited by R Schreiter & M C Hilker, *Harper & Row, San Francisco, 1969*, Pp. 164. \$16.62

FOR THE SAKE OF THE GOSPEL by Edward Schillebeeckx (translated by John Bowden), *SCM, London, 1969*. Pp 181. £9.50.

There can be little doubt that Edward Schillebeeckx is one of the most outstanding Roman Catholic theologians alive today. He is all the more interesting for his hermeneutical and philosophical pilgrimage which reflects the many currents of thought flowing into the Catholic body politic. This collection of essays on Schillebeeckx is to be welcomed for at least three reasons. First, compared to the sometimes dense and meandering writings of Schillebeeckx's main works, his expositors are elegantly lucid. Second, there are few good introductory books to Schillebeeckx in English (the main contenders being John Bowden's *Edward Schillebeeckx* and Robert Schreiter's *The Schillebeeckx Reader*). Third, the essays range through key areas such as Schillebeeckx's methodological and contextual development

Callwaert), his Dominican influences (Goergen), his concern with the sacraments (Ross, Hines), and his more recent exploration of eschatology and ethics (Hinze).

Schreier also writes a concluding chapter explaining why Schillebeeckx is so popular in North America in terms of his inductive approach, his commitment to the narrative character of experience, his grappling with suffering and his emphasis on the primacy of the soteriological. Portiers's incisive piece, in passing, gives a more historically and sociologically orientated answer to this same question drawing heavily on John Coleman's excellent sociological study, *The Evolution of Dutch Catholicism, 1958–1974*. This leads me to one weakness in the book: that of overlap. Hill and Portier for example cover a lot of common ground on Schillebeeckx's methodology, as do the Christology essays. Another reservation of mine concerns the almost total exclusion of any serious critical engagement with Schillebeeckx's thought (with the exception of Galvin). It may lead the reader to think that the only reason Schillebeeckx has been so 'controversial' is due to Curial interest. But this masks serious questions raised by Schillebeeckx's work. Why does Hilkerter not allude to the ambiguities in Schillebeeckx's discussion of revelation and experience as has been noted so well by Dupre, or why does Ross or Hines not mention the biblical and hermeneutical criticisms made of Schillebeeckx's ministry work? Furthermore, none of the sharp biblical or Christological issues are raised in the Christology essays which is a shame for it fails to locate Schillebeeckx's Christological project and its novelty in the context of modern Christology. It would do Schillebeeckx greater service to present his thought in the light of the questions it prompts rather than in this almost exclusively descriptive fashion. The book has an excellent index and is a good introductory guide to Schillebeeckx's theology.

The collection of homilies, short broadcasts and talks by Schillebeeckx is appropriate for a theologian who does not believe that a dogmatics or systematics like that of Barth or Rahner is possible or even preferable in the modern period. Schillebeeckx firmly locates his reflections in the concrete and particular situation that he finds himself, hence many of the essays in this collection reflect issues alive in the Netherlands.

The book is divided into six sections, the first two dealing with homilies showing how well meticulous biblical scholarship can serve the preacher. Some of his sermons are hard-hitting and challenging, and those scared of his big *Jesus* books could well start here and witness the force of his exegesis. My only reservation here is the slightly caricatured picture of the Pharisees given in chs. 1 and 7, and what may be poor translations (or clumsy original text) in places (egs. pp. 25, 25, 139). The second section, 'The Confession of Jesus in the Church', indicates Schillebeeckx's faithfulness to the centrality of a Christology rooted in the living, testifying, liberating church. The last three sections witness rather sadly to the fact that Schillebeeckx finds this ecclesial community less and less reflected in the current Vatican tendency to 'go back to a monolithic church', and he tellingly comments that the 'idea of collegiality ... has in practice disappeared from the church since the year 1965' (p. 142). The critical communities are where Schillebeeckx finds Christianity alive in his Netherlands, although he is not uncritical about them (ch. 34). One of the most interesting chapters here is entitled 'John is his name' and

commemorates the twenty-fifth anniversary of the death of John XXIII. There is a searching assessment of John, emblematically recalling how, some months before the Council, John wrote an encyclical about keeping Latin as the language of the church, including theology—which was of course the first thing the Council would abolish! Schillebeeckx also analyses the post-Vatican situation, in which strong conservative forces have criticised the new slaveries which liberal bourgeoisie has produced, and seen these same values as underlying the Council. He declares that those of this mentality 'differ from Lefebvre only in tolerating no criticism of John-Paul II' (p. 137).

Those familiar with Schillebeeckx's work will find many of his favourite themes running through this book, encapsulated in the phrase 'The glory of God is the happiness of living humankind; but the happiness of humankind is the living God.' (p. 58). There are no substantial clues as to his most current interests and direction, although the relation between mysticism and politics is explored (but going no further from previous work). Nevertheless it is good to have short pithy writings from a theologian infamous for suggesting that his 760-page *Jesus* was written for the 'ordinary Christian'.

GAVIN D'COSTA

THE PROFESSION OF FAITH AND THE OATH OF FIDELITY. A Theological and Canonical Analysis, by Ladislav Örsy, Dominican Publications, Dublin 1990. Pp. 71. £3.95.

In several places round the world, work must be going on to produce official translations of the new Profession of Faith and Oath of Fidelity. Now, all those to be ordained clerics and some lay people come under new and extended obligations in this matter, and some people will make the Profession and take the Oath more than once in their lifetime, e.g. whenever appointed parish priest or superior in a clerical religious institute.

This booklet by Örsy is a timely and stimulating guide to a whole range of issues raised by these changes, although more could be, and ought to be, said at various points. He is right to raise questions about the process of promulgation but, like so many others, he overlooks the fact that the same page of *L'Osservatore Romano* that first published the Profession and Oath on 25 February 1989 also mentioned that papal approval had been given on 1 July 1988.

Simply to dwell on one proposal that he makes once again in print, Örsy suggests that the term '*obsequium*' (as in the Profession of Faith) cannot at present be adequately translated because of its nature and because our understanding of it is still developing. He concludes that whilst the term signifies the fundamental attitude well, for specific responses we need a wide variety of terms, such as assent, or submission, or obedience, or respect, or reverence, or even disagreement—to be applied always in religious and wise balance with the weight of authority in the teaching.

Örsy is making a subtle and illuminating proposal. If found acceptable, it is another reason why Episcopal Conferences should seriously consider issuing at least a very brief commentary with their translation of the Profession of Faith and Oath. And perhaps for some years to come the word *obsequium* should be left in Latin.

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