
Book Reviews

It is with deep regret that we accept the resignation of Vic Hayes as Review Editor. His support in coordinating this section, and his wide range of contacts for placing review material, has been a significant contribution to the publication. The Editors would like to hear from any member who would be interested in undertaking this task.

Chaos or Clarity: Encountering Ethics.

Kath Engebretson and Ray Elliot.

Traditions and Society series.

Wentworth Falls, Social Science Press,

1990. pp.ix + 201.

Rrp \$19.95. ISBN 0 949218 74 X

It is encouraging to see that Religious Studies is increasingly being introduced as a serious subject in the upper years of secondary schooling in Australia. To my knowledge, South Australia, Victoria, Queensland, New South Wales and Tasmania have all introduced Religion Studies in various forms at Year 12 level.

This text emerges from this development. It is part of the series 'Traditions and Society' which has been developed to meet the needs of the new Victorian Certificate of Education. In particular it is designed for the use of senior secondary students in the semester unit 'Ethics' - one of four units in the VCE study *Religion and Society*. The authors have very helpfully included the introduction to the VCE study design and an outline of the unit in an appendix.

The aim of the text is to enable students to think about the nature of ethics and ethical argument and to begin to for-

mulate their own ethical stances. In doing so it adopts a refreshing approach to the subject. Rather than being concerned to introduce students to the specifics of a particular morality, it provides them with the skills to analyse and construct ethical arguments. This is accomplished by breaking open the nature of ethical thinking to reveal its components (one of which is religious and philosophical frameworks). These components form a refrain throughout the text providing a basis for the analysis of ethical positions. Finally students are invited to use these in constructing their own ethical perspectives.

The result of this is that many of the fifteen chapters have a very practical focus; 'Life without Ethics?'; 'Ethics in Personal Living'; 'Identifying Ethical Issues'; 'Analyzing Two Ethical Debates'. Only one chapter surveys the moral codes of religious traditions although religious perspectives on a range of issues are introduced in other chapters.

I felt the book was very ambitious in not only attempting to introduce the nature of ethical thinking, but also discussing a way of arriving at ethical

judgements, the ethics of a number of religious traditions and the various philosophical approaches to ethics. Each of the last two subjects would require further resources for the students, and indeed in a separate publication from the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board 'Course Development Support Material' - lists of such resources are given. In the case of the religious traditions the forthcoming completely revised edition of *Set Your Heart on Goodness* by Arnold Hunt, Marie Crotty and Robert Crotty (Collins-Dove, Melbourne 1991), with its more detailed discussion of ethics in religions, will be a very useful companion volume to this text.

The book reflects the teaching experience of the authors in the inclusion of a wealth of suggested student activities. The text is enlivened by cartoons and photographs and is presented in an attractive format.

The authors and publisher are to be congratulated on a very useful addition to the growing number of Australian publications for secondary Religion Studies Courses. In this case, the book also has a wider appeal being suitable for upper secondary course in ethics and ethical thinking.

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Chaos or Clarity: Encountering Ethics

Kath Engebretson and Ray Elliott, 1990. (Traditions and Society Series, ed. R. Elliott), Social Science Press. Wentworth Falls. Rrp. \$19.95.

My Story, Our Stories: Religion and Identity in Australia

Paul Rule and Kath Engebretson, 1990. (Traditions and Society Series, ed. R. El-

liot), Social Science Press. Wentworth Falls. Rrp. \$19.95.

Developing a new curriculum for Religious Studies at Higher School Certificate Level is one thing; its successful implementation depends heavily on the availability and use of suitable student resources. Having teachers of Religion with good background in Theology, Scripture and Religious Studies is one thing; teachers' provision for a successful and satisfying classroom study of these areas by school students also depends on other factors like their teaching skills and the resources used.

These two new texts from Social Science Press will make a valuable contribution to the second part of each of the above equations. Ray Elliott as Series Editor, Kath Engebretson and Paul Rule have produced texts with a view to the new Higher School Certificate course, *Religion and Society* offered by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board. No doubt the texts will also be useful in other states.

The authors are to be congratulated for developing quality Australian texts that will enhance the study of religion in schools, both Government and church-related. The production of these books upholds the principles that the study of religion (philosophy and ethics etc) can make a valuable contribution to the education and personal development of all school students no matter what their religious background or lack of it. The books show that they can help with any young citizen's attempts to become more informed about religions, and religious and moral issues. In some schools, this will be regarded as an important part of students' general education; in church schools, this will also be viewed from the perspective of its contribution to an over-

all education in the church's traditions and student participation in the religious life of the school.

