

LITTERATUR

Thomas Kazen: *Jesus and Purity Halakhah: Was Jesus Indifferent to Impurity?* 402 sid. Almqvist & Wiksell International, Stockholm 2002.

This doctoral thesis is a learned and very impressive tome, indeed. Dr. Kazen has mastered the ritual material in the two concluding sections of the *Mishneh: Kodoshim* and *Tohorot*. He has studied the ritual writings of the Dead Sea group. Most significantly, his knowledge of Greek has enabled him to use Josephus as a major source for the actual practices of the period. The result is a very thorough study of a difficult topic: *Was Jesus Indifferent to Impurity?* Dr. Kazen's conclusion is (p. 347): «Although remaining somehow within the framework of the purity paradigm, Jesus disregards impurity in a way which may threaten the whole concept and cause its breakdown.»

This is a daring statement, especially in the light of the fact that it was the destruction of the Temple that threatened the system and not Jesus' teachings. Besides which, many purity traditions are still widely followed in contemporary Jewish practice. I am thinking about Kohanim and burial practices and limiting sexual relations during menstruation. Scholars like E.P. Sanders and Paula Fredriksen describe the historical Jesus as a Jew of his time, a non-Pharisee, a non-Sadducee, indeed, an unaffiliated, independent thinker who follows the purity regulation, to put it my way: «as people did». Fredriksen writes, for example, (*Jesus of Nazareth*): «But when Mark does not belabor some controversy between Jesus and his Jewish contemporaries, he presents a normal Law-observant character» (p. 204) And Sanders (*Judaism Practice and Belief 63 BCE-66 CE*), emphasizes my major point in this review, i.e. that Jews lived the Judaism of the time (p. 214): «... most impurities were not forbidden and ... a majority of the purity laws affected only entrance to the temple and handling or eating «holy things». It was not wrong to contact semen, bury the dead, have a child or menstruate. These caused impurity, which one must not convey to the sanctuary, but in and of themselves were right, good and proper.»

In all fairness to Dr. Kazen, he, early on in *Jesus and Purity Halakhah*, (p. 17–18) notes and replies to these and other views contrary to his thesis. My problem with Dr. Kazen's Jesus is that as an educated, practicing Jew viewing my historical forefathers from afar, I am certain that they, too, then lived the Judaism of their time—each and every one of them in a contemporary form. And the Jewish life of the Second Temple period was multiple, very different from today's religion in form but with about as many vari-

ations to choose from. So much was happening at one and the same times: synagogues existed and were spreading throughout Palestine and the Diaspora. Pure and impure people met there for prayer and study, likely even women. No one inquired about their menstrual status.

Dr. Kazen often uses the *Mishneh* as a source for historical insight. This is very dangerous. I recall my teacher, Salo W. Baron, declaring in class that the first generations after 70 CE expected the Temple to be rebuilt. It was only many years later, when reconstruction tarried, that they interviewed older scholars and recorded in the *Mishneh*, in volumes like *Tamid* and *Middot*, their memories of the Temple and its functioning from the days of their youth. But, did they recall correctly? The Dead Sea Community Rule, which Dr. Kazen frequently cites, is also a weak straw to lean upon. It is the extremist document of an esoteric sect, with little Halakhic importance outside that group.

Herod's Temple was the focal point of Jewish religion, but most people, according to Baron, could not come to Jerusalem even once a year. For many, the pilgrimage was a once in a lifetime event. So how central could purity laws have been for most Jews, especially those living distant from Jerusalem? I cannot imagine a busy farmer or artisan leaving his work for a whole week after contact with a corpse, say a parent or a child, waiting impatiently in Jerusalem to be sprinkled twice during that period with water mixed with the ashes of the Red Heifer?

Leviticus 12:6, 8 obligates a mother to bring sacrifices after childbirth as part of her cleansing process. *Kritot* 8a indicates that they did not do this, a failure that made them all unclean, continually contaminating others. In such an unclean society touching a leper, as Jesus did, would have no ritual significance. It is simply a wonderful act of human kindness.

I have difficulty understanding Dr. Kazen's main argument for «Jesus' lack of interest in purity Halakhah». He writes: (p. 346) «Jesus' exorcisms, as well as his behaviour toward impure people in general, could be seen in the context of a power struggle, in which the power of the kingdom which he proclaimed, mediated or embodied, would overrule demonic influence and impurity.»

I believe that few people of the time could comprehend what Dr. Kazen is claiming. Of course, Jews were eagerly awaiting the Messianic epoch, when the invisible Kingdom of God would transmute into the visible Kingdom. But when that happens, purity laws will disappear because all people will always be pure. But Dr. Kazen's historical Jesus never says that these

laws will no longer apply. Jesus is described as merely touching impure people and not washing his hands. An openly rebellious Jewish messiah would never have dared to go beyond the *Serug* and enter into the holy area of the Temple Mount. Indeed, even an openly indifferent Jew, were this inclination known, would have been stopped by the fanatical young priests who checked those entering, and killed «unclean» transgressors. Yet Jesus did enter the Temple and he did get past the fanatics. So where is the «messianic» threat that could bring the whole system down?

