

widow and her children from debtors—are insightfully interpreted together around the themes of “Music and Maternity,” the chapter’s title.

Chapter 4, “Axes and Allies,” further thickens the portrait of this prophet, showing him to be caught up in both the mundane matters of rescuing tools from streams to confronting officials who could have him beheaded (2 Kgs 4:38–68). In chapter 5, “Counter Intelligence,” B. identifies the thematic alternations—from feast to famine to feast—that navigate the drama of Elisha’s involvement in political crises between Israel and Aram (2 Kgs 6:8–7:20).

Ironically, B.’s overtures in chapter 6, “Throne Calls,” cap the characterization of Elisha when he is least present in the story (2 Kgs 8–13:21). Elisha’s one conversation with Hazeal resulting in the king’s death fashions a crucial part of this chapter’s analysis. Though the prophet is offstage for most of the texts, B. sketches him from what Gehazi reports, from his absence at Jehu’s anointing, from Elisha’s brief appearance when he himself is deathly ill, and finally from the abrupt notice of the prophet’s death. The postscript, “Double Take,” occasions, among other concluding matters, an original take on the final story of this tradition (2 Kgs 13:20–21). B.’s skillful analysis shines in his treatment of the perplexing account of a dead man’s body that was hurriedly thrown into Elisha’s grave and immediately restored to life. Of this final scene, B. remarks, “Elisha is introduced while tilling the soil and providing food for the living, and concludes his tenure *in* the soil and providing life to the dead” (152, emphasis original). That B.’s study weaves even these final narrative threads into a satisfying whole merits not only double applause but also a careful study of this work.

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From Jesus to the New Testament: Early Christian Theology and the Origin of the New Testament Canon. By Jens Schröter. Translated from the German by Wayne Coppins. Waco, TX: Baylor University, 2013. Pp. xiv + 417. \$59.95.

Schröter, professor of New Testament at Humboldt University in Berlin, revised and assembled essays written between 2000 and 2006 for the German edition of this book published in 2007. English-language students will be grateful for this translation. S.’s methodological and historical observations mark significant advances in understanding NT theology and the development of canon, but this volume is not a fully articulated theological or historical treatment of canon. In fact, the NT is represented as the Jesus tradition—including extracanonical sources, Paul, and Luke–Acts. The Johannine corpus, Deuteropauline and Catholic epistles, and Revelation are mentioned only in passing.

The essays are divided into four groups, each providing a somewhat loose thread for the reader to follow. The first comprises four chapters that focus on the methodological problem of history as recollection and constructed narrative, or “the relationship between past happening and historical imagination in the writing of history” (9).

S. provides a clear survey of the theory of historical writing from Max Weber and Johann Gustav Droysen onward. He rightly insists that much of the “historical Jesus” debate has continued to engage in naïve positivism, ignoring the complex relationships between event and interpretation. (Translating *Wissenschaft* as “science” leads to somewhat jarring statements about “New Testament science” that are bound to confuse students.) Anticipating his essays on Luke as historian, S. expands this critique to challenge the wedge that scholarship drives between the “historical Paul” and the figure depicted in Acts: “various pictures of Paul were drawn, which are the result of different rhetorical strategies” (45).

The seven essays that make up the second group are the heart of S.’s contribution to NT exegesis (“Jesus, Paul, and Luke”). Drawing on his considerable work with reconstructions of the sayings of Q and apocryphal Jesus materials, S. challenges the use of reconstructed sayings groupings stripped of narrative elements as the authentic Jesus tradition. Furthermore, the various uses of Jesus material as “from the (risen) Lord” or without any attribution at all in other early Christian writings proves that its authority for early Christians did not depend on derivation from the earthly Jesus (83).