Helping young people to become better informed about personal and social issues and helping them learn about the different processes involved in making moral decisions are valuable educational tasks that are being emphasised in recent State documents on education. While all subject areas at school should be able to make some contribution to the moral education of young people, study areas like purpose in life, religion, philosophy and ethics focus more directly on fundamental human issues of meaning, purpose and values in life.

In other subject areas, attention to these issues is indirect or it is like a bonus by-product of the study. Hence, unless there is the opportunity for school students to study religious, moral and philosophical issues directly, then there is a vacuousness in the curriculum. There may be a lot of rhetoric about education for moral and spiritual development, but this is hypocritical if there is no formal place in the curriculum for students to study these matters with the same seriousness as they take for granted in the study of traditional subjects.

Chaos or Clarity: Encountering Ethics models an educational process that includes giving of information, analysing issues and evaluating arguments. It gives students some idea of the place of moral decision making in the overall moral development of the human person. It also introduces some of the ways in which people have thought about ethics as a systematic study. The issues chosen for analysis are topical and are presented clearly. The writing is uncomplicated and its student readability is good.

In addition, the book attempts to acquaint students with debates about issues at different levels - local, national and global. It also examines the contribution of secular and religious sources to thinking about moral issues. Hopefully, this study will be useful to the students when it comes to thinking through their own stance on social issues and working their way through situations and issues that concern them personally.

My Story, Our Story: Religion and Identity in Australia takes up the study of aspects of religions in Australia under the theme of identity. It begins with psychological questions about identity for the individual and then proceeds to study the distinctive nature of religious institutions and their rituals. Areas such as religions and society, individual religious experience, expressions of religious identity, freedom and traditions are examined. There are a number of individual stories that give students insights to the subjective world of people who are reflecting on how their identity relates to religious traditions and religious experience. Finally, the book looks at how individual identity is forged with reference to socialising forces in the community, particularly religions.

The concept 'identity' is important in Social Science and Psychology, but it is elusive. It usually becomes more prominent and a cause of personal concern in times of rapid change. The questions: what is religious identity? How is it forged? How is it maintained and changed? are questions of great interest. It may be too much to expect that the student text should investigate these questions in detail. However, the text makes a good start. It is difficult to cover many aspects of religion and at the same time to relate these to religious identity and to go

the way in which religion helps shape personal identity. In a few instances, aspects of religion are presented to identify, even if the links noted are tenuous. This may be more the problematic nature of religious (and personal) identity than the fault of the text. If it theorised at too detailed a level, it would not help introduce students to the problem.

The book is readable and is not beyond the understanding of senior school students. It is objective and it includes many examples of people's personal religious views. It is well illustrated and set out well. I would have suggested avoiding the 'My Stories, Our Stories' part of the title as this is more akin to the titles of the primary and secondary religion texts that suffer from presumed emotional and devotional overtones (this text does not). However, if the text is objective - and this is perfectly consistent with the presentation of strong personal/subjective case histories - then it would have been better to avoid any mistaken identification with texts that suffer from artificial attempts to make the study more 'personal' and 'relevant'. Presumptive and devotional language hinder rather than foster these objectives.

For the teacher of Religion Studies in the senior school in Victoria, both books will be particularly welcome. Their advent may make all the difference between not offering and offering the Religion and Society course in a school. As well as including the study designs (syllabuses) from the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board as appendices, the books suggest a teaching sequence that includes the special 'work requirements' specified in the course. The texts will also be useful for senior school Religion teachers in other states.

The authors of both publications are to be congratulated. They will undoubtedly advance the study of religions in Australian secondary schools.

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**Fashion Me a People: Curriculum in
the Church**

Maria Harris

Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press,
1989

204 Pages Aust \$28.95
ISBN 0 664 24052 6

Book on religious education, particularly from a Catholic perspective, often run the risk of presuming that religious education is a school-based activity organised by adults for children and adolescents. Maria Harris' latest book on curriculum in the church offers resistance to this overly narrow vision of the task of religious education. She suggests that a changed self-understanding is occurring in the people of the church following a broadened understanding of education and the church' pastoral vocation. She writes: 'the realisation is taking hold that education is indeed life-long and that although it is work which includes children as participants, it is not exclusively devoted to children, nor should it be.' (:49) This expanded view is leading people to see that the church does not have an educational programme, but rather that the church is an educational programme. The implications of this shift in awareness form the basis of this book.

This is not a book for beginners in the field of religious education. Maria Harris addresses those experienced practitioners who would theorise about their work.

