

# philippine studies

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## Contemporary Catholic Biblical Studies

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Beyond these words, little else need be said about the contents of this book. One must read it to grasp more fully the philosophy it espouses. In this slim volume, Dr. Romulo has cut into the major problems which beset Asian intellectual and cultural progress, fostered by centuries of colonial sleep. The observations made are often penetrating in their incisions: "... the nationalist resurgence in Asia implies the need for a reorientation of outlook and traditional regards, because a revolution presupposes a recreation of values if not the total substitution of old structures of economies and societies with new ones."

The volume is to be commended for the printing type used, which is highly readable, and the profusion of marginal spaces which (aside from resulting in a thicker book) allow room for marginal notes and comments. A good book or article is not always one which says everything there is to be said about the subject. It is something that a person can ponder on, which will make him think and move him either to assent or dissent. The contents of this book accomplish this objective to a great degree.

JORGE M. JUCO

## CONTEMPORARY CATHOLIC BIBLICAL STUDIES

UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL RESEARCH. By Luis Alonso Schokel, S.J. New York: Herder and Herder, 1963. 130 pp.

THE BIBLE IN CURRENT CATHOLIC THOUGHT. Edited by J. L. McKenzie, S.J. New York. Herder and Herder, 1962. 247 pp.

AN INTRODUCTORY BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR THE STUDY OF SCRIPTURE. By George S. Glanzman and Joseph A. Fitzmyer. Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press, 1961. 135 pp.

Within the last twenty-five years, Catholic biblical scholarship has experienced a remarkable "second spring". It is perhaps unavoidable that members of the Church unfamiliar with the advances made in biblical studies and unaware of the nature of biblical research should be surprised and at times shocked at the divergence of the new knowledge from that which they learned in school or seminary. As Fr. Joseph Fitzmyer writes in the introduction to Father Schokel's book: "...it is understandable that scripture professors who were themselves trained under the dark cloud of reaction would pass on to their clerical students a conservative attitude, and that these in turn as pastors would inculcate the same in the laity". This is understandable, but it is not to be cherished today.

In order to help dispel this feeling of uneasiness and suspicion toward the new biblical movement, Fr. Luis Schokel, professor of Old Testament exegesis and biblical theology at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome has prepared this historical analysis of the state of biblical scholarship from the reformation to the present day. A first chapter follows the historical trail that led from rationalism to apologetic reaction and restrictive measures, to the constructive programs of Fr. Lagrange, Leo XIII and Pius X, to the present era of critical moderation and conquest of rationalism among non-catholics, and of qualitative improvement of Catholic biblical criticism, both textual and literary, and the contribution of archaeology. The third and final chapter briefly treats of the problems of literary objectivity, literary forms and historicity, and the role of tradition in biblical interpretation. This is a synthetic and limpid book. It is recommended to all modern Catholics, both clerical and lay, who seek a sound and appealing introduction to recent developments in scripture studies.

*The Bible in Current Catholic Thought* is a testimonial volume offered in memory of the late Michael J. Gruenthaner, S.J., editor-in-chief of the *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* from 1941 to 1951. It contains contributions from thirteen competent American Catholic biblical scholars: six articles on Old Testament themes; three articles dealing with themes from the Inter-testamental period, and four articles on new Testament topics.

*Old Testament:* William J. Moran of the Biblical Institute in Rome presents a thorough study of the problematic phrase: "A kingdom of priests" (Ex. 19, 6). Ignatius Hunt offers a useful survey of "Recent Melkizedek Study". He concludes: "The footnote to Gn. 14, 18 in the Bible of Jerusalem by R. de Vaux is a model of synthesis and diplomacy, summing up rather well the entire Melchizedek question." Frederick L. Moriarity gives a lengthly constructively critical review of Gerhard von Rad's important commentary on Genesis. Roland E. Murphy examines the concept of Wisdom literature as exemplified in the New Testament, against the background of the notion of Wisdom literature in the ancient Near East. He concludes: "For the most part, it is essentially a postexilic, religious interpretation of human conduct, carried on in the light of the traditional Israelite moral ideals and motivation of Deuteronomy, but also continuing the experimental, humanistic tradition inherited from courtly origins." Mitchell J. Dahood seeks to apply to the understanding of a number of verses of Job some of the gains that have been registered in northwest semitic research. Louis F. Hartman studies the haggadic story in Daniel that describes Nabuchodonosar's vision of the great tree and his subsequent madness (Dn. 3:98-4, 34) in order to discover some of the literary and traditional sources that the author used. *Inter-testamental:* Bruce Vawter, in an article on "Levitical Messianism and the

