perfection that is introduced by Jesus, that is by baptism. In baptism Christ is born in man, that is the baptismal candidate is filled with the Logos. (iv) the consummation of human perfection in the Eschaton.

Methodius also addresses the question concerning the origin of evil (πόθεν τὰ κακὰ). He ascribes it to man's freedom to choose (τὸ αὐτοκράτορον). Methodius therefore believes that man alone is responsible for the evil.

Bracht shows in her study to what extent Methodius has modified Stoic theories, and how he also rejected the Platonic view of man, which was very much anthropocentric. Bracht describes Methodius's anthropology as theocentric, since man is always depicted as being in relationship with God. Man can attain perfection only through God (διὰ θεοῦ).

After discussing the theological-historical aspects of Methodius's anthropology in Part II of her book, Bracht proceeds to discuss the church-historical aspects in Part III. She reminds the reader that Methodius's anthropology originated in a concrete historical situation. In a sense this section deals with the "Sitz im Leben" of Methodius's anthropology.

There are several appendices to the study that are not really related to the main theme. Yet, these annexures give us valuable information that is not readily found in other literature. In one of these appendices, Bracht for example gives us an overview of the construction and contents of all Methodius's writings. She also gives us a full list of all available primary and secondary works on Methodius. Moreover, she gives us a list of all Biblical references in her book, as well as references to Christian and non-Christian authors of the ancient world. There is also a list of Greek and Slavonic words that are found in this work.

Bracht must be congratulated with her book. She is a master of her subject, and the book is a good example of great scholarship. It was an honour for me to read the book and write this review.
To enter the world of the social sciences and their use in biblical studies has as a necessary consequence an understanding and sensitivity of the context described or assumed by the text, the context in which that text is read and applied, and the context lying behind its production. The true value of this book is to be found in the ways that the contributors succeed in exploring and refining the avenues of research in this regard exactly. What becomes clear in this book, soon enough, is that social sciences approaches necessarily will draw upon and impact on other disciplines. For instance, it is simply impossible to speak of the contexts of the reception of the Bible and not interact with literary theory and philosophical hermeneutics. Making decisions about the contemporary viability of the text, be it positive or negative, moves one very quickly into issues of theology and religious and/or ecclesiastical traditions. Or, to put it differently: interdisciplinarity breeds yet greater interdisciplinarity. This book shows that this tendency can be a salutary development as different fields of interest interact with and enrich biblical studies, constituting the "network of knowledge" typical postmodern thinkers such as Lyotard and Foucault, and perhaps less typical postmodern thinkers like Adorno and Habermas, have agitated for over the last four decades.

The book consists of two parts. The first set of essays includes aspects of the journeys of the authors into the realm of the social sciences; each essay suggests, as well, fresh insights into how they might serve biblical research. The second set of essays contains three extensive case studies, or "applications" of the results introduced in the first part. It would serve the hermeneutical perspective of this book well to introduce you to the themes explored:

**Part I:**

John W Rogerson's *The potential of the negative: Approaching the Old Testament through the work of Adorno*

Mark G Brett's *Reading the Bible in the context of methodological pluralism: The undermining of ethnic exclusivism in Genesis*

Gerald O West's *A cautionary tale concerning the contribution of the social sciences to biblical interpretation*

**Part II:**

Jonathan E Dyck's *A map of ideology for Biblical critics and Ezra 2 in ideological critical perspective.*

M Daniel Carroll R's *Re-examining "popular religion": Issues of definition and sources and "For so you love to do." – probing popular religion in the book of Amos.*


Each one of these essays is well worth the time and trouble of a close reading. Having been an Adorno scholar for the past nine years myself, I have to acknowledge my inclination towards Rogerson's excellent article on Adorno. Rogerson has an extremely comfortable and engaging style. He lets Adorno speak the notoriously complex "Adorno-tongue" (*skotelmos*) without either setting him up or letting him down. I have to admit some sort of scholarly envy here: having not succeeded in it myself (yet!), I personally was not at all convinced that Rogerson would succeed in introducing Adorno to the Old Testament (or is it the other way around?) without giving in to the temptation of making Adorno a victim of his own negativity. But Rogerson honours Adorno's very peculiar idiosyncrasies, his profound sincerity and willingness to "think the unthinkable". And even if that were to be the only solid reason I had for recommending to you this marvellous book, I would do so without hesitation.