Clearly, her intention is to address a wider audience than teachers in church schools, although they are included and would gain much from what is presented here. According to Harris, the church's educational vocation has been embodied and lived in five classical forms throughout the church's history: *koinonia* (community and communion); *leiturgia* (prayer and worship); *kerygma* (proclaiming the Word of God); *diakonia* (service and outreach); and *didache* (teaching and learning). Thus, all those engaged in work in these areas of church activity need to 'realise that in partnership with one another and our creator God we are engaged in the same fashioning work begun in Genesis.' (:19)

The organisation of material demonstrates the balance that is characteristic of Harris' thinking in relation to religious education. The opening section establishes a framework based upon understandings of the church's educational and pastoral vocation. Her discussion of the interplay of life forms in the process of education owes much to the work of Gabriel Moran and is central to the formulations which follow. The middle section explores the five classical forms of the church's educational vocation - *koinonia*, *leiturgia*, *didache*, *kerygma*, and *diakonia*. The closing chapter offers an artistic process for giving form to the design of church curriculum. Throughout this book, a strong conviction emerges about the centrality of justice to the church's educational task. For instance, in the chapter on *diakonia*, it is suggested that members of church communities be invited to prepare a photography exhibition. In pictorial form, people are asked to find answers to the following questions:

- what is oppression?
- who is my neighbour?

how do we reach out?

The results of these photographic explorations are displayed in a prominent place in the community. A collection of similar exercises at the end of each chapter demonstrates Harris' concern to present non-discursive forms for exploring issues in church education.

The seeds of the present book exist in Harris' earlier work, particularly *Teaching and Religious Imagination* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987) and *Portrait of Youth Ministry* (New York: Paulist Press, 1981). Those familiar with Maria Harris' writing will note a return to concerns and themes aired in her many books and articles. The present book is a more mature statement. The distinctions are more strongly stated. The implications of her theorising are more fully sketched. I found her principles for curriculum design in church settings a challenge to the accepted wisdom which exists in the secular education community.

Although writing from the perspective of a white North American, Harris' work has much to offer Australians. This is mostly due to her reluctance to move to an overly narrow conception of curriculum and education. She is convinced that religious people, when they reflect upon the direction of their educating, are discovering that 'no place is God's 'special' place, God's 'only' place, for everywhere can be the place where the community meets God...every place, every time, and every person is a lure from and to, the divine.' (:51) Australian readers will make their own adjustments to the suggestions of times, places and people which are detailed in the North American context. A helpful guide provided by the author is a set of questions and exercises for musing and reflection at the end of each chapter. These

provide church communities with the possibilities for gathering together to give form to the rich array of material presented here.

Maria Harris' writing is engaging, accessible and eloquent. She is a reflective teacher who takes seriously the task of engaging in subject matter which offers the possibility for revelation. Above all else, she invites all in the church to unite in the task of fashioning a people, lest something of value be lost. She says: 'unless we do come together, many features of church life that educates, features by which and in which the Christian vocation is learned, will not be spoken of, or mined for the riches they are.' (:19

Maria Harris' book is worthwhile and timely. I found myself drawn in at each step along the way.

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**Rescue the Perishing: Comparative
Perspectives in Evangelism and
Revivalism**

D. Pratt (ed)

Auckland, College Communications, 1989
(Waikato Studies in Religion Vol.1)

The development of Religious Studies at the University of Waikato has produced some interesting research work and contacts with international students of revival religion. This collection is predominantly addressed to aspects of the revival tradition in New Zealand, but it has three articles which make it of far more than local interest. Indeed, since the evangelists studied came to New Zealand from the USA, historians there should take note of the impact of fundamentalism and revivalism in a very different and much smaller scale society. Douglas Pratt is to be congratulated on the quality

of the first volume in the series, which will make scholars elsewhere look forward to further volumes.

Peter Lineham offers a very perceptive comparison of revivalism in Canada and New Zealand. His article underlines the value of placing historical studies in an Anglo-American context, for he is able to map aspects of New Zealand Christianity which would not be so clear without that wider context. As usual, he gives invaluable bibliographical resources in his footnotes and makes comments about the assumptions and methods of other historians which are very stimulating. The smallness and isolation of many communities affected by revivalism precluded any major movement.

Joseph Kemp found the same resistances when he came to New Zealand after very successful ministries in Scotland and New York. He came to the Baptist Tabernacle in Auckland with a rich network of US fundamentalist associations. He developed a very significant congregation, established important institutions like the Bible Training Institute and edited *The Reaper*. Yet he did not succeed in polarising Protestant Christianity between fundamentalists and modernists, even though he helped to shape a significant subculture which is still very influential in Auckland. Jane Simpson's essay on Kemp makes interesting and helpful comparisons with American studies of fundamentalism, but needs to pay more attention to the regional and religious distinctiveness of the Auckland region.