New Testament", investigates the Judaism of the late period (Jeremiah 33, 14-26; Malachi 1,6-2,9; 3, 1-5; Zechariah 12, 12f etc., Ben Sira 45, 15.23-26) and of the Inter-testamental period (Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs and Qumran literature). His conclusion is: "It does not appear that in these affirmations (concerning the priesthood and Jewish eschatology) there was sufficient consistency to allow us to speak of a Levitical messianism that either supplanted or shared the Davidic messianic expectation. We can speak of a priestly Messiah only by making the word 'Messiah' mean something quite different from the meaning it has traditionally had both in Jewish and in Christian thinking." This is a reversal of a widely accepted view. Robert North presents an exhaustive description and analysis of the Qumran reservoirs and their possible uses. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, on the basis of recent documents, sheds new light on the Bar Cochba Period, the Second Jewish revolt, 132 A.D.—135 A.D.

*New Testament:* For general information for the non-specialist, perhaps the most significant article in the volume is that of David M. Stanley: "New Understanding of the Gospels". He first describes the three most influential factors in the "new look" at the Gospels: the historico-literary method of investigation known as Form Criticism, the encyclical *Divino afflante Spiritu* of 1943, and the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947. He then explains the two salient features of this "new approach to the Gospels": 1) a more discerning appreciation of the literary character of the Gospels, of the distinctive "genius" of each evangelist, and of the variety of literary forms the Gospels contain; 2) a deeper insight into the historical process which produced the Gospels. This article is a good introduction to modern Gospel trends. Raymond E. Brown, in a valuable article on "Gospel Miracles" brings together the results of modern research and reflection by comparing the role and significance of miracles in the Synoptic and Johannine traditions. Thomas Aquinas Collins presents a survey of "Changing Styles in Johannine Studies" over the past sixty years. Finally Francis J. McCool of the Biblical Institute proposes an original explanation of the phrase "Living Water" in John 4, 14f. He agrees with Bultmann and Wikenhauser that it means the Word or revelation of Jesus; but the vivifying action of the Spirit is also implied as the transforming power present in and through the Word of revelation.

*The Introductory Bibliography for the Study of Scripture* is an annotated guide to the basic works on the Old and New Testaments. It comments on and evaluates periodicals, biblical series, biblical texts and ancient versions, english versions, lexica, grammars, concordances, introductions to the bible, commentaries, dictionaries, works of biblical theology, biblical archeology, biblical geography and history, texts and studies of the Inter-testamental period, texts and studies of the Dead Sea scrolls, New Testament apocrypha, rabbinical literature and works

of bibliography. In its brief existence it has established itself as a necessary tool for all students of scripture and theology.

JOSEPH J. SMITH

## A SYMPOSIUM ON CHINA TODAY

SYMPOSIUM ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF THE FAR EAST. E. F. Szczepanik, ed. Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong Press, 1962. ix, 508 pp.

The book is a selection from papers read at the Golden Jubilee celebration of Hong Kong University in 1961. The papers and discussions have been arranged under five principal headings, Economic Changes in China, Economic Impact of Changes in China on the Far East, Political Changes in China and Their Impact on the Far East, Legal and Cultural Changes in China, and Social Changes in China and Their Impact on the Far East. There are altogether 47 papers, 11 of which are published only in summaries of less than one page; each subject is followed by a brief summary of the discussion. The number of participants was perhaps too large and included persons whose field of studies is not Asia or who had a limited scholarly background. But there are also papers by well-known experts on China, among them Conrad Brandt, Li Choh-ming, T. C. Lee, S. Ishikawa, T. Ishikawa, H. A. Steiner, and R. L. Walker.

Perhaps the contents do not justify the title of the book and of the symposium since the dominant subject is communist China—understandable in discussions held in Hong Kong.

On communist China the subjects treated are agriculture, industry, transport, trade, finances, ideology, foreign policy, law, family, overseas Chinese, social changes, and, because the discussion took place in 1961 when the failure of the commune was evident, this failure was reflected in many reports and discussions. It is the more astonishing that one paper spoke highly of the iron smelting in small village furnaces (pp. 38-45) which, recognized as an aberration, was quickly scrapped in communist China. Papers on transport (Bernhard Grossmann, Hamburg), on internal trade (Audry G. Donnithorne, London), monetary system (John Young-wah Liu, Hong Kong) are worth reading, while the paper on law asserts that "This fusion of filial piety towards Chairman Mao in the best of the Confucianist tradition, with loyalty and devotion to the state and Communism, bespeaks the trend of the Chinese legal system in integrating the old with the new and blending the East with the West" (p. 348, Luke T. C. Lee, Harvard University) — perfect nonsense.