

THE

# EXPOSITORY TIMES

*Martin Luther*

David Bagchi

*How to cope with Anxiety in Hospital Settings: Evaluation of a Professional Training*

Kirsten Kaya Roessler and Friedrich-Wilhelm Lindemann

*Pastoral Care of People with Dementia*

Frances Ruthven

## BOOK OF THE MONTH

*The Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature*

J.J. Collins

Paul Foster

*Editors*

Guy Bennett-Hunter, Paul Foster, John Riches

*Editorial Board*

Graeme Auld, David Fergusson, Larry Hurtado, Karen Wenell



archaeologist the late Joseph Gath.) They recount their work and carefully explain what was recovered. As have many, Kloner and Gibson conclude that, 'there is nothing to commend the Talpiot tomb as the family tomb of Jesus' (p. 51).

I have space to mention only two other contributions. Stephen Pfann correctly interprets the 'Mary Magdalene' ossuary inscription to read, 'Mariame and Mara' (pp. 190–99), not 'Mary the Master'. Christopher Rollston reviews several aspects of the relevant science, including statistics, and concludes that 'it is certainly not tenable to suggest that the data are sufficient that this is the family tomb of Jesus of Nazareth' (p. 221).

There is one glaring omission: No study explains the prominent pointed gable and circle excised over the tomb's entrance. This artistic design is found on coins—as far back as the Hasmonean period—ossuaries, monumental tombs and other forms of Jewish funerary art. It symbolizes the temple and has nothing to do with Jesus and his movement. Given the temple establishment's opposition to Jesus and his followers, such a symbol would have been a most unlikely choice as adornment for a tomb linked to Jesus or his family.

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### STUDIES IN SOCIAL MEMORY

Diana V. Edelman & Ehud Ben Zvi (eds), *Remembering Biblical Figures in the Late Persian & Early Hellenistic Periods* (Oxford: OUP, 2013). £85.00. pp. vii + 516. ISBN: 978-0-19-966416-0).

This is primarily a study in 'social memory' (also referred to as 'cultural memory' or 'collective memory'), which can be defined as the way in which 'group members recall people and events of the past ... providing a sense of common identity' (p. xi). Specifically, twenty-two figures from the Bible (including such non-Israelite figures as Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus) are investigated as to how they were recalled in the late Persian and early Hellenistic periods. For those new to the field, Edelman gives an introduction to the subject of social memory. N. P. Lemche also provides an overview of the subject and the final essay by D. H. Aaron discusses the contributions of D. Sperber and M. Bloch.

Social memory is usually studied by looking at how contemporary groups think about their collective past. Therefore, one of the immediate questions with an exercise like this is whether the social memory of a group in the distant past can be determined with any degree of confidence. Lemche expresses his view that we simply cannot know what the Jews of the Persian or Hellenistic periods thought about past figures. Edelman notes that some of the essays take a more conventional approach, but this is understandable since they are trying to determine how the text was read in the past by means of reconstructing its editing. The authors of such studies would no doubt disagree with Edelman's comment that source and redactional criticism are 'not really applicable' to the study of social memory.

Yet most contributors seem to think that they can comment on the social memory of Jews of the late Persian and early Hellenistic period. Even Lemche, in spite of his scepticism, in the end makes quite an interesting analysis of how Solomon might have been remembered at that time. Lemche observes that most of the memory of Solomon is not cultural memory but 'applied memory'. However, it seems to me that applied memory in the sense that Lemche uses it is a type of cultural memory: it may not be folk memory but it serves the same function in creating and sustaining group identity.

This collection can be recommended as a good way for those new to social memory to see how the theory works, while those who already know something about the subject can learn from the variety of approaches and modes of analysis.

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### PARTICIPATION IN DIVINE NATURE

Stephen Finlan & Vladimir Kharlamov (eds), *Theōsis: Deification in Christian Theology*, 2 vols (Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2006/2008). £20.75/£24.50 (2 vol set £40.00). pp. ix + 185/xiv + 282. ISBN: 978-0-227-17329-9/ 978-0-227-68033-9).

These twin volumes explore the startling Biblical proposition 'by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature' (2 Pet 1:4), with diverse contributors exploring what may or may not be meant by 'theōsis', also known as *theopoiesis*, deification or divinisation.