Bryan Gillings, who has completed a major study of visiting evangelists to New Zealand in the 20th century contributes two summary articles on Billy Graham and Luis Palau, which make helpful comments on their theological mes-

sage, but from a sharply critical perspective. A somewhat selective survey of attenders at Palau's mission revealed some very interesting results. Only a tiny proportion of the audience were Polynesian and a very high proportion were already convinced Christians from Pentecostal groups. Gillings rightly suggests that whatever functions visiting evangelists have, appealing to secularised non-church attenders is not one of them.

Palau's message came in for very sharp denunciation. Pratt looks at the literature and the message to clarify what were the major emphases and provides a very useful and thoughtful analysis. It would have been helpful to have had some more historical and sociological perspectives.

In the last two articles, Paul Gifford covers the gospel of prosperity taught by Kenneth Copeland of Fort Worth, Texas, in African conferences and American televangelists are examined by Wiebe Zwaga. Gifford's discussion of the crass materialism offered by Copeland could make even sharper contrasts between this teaching and the life and teaching of Jesus, but he rightly reminds us that the sheer growth of African Christianity and the appeal of this teaching means that it cannot just be dismissed. Zwaga's article is very helpful, though it does not explore the scandals which have plagued the televangelists recently.

Altogether this publication provides a stimulating examination of aspects of evangelical Protestantism, put in a perspective which underlines some of the reasons for the appeal of this version of Christianity, as well as one of its weaknesses.

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(Copies available from 'Tricia Blombery,
6 Balfour Street, Wollstonecraft 2065.
Price \$15)

Landmarks

Eugene Stockton

Parish Ministry Publications, Sydney.
1990

I can see now that I had it easy during the preparation for the *Sunburnt Soul*. It was a relatively simple thing to look into our experience of the Gospel in this country and say that we should find a uniquely Australian spirituality. Most people at the time seemed to agree. But now the task is to begin to state what that spirituality might look like. At the beginning there were a few theological diehards who wanted to argue that the Gospel is neutral to all culture. I remember a memorable discussion with the Principal of Moore College, Broughton Knox. We arrived at an impasse on the matter of 'accommodation'. I wanted to argue that there was a dynamic relationship between the content of the Gospel and the culture of Australia in which the Gospel could not remain neutral. I did not see there could be a definitive statement of the Gospel which is beyond culture and treat the world to which it comes as insignificant. We ended our discussion with Dr Knox putting to me the following statements: 'We serve Christ as Lord, which means He is also teacher. It is to Him we go for the Gospel. There is one Christ and He has given us one Gospel'.

Eugene Stockton is not of this mould. *Landmarks* is an exploration of a uniquely Australian spirituality based on the assumption that the history and contemporary life of Australians in this land is a positive and essential ingredient in the formation of a spirituality for 'the Southern Land'. His starting point, which

he does not defend, is the belief that contemporary Australians are in all senses in the same relationship with God as the Children of Israel as we see it in the Old Testament. From this model he moved into an exploration of the themes which have now become standard in the discussion of Australian theology. It is in a sense an exercise in Natural Theology. He sees the experience of being an Australian as an essential participant in the discovery of truth and the articulation of the Gospel. He looks at themes such as 'the desert', 'the larrikin', 'mateship', 'gambling', 'the home' and examines them with a sensitive and gentle eye. It is a dangerous undertaking, for he slips into literalism or quaintness in pushing the points of contact too far. His attempt to link Christ with the gambling, larrikinism and mateship strains the model.

Much of the book in fact gives the impression that Eugene is working too hard to drag the hard world Australian experience into the language of the Gospel. The other side of accommodation is prophetic rejection. He seems to have an unqualified optimism in the egalitarian and essentially honest character of Australians. But he is at his best when he is talking about the sacred character of the land and the role of story in both Australian culture and in the statement of the Gospel.

It is clearly a deeply felt experience of his own:

This land I have learned from its earliest inhabitants is my mother in whom I am formed and by whom I am nurtured. She makes a Home for me. She is 'the ground of my being'. She is the sacrament, an effective sign, of my parent God in more feminine mode. I am driven to care for her and to respond to her many and

varied moods, as child to mother. I am alert to her secrets, her lesson of life. I let her take me to the Father.

