have previously allowed. Needless to say, I do not follow all of Charette’s exegetical conclusions. On a number of occasions, they seem to me to exceed the evidence.

My main concern, however, is that Charette has seen fit to limit his sources to the Gospel itself and the Hebrew Scriptures. It goes without saying that these sacred writings impacted enormously upon the evangelist in many ways, but Matthew did not live in a historical vacuum with the Hebrew Scriptures as his only source. He was a first-century Jew and as such he was doubtless influenced by later Jewish texts and oral traditions. Much of his theology has little basis in the Old Testament, and certain aspects are best understood by examining contemporary Jewish texts which contain the same themes. The evangelist’s demonology is a clear case in point. While Charette tries to tie this subject to the Old Testament theme of exile, his arguments are not convincing. It is preferable to examine this theme in the light of the advanced demonology of contemporary Judaism. The same can be said of the evangelist’s pneumatology. While Charette is doubtless correct that many of Matthew’s views on the Spirit are based upon the Hebrew Scriptures, it can be questioned whether these texts can adequately account for every Matthean viewpoint. Charette’s canonical approach needs to be supplemented by a more historical approach.


T&T Clark: Edinburg. 218 pages. Price: Unknown

Reviewer: Prof J Buitendag (University of Pretoria)

This volume is the product of a joint effort by scholars from a variety of disciplines, for example scientists, philosophers and theologians. The interdisciplinary body, The European Society for the Study of Science and Theology (ESSSAT) hopes to establish a constructive debate between science and theology in order to solve mutual problems. Some of the plenary lectures of its Seventh European Conference on Science and Theology held in Durham, United Kingdom, are published in this edition. The theme of this conference was “The Person: Perspectives from Science and Theology” and the different lectures were selected on the basis of their understanding and exposition of the theme of the person. Hence the title the editors chose for the publication.

What is important about this endeavour is that dialogue between science and theology is no longer confined to discussions on physics, cosmology, biology or history. Neuroscience, psychology and sociology come to the fore in this regard as well. All these can be understood in terms of the common denominator of the person demarcated by community. Cultural matrices thus play a heuristic role in the construction and interpretation of scientific theories. The idea of personhood points to important subject matter for scientific investigation.

The book argues primarily for a holistic understanding of reality for a synergy of brain and culture in terms of the evolution of the human body and human societies. This understanding might be called a bio-cultural paradigm. Human persons not only have bodies, but also are bodies; human persons do not live in private space, but also in natural and moral space. From here it is a short step to understand the human person as rooted in a network of relationships between God, world and Thou (Philip Hefner). The human person must become the imago Dei, which means he/she has to portray or reflect God’s presence in
this world. (The attempt to derive a theological understanding of the human person from the doctrine of the Trinity remains very dubious, however.)

Niels Gregersen’s noteworthy argument is that Eucharistic theology offers a model for understanding how the Godly presence is mediated through the interplay of physical substructure, mental apprehensions and socially shared meanings (cf the three interacting worlds of Karl Popper!). In other words, the material elements, apprehensible signs and words and a specific social setting may illuminate the relation among nature, person and God. Holistic supervenience (as opposed to intervenience) is then understood as occurrences that originate from within a given setting, namely God’s interaction with human beings which takes place in the public sphere of words, signs and social settings. The Cartesian dualism of mind and matter is thus being overcome not only in philosophy but progressively so in theology.

This book can be recommended to scholars of various disciplines who have an interest in understanding reality. Except for literally one typing, one grammatical, and one terminological error, the lectures are well written, neatly printed and properly published. The one interpretative problem I encountered is the commonly made mistake that evolutionary determinism should be ascribed to Darwin.

Matheson, P 2000 – The imaginative world of the Reformation


Reviewer: Dr G M J van Wyk (Vanderbijlpark)

The imaginative world of the Reformation is a neat publication. This soft cover book is printed on good quality paper and illustrated with several images in shades of grey. The text contains several footnotes, referring the reader to a world of information on the Reformation. Several of these contain a short but also in-depth discussion on a specific argument in the text. The publication is rounded off with a bibliography and an index of names and places. The technical quality of the publication contributes to a pleasant reading experience.

Matheson, the principal of the Theological Hall of the Uniting Church in Melbourne, and fellow of the Department of History, University of Melbourne, explains the central thesis of his book in Chapter One. He says: “The central thesis of this book is that a quite new approach to the Reformation may be required. Our current tendency towards a doctrinal approach on the one hand and to social reductionism on the other has led us into a blind alley.” The author understands this as the main reason that the Reformation is viewed in almost exclusively negative terms outside the world of church or academy. He describes the harsh reality as being that “The Reformation has become a conundrum to most of us, almost an embarrassment.” He states: “We can uncover the history of the Reformation, but cannot recover its meaning.”

Matheson’s remedy to the writing of the history of the Reformation is to amend the conventional doctrinal and social histories of the Reformation with a history of “the imaginative world of the Reformation”, or as I see it, “a history of the change in metaphors during the Reformation”. Matheson’s main argument in this regard is that when your metaphors change, your world changes with them. But, like people, images and metaphors can and do burn out. They have to be continually renewed. The imaginative