The three chapters on Paul are linked by highlighting the ways Christology figures in the argument. Two of the three chapters challenge some conventional scholarly readings of Galatians. S. identifies the assumptions about Christ and salvation that Paul shared with his opponents proclaimed in different forms to Jews and Gentiles (151). Spelling out the rhetoric of Paul’s argument about the Law in Galatians, S. distinguishes the situation of Jews whose way to Christ passed through the Law, from that of Gentiles, whose way did not (181). Theoretical concerns return in the essay on metaphorical Christology in Paul, which lead to a distinction between adopted traditions and the examples in which Paul reverses the conventional valuations associated with those metaphors: *hilastērion* (Rom 3:25), “Pascal sacrifice” (1 Cor 5:7), Christ’s death as redemption, participation in Christ, and body of Christ (1 Cor 12; Rom 12).

The last two chapters in this section that deal with Luke–Acts address two major concerns in the previous chapters. While S. rejects attempts to discern a single literary genre that unites the two works, he defends an understanding of Luke as the historiographer of early Christianity. In the mode of 2 Maccabees and Josephus, Luke shows that the emergence of Christianity belongs to a salvation history determined by Israel’s God. His understanding of the current disbelief of Israel is comparable to Paul’s in Romans 9–11. The possibility of belief in the future remains open.

The final two parts of the book, a total of five chapters, address aspects of the topic suggested by the book’s subtitle. Under the heading “on the way to the New Testament,” one essay treats the important question of early Jesus tradition and canon. Apocryphal Jesus material as well as text criticism points to a complex history of reception in the second century. The role of Acts in the emergence of the canon provides the hook to incorporate the Catholic epistles (273). The next chapter deals with the use of the “four Gospel canon” as a criterion for orthodoxy, against the many gospels of heretics. Though the final two chapters could have easily belonged to this part, they are incorporated as pointers toward the meaning of NT theology: one dealing with the fraught issue of particularity and inclusivity, the other with the importance of canon.

Every chapter in this collection has rich insights for students of the NT and early Christianity. Its methodological sophistication makes it a must read.

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The Coptic Christian Heritage: History, Faith, and Culture. Edited by Lois M. Farag. New York: Routledge, 2014. Pp. xvi + 279. \$125; \$39.95.

The 16 contributions in this collection, plus the general introduction, were written by eleven different authors. The essays cover several thousand years of Egyptian history, though the collection's main focus is on the growth of Christian civilization in Egypt from the first century CE to the present. From the very beginning we know that the approach is one where "the contributors combine academic expertise with intimate and practical knowledge of the Coptic Orthodox Church and Coptic heritage" (i). A particular aim of this volume is to hasten "the dismantling of Orientalism and Eurocentric views" (3) that have dominated the study of Christianity. The contributors, who have varying levels of academic training and activity (as indicated by the brief biographical descriptions), identify themselves as members of the Coptic Orthodox community, which exists both in Egypt and in a worldwide diaspora. This collection, therefore, makes an important contribution to the growing research field of world Christianity, though its effect is limited at times by the effort to cover so many topics over several thousand years of change.

The volume is divided into four sections: history, religious culture, literary culture, and material culture, each prefaced by "Coptic." Some essays struggle with the effort to cover a great deal of material; for example, in "The Pre-Christian Period: Changing Times and Cultural Endurance" (9–22), Mariam Ayad attempts to review 3,000 years of Egyptian history and culture, ending with the Ptolemies, and concluding with a series of topics/single paragraphs and bibliography for further reading. When the period covered is more manageable, and the contributor is very familiar with the material, however, the brief essays are more successful, as in Maged S. A. Mikhail, "The Early Islamic Period (641–1517): From the Arab Conquest through Mamluk Rule" (39–53) and Febe Armanios, "The Ottoman Period (1517–1798): Beyond Persecution or Tolerance" (54–70). Both authors have published books on these topics and are able to present the most important points to general readers and nonspecialists alike.

In Part II, "Coptic Religious Culture," F. contributes three separate essays: on Coptic theology, monasticism, and spirituality (105–42). In each of these, one or two aspects are emphasized as distinctly Coptic. Individual points may need more nuance (e.g., that the Pachomian rule lacked monastic vows, 125) since there is clear evidence that the closely related White Monastery Federation required new monks to "promise" to obey the rules of the community. How exactly was this promise, which was made after a few weeks' residence at the gatehouse, different from Western-style monastic profession? John Paul Abdelsayed, "Liturgy: Heaven on Earth" (143–59), describes