Along with each short chapter there is a 'Follow On' section. This includes suggestions for worship and a celebration for individuals and groups anxious to explore the themes further. It is a hastily prepared book, without justified print and more than an acceptable number of typing errors. But for all that, it is a step into a world where few of us have been game to venture.

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New Religious Movements. A Practical Introduction.

Eileen Barker. Her Majesty's Stationary Office, London. 1989.

Religion and Advanced Industrial Society.
James A. Beckford. Unwin Hyman, London. 1989.

The debate in different areas of sociology about the 'relevance' of a particular piece of work is often conducted on two distinct levels. On one level the criterion of relevance is usually held to be the contribution made to some contemporary concern or public issue - what is often called applied research or, in John Lofland's terms, 'timely'.

On another level a criterion of relevance is used by which work is evaluated for its contribution to the development of sociology's theoretical and conceptual content, and especially to the integration of discreet areas of the subject within a theoretical whole. This case can be paraphrased as the pure - of Lofland's 'timeless' - approach to research.

When Lofland made his distinction it was to emphasise the need retain both criteria within a fruitful synthesis, and there have been sociologists notable for this achievement. The two books reviewed here are recent and highly successful additions to the 'double relevance' of sociology.

New Religious Movements. A Practical Introduction is, as its subtitle suggests, a book intended to address immediate concerns in an accessible way. It lists as its intended readership the parents, relatives, and friends of those who belong to New Religious Movements (NRMs), as well as those who may become more directly involved in a counselling role. Clearly this is a contribution of a timely kind.

Its special value, however, derives from its author's excellent grasp of the comparative context in which NRMs have arisen and of the conceptual tools needed to explain their development. Thus it addresses in an informed and readable way the main characteristics of NRMs as well as the significant differences between them - something which psychiatrically oriented and more popular accounts frequently fail to do. It evaluates the alternative interpretations given to the process of becoming a member - conversion or mind control? - and provides a thoughtful treatment of areas of public concern.

The accounts of living in an NRM, of parental reactions, and of leaving the group (most people do leave the NRM they have joined, many after a relatively short period of time) as well as the deprogramming, contains a combination of well-balanced, practical advice against a background of broad sociological understanding and expertise. The book concludes with a general reader's summary

of the main NRMs and an account of INFORM, the Information Network Focus on New Religious Movements, founded by the author and supported by the Home Office and by prominent representatives of different denominational groups in Britain.

That this book should have been published by the HMSO provides an insight on its fully merited status as an authoritative work. It is richly informative about an area or intense concern while at the same time exemplifying the 'humane engagement' of the author which Peter Berger and his colleagues have identified as lying at the heart of sociology as a useful discipline.

Religion and Advanced Industrial Society can in many respects be seen as following sociology's 'timeless' option. Its stated intention is to puncture the isolation of the sociology of religion. This and the subsequent chapter on religion in classical models of industrial society - which reviews the contribution of Marx, Durkheim, Weber, and Troeltsch - are exercises in academic orienteering which students of the discipline will find extremely helpful. And the following chapter, in which the work of Parsons and his associates is assessed, throws valuable light on the impact of Parsons' insistence on the primacy of non-economic factors had on the interpretation of earlier classical theorists (especially Durkheim).

There is a fascinating account of the many variations, with their underlying Lutheran theme, of Peter Berger's work, and an examination of the concept of differentiation and its contested relationship with secularisation. Foucault's inversion of Weber's discussion of the rational individual as originator of contemporary power structures is also reviewed. The

book concludes with a chapter on ideology and new social movements.

As a work which provides a clearly signposted overview of theoretical themes in the sociology of religion, as well as the links they share with wider theoretical discussions of industrial and advanced industrial society, this is the book I recommend most enthusiastically to my students. Its concern to communicate and to disentangle ideas for its readers makes this book an eminently 'relevant' text.

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The Encyclopedia of Judaism

Wigoder, Geoffrey (ed)

New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1989

768 pp. A\$125 cloth ISBN 0-02-628410-3

For the purposes of this work 'Judaism' is taken as a parallel to 'Christianity' in that it refers to what is called the religious tradition, traced back to 'biblical times' despite the fact that in this religion it is not possible to make a genuine distinction between sacred and secular (:9). This impossibility is evident in the range of entries - covering 'Historiography', 'Humanistic Judaism' and other terms that one might not regard as religious in a Western religious sense. However, Wigoder and his collaborators have clearly excluded events, themes and personalities which are purely cultural, political, economic, etc.