We are ‘gods ... children of the most High’ (Ps 82:6), and if that sounds like winging it, Christ himself invoked the text when charged with blasphemy (Jn 10:34). Ephesians urges us to ‘put on the new self, the one created according to God’s likeness’ (Ep4:24) and First John says of Christ, ‘we shall be like him’ (1 Jn 3:2). After all, we were made in God’s image and Eucharistic *anamnesis* arguably invokes Real Presence beyond time.

As Kharlamov reflects in Volume 2, *apocatastasis* or ‘the times of restitution of all things’ (Acts 3:21) for Clement of Alexandria implies an epiphanic ‘unification [that] occurs both on personal and corporate levels’. Finlan concludes Volume 1 with his study of Soloviev: ‘comedy’ in the Aristotelian sense is the antithesis of tragedy since it recasts human folly within ‘God’s project’ that ‘will ultimately unfold as a story of triumphant resolution and universal unification’ through ‘the incarnation of the Spirit in the lives of believers.’ Finlan also cites Athanasius’ dictum, ‘in Christ God became man in order to make man God’. And if that too sounds like winging it, the contributors are unanimous: such is divine mystery. Abandon dogmatics, all ye who enter here!

Volume 1 opens with Kharlamov (on deification in the Apostolic Fathers and Apologists), Finlan (on the Second Peter’s divine participation) and Gregory Glazov (on Judaic and OT anthropology). We move to Jeffrey Finch (twice) on Irenaeus and Athanasius, then Robert Puchniak on Augustine’s limited use of deification - not as a ‘private affair’ - but as process within the church’s cultus. Next, Elena Vishnevskaya unveils Maximus the Confessor on ‘purification in love ... “to raise up human beings to deification” ... [as] the return of “our entire self”, or image, to God, the archetype’.

Of interest to Presbyterians will be Myk Habets’s chapter (prior to Finlan’s closing) on theosis in Reformed traditions. Apparently T.F. Torrance was highly honoured in the Orthodox world. In a case study, Habets explores ‘how a modern-day Reformed doctrine of theosis may be constructed’ showing how Torrance, drawing on Calvin, acknowledged the conundrum that: ‘We are unable to describe this participation in positive language ... [but] refusal to do so does not by itself import that a real and creative, and therefore ontological, relation is not envisaged in this participation.’

Volume 2, after Kharlamov’s introduction, moves to a compelling meditation from Finlan on deification in Jesus’s teaching, unfashionably stressing the ‘withinness’ rather than the ‘amongstness’ of the Kingdom. A translation follows of the modern martyr and Orthodox saint (shot by Bolsheviks in 1938), Ivan V. Popov, reviewing deification in the early Eastern Church. Kharlamov returns (twice) on Clement of Alexandria and Basil of Caesarea. Joel C. Elowsky explores ‘bridging the gap’ between Antioch and Alexandria - one is tempted to think, ‘mind the gap’. Paul M. Collins (twice) reflects on theosis in the *Philokalia* and Christian theurgy. Finally, Mark S. Medley offers a lively account of the adoption of theosis by Baptists and evangelicals seeking ‘to explore new theological vistas.’

This reviewer would have welcomed a chapter on interfaith theosis, perhaps informed by the late Raimon Panikkar’s ‘cosmotheandric’ vision of reality as explored in his 1989-90 Gifford Lectures, now published as *The Rhythm of Being* (Orbis 2010). But that’s a small point. These twin volumes are a scintillating gift to Christianity’s ongoing revelation in the third millennium. Taste and see that the Lord is good!

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### NEW TESTAMENT IN CULTURAL, SOCIAL, AND HISTORICAL CONTEXTS

Joel B. Green and Lee Martin McDonald (eds), *The World of the New Testament: Cultural, Social, and Historical Contexts* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013. £29.99/\$49.99. pp. xxiv + 616. ISBN: 978-0-8010-3962-1).

This volume contains forty-four essays written by a panel of thirty-four distinguished, English-speaking scholars and is divided into five parts: ‘Setting the Context: Exile and the Jewish Heritage’; ‘Setting the Context: Roman Hellenism’; ‘The Jewish People in the Context of Roman Hellenism’; ‘The Literary Context of Early Christianity’; and ‘The Geographical Context of the New Testament’. The mandate of each article is to provide an orientation to the topic’s main issues and to assist in gaining a better understanding of the world behind the New Testament documents. The work as a whole is an initiative of the Institute