Entries range from a few lines to several pages ('Bible', for instance), but most words are treated quite adequately in less than a column - 300 words or so. Worthy of mention are a number of what one might term 'omnibus' entries on very broad topics (eg., 'Bible', 'Theology', 'Ethics', 'Halakah') These often extend to

several subdivided pages - 'Halakah' contains fourteen subheadings - and serve as excellent introductory essays. Although the number of entries are unsigned, the list of contributors indicates that well known scholars from all traditions have been enlisted to provide material. Generally this diversity of viewpoints is reflected in the entries, but the occasional imbalance is evident; the article on 'Intermarriage', for example, notes the Reform acceptance of patrilineal descent but fails to highlight the significance of this break from tradition. In several other instances the Reform movement is not given a full hearing, which suggests a slight Conservative and Orthodox bias in coverage. Subject headings frequently utilise Hebrew or Yiddish terminology, which may distress the general enquirer somewhat. The Preface is adequately explanatory in terms of coverage but inadequate in explaining how to use the work, and the rather basic index provides insufficient user notes. Otherwise, however, the content and layout are admirable, with many illustrations and photographs (some absolutely splendid full page colour plates), useful boxes containing summary information, a basic glossary, frequent cross references, use of bold headings in the double column layout and very readable entries.

Although neither the dustjacket nor Preface says as much, *The Encyclopedia of Judaism* is a successor to Wigoder and Werblowsky's *Encyclopedia of the Jewish Religion*, which is now somewhat dated. The new work is far more attractive and contains probably double the amount of information. Wigoder, as editor of the multi-volume *Encyclopedia Judaica*, is an encyclopaedist of note, and the present work can only enhance his reputation. This volume is an excellent

resource for the general reader, the student and anyone else seeking basic information on Judaism as a religion.

G E Gorman

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**The Jewish Communities of the World:
A Contemporary Guide.**

Lerman, Anthony (ed) 4th ed. London: Macmillan Press in Association with the Institute of Jewish Studies, 1989
ix + 206 pp. A\$59.95 cloth ISBN 0-333-48070-8

This useful compendium arrived as Iraq was invading Kuwait, and as test of its usefulness I checked to see whether this country was listed. Because both are exclusively Islamic nations, one can properly assume that neither would appear; it came as a surprise, then to find an entry for Iraq. In about 700 words Lerman summarises the history of Jewry in Iraq and describes its present position thus: 'after an incredible two and a half millennia of continuous existence, what was once a great diaspora community has all but disappeared'. (:86) That Iraq figures at all in this guide is all the more remarkable when one considers that the Jewish community amounts to no more than 200 on a population of some fifteen million.

Arranged alphabetically by country, this guide covers Jewish communities in ninety-eight nations, ranging from Pakistan and China, with an estimated five Jews in each ('it is believed that only one Jewish family remains in Pakistan') to Israel and the United States, with nine and half million Jews between them. Taking Australia as a typical entry, in four pages one finds information on the size of Jewish population, history, composition of the community, legal status, communal

organisation, religious life, education, cultural activities, press, welfare, relations with Israel, historical sites, general position. Under each heading Lerman has provided enough basic information to give one at least a passing acquaintance with Judaism in a given country.

The Preface indicates that 'information on the present position of Jewish communities is based on material in the Institute of Jewish Affairs' archives and on the questionnaires sent to the communities themselves (:ix). Entries appear to have been sent to 'the communities' for checking, but it is not clear to whom these were sent, nor is there any indication of when this was done. That the Australian entry still refers to Prahran CAE rather than Victoria College should give pause for concern with regard to both accuracy and currency. Use Lerman (with some caution) as a source of quick information on Judaism in many countries for which material may otherwise be elusive. The work is recommended, but with a fairly strong caveat about currency, for libraries which receive queries about Judaism in other countries.

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**Yoga, Meditation and the Guru:
critical reflections on the Australian
Scenario**

Purusottama Bilimoria

Indra Publishing, 1989. 70 pages.

The great vogue in the West for trendy Eastern cults passed with the sixties. On a recent visit to Australia I noticed that interest in India is declining even on the academic scene, and the situation is much the same over here. Still, pockets of interest persist. One still sees ads for Yoga

classes on University notice boards, or in Public Libraries.

So Dr Bilimoria has written a brief introduction for anyone who wants to know more about this phenomenon. It is aimed at the ordinary reader, not the specialist, not the academic, and seeks to give him or her a clear introduction to yoga, and also to warn specifically against the possible abuses and misuses of yoga such as are sometimes encountered on our side of the saffron curtain - and here the author seems to have particularly in mind the unscrupulous Guru (hence the 'critical reflections' of the sub-title).

The book is clearly written in simple and straightforward language, and there is a good glossary at the back giving simple meanings for technical Sanskrit words. There are chapters on the history of yoga, its aims and methods, and its ethics. Importantly the author stresses that 'yoga' is not monolithic, and describes the various kinds of yoga which may be encountered, both here and overseas. The chapter on the guru, though it contains criticisms and warnings, is not entirely negative and does outline the role of the teacher in yoga instruction. Here I think it might have been stressed that in traditional systems of Indian learning, such as yoga, The relationship of teacher and pupil, with the former demanding unquestioning faith and obedience from the latter, is entirely different from the Western model. If a pupil could not accept the guru's teaching he did not question it, he left (as did Ramanuja). This critical difference is, I believe, at the root of many of the problems encountered with gurus in the West. As is the fact that gurus *were* paid, but in kind and in service, so I don't think it is altogether fair to criticise teachers who charge (money) for instruction. There is also an extensive bibliography

for the reader who wants to read further in more specialist literature.

The book, as I said, is a popular introduction, and has both the advantages and disadvantages of the genre. The specialist reader can always pick up some generalisation he or she thinks oversimplifies, or should be dealt with in more detail, or could have been better put (in my case, for instance, simply stating that the Buddhists were responsible for originating Tantrism - the jury is still out on that one; and the history is *very* brief). And there is little on the psychology of yoga. Overall the treatment is balanced and fair.

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In Search of God: The Meaning and the Message of the Everlasting Names

Tryggve N D Mettinger

Fortress, Philadelphia, 1988

Mettinger adopts a two fold approach to the study of the meaning and significance of the names and titles by which God is known throughout the Old Testament. He examines the major designations linguistically to determine their meaning as accurately as possible. His interest, however, is much wider than linguistic analysis and accuracy of definition; he is concerned with the metaphorical freight which the various designations carry with them. Names and titles are human ways of speaking about the hidden God, and these human metaphor are rich with associated concepts. These concepts are derived from the historical context in which each name has its primary *locus*. As time goes on and situations change, former names can take on new meanings, or new situations can give rise to new divine designations.

For example, during the period of the patriarchs, God is known as 'the God of the fathers'. He is a close associate and relative of the clan; he wanders with his people as head of the family. He is the protector of the guarantor of the blessing and of the promise. The clan situation provides the metaphors for the divine designations.

Mettinger surveys, in concise form, the various theories of the origin and meaning of the most holy name, Yahweh. Most importantly, however, he examines the significance of the name to the people of Israel in their particular situation. The primary *locus* of the divine name is the slavery in Egypt and the Exodus, in which the revealing of the name signifies God's active and abiding presence. As time goes on, the significance of the name takes on new dimensions. For example, during the Babylonian captivity the name becomes more an existential statement in the face of the apparent superiority of the Babylonian gods: 'He is the one who exists, and no other'.

The divine designations of God as the 'Living God' and 'King' come out of the context of Israel's conflict with the fertility cults of the Canaanites. God does not die, as does Baal, seasonally. The Lord not Baal is 'King'. The titles, 'Redeemer', 'Saviour', and 'Creator' have as their main setting the period of the Captivity when Israel was faced with the threat of the loss of hope and faith.

Mettinger's book will have general appeal, having much to offer both the professional Old Testament scholar and the layperson. While professionals will find much they can skip over because it is well known, they will find the extensive footnotes and bibliography helpful, and many insights refreshing even if they may not agree with all. Theological teachers

and students will find the book useful because of the orderly way in which the argument is developed, and the use of summaries at the end of chapters. The preacher will be well served because of the soteriological riches with which Mettinger identifies the various names, and because of the way he carries this significance through to the New Testament and to Christ. The book is also designed for those with limited knowledge of Old Testament theology. All technical language is clearly explained, and the argumentation is concise and lucid.

Rolph W Mayer
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Editor, *Lutheran Theological Journal*)

**Highlanders and Foreigners in the
Upper Ramu: The Kainantu Area,
1919-1942**

Robin Radford

Melbourne University Press, Melbourne,
1987

Radford's work on the interaction between native-born and foreigners in the Eastern Highlands in the 1920s and 1930s tells the 'story' lucidly, through different sets of eyes, and, with its two major themes, corrects an imbalance (in one case), and challenges a received truth (in the other).

The accepted truth which Radford questions is 'one of the great myths in New Guinea history, which is based on the assertion that [Michael] Leahy and [Michael] Dwyer 'discovered' the Highlands of New Guinea' (:56). Arguing that the term 'Highlands' includes also the Eastern Highlands, Radford demonstrates conclusively that 'Lutheran missionaries with their New Guinea evangelists were probably the first outsiders to penetrate the Eastern Highlands of New Guinea

during the period of recorded history' (:18).

Having said that, I must also say that I'm not sure of just what Radford has accomplished. For the people of Papua New Guinea, the 'facts' established by using the cannons and tools of historical research are not necessarily superior to the 'facts' preserved in myth - indeed, the latter are probably more significant than the former. I suspect that no amount of bombardment with 'historical facts' will change the status of the 'first contact' story starring Leahy and Dwyer.

An important achievement, to my mind, is Radford's successful demonstration of the thesis that Papua New Guineans from non-Highland communities played an influential and initiating role as agents of change in the Highlands. That Europeans were agents of change is well documented - so well documented, in fact, that the accounts are out of kilter. Europeans were indeed influential in effecting change; even more influential, however, were the men and women who **looked** the same (under the strange clothes) as the local people, but who soon showed that they were different; the Kâte evangelist and his family, the Waria carrier, and the Sepik policeman.

These 'foreign' Papua New Guineans are often nameless in the history books ('Missionary Braun with native helpers' say the photo captions). Radford, however, names the evangelists, and records their crucial role on the cutting edge of mission and of cultural change. The Kâte evangelists left their own land, where they were protected by the spirits and deities and local magic, to go to a strange land, and there they put down their roots. In highlighting their participation in events, Radford has made an important

contribution to the historical record. Future Papua New Guinea historians will bless her.

Some books make you wonder why anybody bothered to write them, let alone publish them; others make you wish they had been published much earlier than they were. Radford's work belongs in the latter category!

John Strelan

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Adam, Eve and the Serpent

E Pagels

New York, Vintage Books, 1989

Adam, Eve and the Serpent, published in paperback and very reasonably priced, is largely a more popular version of a series of technical articles which have been published elsewhere. The work, which is prefaced by an English translation of Genesis 1-3 and an introduction, is divided into six chapters. It begins its social and theological study of the relations between the sexes at the time of Jesus ending with Augustine and his opponents. It is these first four centuries of the Christian Era which Pagels sees as decisive for the sexual attitudes associated with Christianity which have pervaded Western culture, but which have been challenged and undergone changes in the second half of the twentieth century.

The first chapter outlines Jesus' revolutionary attitude to humanity, including such issues as family and divorce, and then proceeds to demonstrate the way that these were interpreted over the next one hundred and fifty years, being intensified or modified according to the social and/or political situation.

The second chapter investigates the attitudes of early Christians to the prevail-

ing Roman power, demonstrating that notions of human equality and freedom from allegiance to a political overlord result from a particular understanding of the Creation stories with God as Creator and Lord over all.

The third chapter gives an account of gnostic interpretations of the Genesis stories, demonstrating the allegorisation of detail and the fundamental shift in perspective from that of orthodox commentators. It is one of the ironies of Christianity that the Gnostics denied human freedom in the form of free will and for this were effectively silenced, yet Augustine who, at a later date, placed limitations on free will became accepted as the supreme example of orthodoxy!

Pagel's fourth chapter entitled, 'The "Paradise of Virginité" Regained', deals with the ascetic life and the freedom that was gained for both men and women with the adoption of a celibate lifestyle.

The final two chapters of the book deal with Augustine and his opponents. Augustine asserted that although Adam had possessed free will, his sin had caused its loss, not only to himself but to all his descendants. Pagel outlines Augustine's personal, social and political background as well as the intellectual steps he makes to come to his conclusion. She presents, in chapter 6, a fine account of the debate between Augustine and

Julian of Eclanum who presented arguments more in line with those of previous Christian leaders.

In every chapter of *Adam, Eve and the Serpent*, Pagels gives sufficient information of a background nature to enable the layman to follow her argument. Like a good novel, the work is difficult to put down and this, along with its provocative title, will ensure its popularity with the general public and students of Early Christianity alike. The material included in it reveals the erudition of the author, nevertheless the present reviewer must confess to having experienced a sense of disappointment and dissatisfaction upon first reading the book, with the exception of the final chapter. Upon reflection, these feelings resulted from expectations aroused by the title: as Pagels herself makes clear, there are two creation stories in Genesis and she prints both as a preface to her work; further, a number of the matters she discusses in several chapters refer more to the first story than to the second and yet Adam, Eve and the serpent figure in the latter only. Accordingly, a more suitable and less misleading title for the work might have been, *The Creation Stories and Early Christianity*.

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