Please do not misunderstand my criticism. I highly recommend *Jesus and Purity Halakhah* as a scholarly and fascinating attempt to get to the historical Jesus. Unfortunately, I find the Judaism of this Jesus «unliveable».

Morton H. Narrowe

Josep-Ignasi Saranyana & Carmen-José Alejos Grau (utg.): *Teología en América Latina. Vol III, El siglo de las teologías latinoamericanistas (1899-2001)*. 773 sid. Iberoamericana, Madrid och Verveurt, Frankfurt am Main, 2002.

Trots att mycket skrivits om latinamerikansk teologi i allmänhet och befrielse-teologi i synnerhet har det hittills saknats en detaljerad översikt av kontinentens teologihistoria från kolonialtiden fram till våra dagar. Inte minst därför är utgivningen av trebandsverket *Teología en América Latina* mycket efterlängtat. Ledare för det ambitiösa projektet med säte vid Universidad de Navarra i Pamplona är den spanske teologihistorikern Josep-Ignasi Saranyana, som till sin hjälp haft en grupp av företrädesvis spanska och latinamerikanska teologer och historiker. Första bandet utkom 1999 och behandlade tiden från den spanska erövringen fram till år 1715. Andra bandet som ska behandla tiden fram till 1898 har ännu inte publicerats, medan ett något uttänjt tjugonde århundrade — de latinamerikanska teologiernas sekel — utgör den tidsmässiga ramen för det tredje bandet, som nyligen sett dagens ljus med den spanska historikern Carmen-José Alejos Grau som redaktör.

Författarna tar sin utgångspunkt i det betydelsefulla plenarkonciliet för Latinamerika 1899 och slutpunkten är den plenarsynod som den påvliga kommissionen för Latinamerika genomförde i Rom 2001. I nio kapitel ges läsaren en mångfacetterad bild av den latinamerikanska teologins utveckling under det senaste århundradet. De två inledande kapitlen behandlar institutionella aspekter på kyrkans och teologins historia. I det första kapitlet beskrivs hur kon-

tinental be-handlades i den romersk-katolska hierarkins officiella uttalanden. Här analyseras bland annat påvliga encyklikor, Andra Vatikankonciliet dokument och den latinamerikanska biskopskonferensens inflytelserika generalkonferenser i Rio de Janeiro 1955, Medellín 1968, Puebla 1979 och Santo Domingo 1992. Det andra kapitlet, författat av den tyske kyrkohistorikern Hans-Jürgen Prien, är en översikt av den protestantiska missionen i Latinamerika. Under de senaste årtiondena har katolicismen upphört att vara den helt dominerande religionen i Latinamerika, samtidigt som pentekostala och evangelikala kyrkor blivit en teologisk kraft att räkna med inte minst bland de allra fattigaste folklagen på kontinenten.

Större delen av *Teología en América Latina* behandlar dock inte institutionella aspekter av den latinamerikanska kyrkans historia. De följande sju kapitlen tar i stället upp skilda aspekter av teologins idéhistoria. Efter att ha studerat teologiska utvecklingslinjer i latinamerikansk teologi före Andra Vatikankonciliet (kap. 3) går Josep-Ignasi Saranyana vidare med en noggrann studie av den latinamerikanska befrielse-teologin (kap. 4), som i mångt och mycket är en frukt av de teologiska diskussioner som följde i koncilietets kölvatten. I kapitlet blandas internationellt välkända namn som Gustavo Gutiérrez, bröderna Boff och Ignacio Ellacuría med mindre kända som Lucio Gera och Carlos Mesters. Betydligt mer skissartad är presentationen (kap. 5) av den teologi som skrivits av *hispanos* i USA och de teologier som utvecklats av och för de indianska befolkningarna på olika håll på kontinenten. I ett högtintressant kapitel (kap. 6) går Fermín Labraga García igenom olika teologiska tolkningar av det fenomen som brukar kallas folkreligiositet, det vill säga religionsyttringar som vallfärder, undergörande bilder och helgon- och Mariakulter, vilka fortfarande kan sägas utgöra stommen i den latinamerikanska kristendomen. I det sjunde kapitlet diskuterar den argentinska teologen och historikern Celia Lértora Mendoza utvecklingslinjer inom reformert och evangelikal teologi i Latinamerika, med tonvikt på de senaste decennierna. Professor Saranyana tar sig själv (kap. 8) an utvecklingen av olika typer av feministisk teologi/kvinnoteologi i Latinamerika och den välmatade volymen avslutas (kap. 9) med en översiktlig studie av innehållet i ett stort antal latinamerikanska teologiska tidskrifter.

Teología en América Latina är inte bara en sammanställning av andras forskningsrön; bakom verket ligger också en mycket omfattande grundforskning. Genomgående kopplar författarna på ett skickligt sätt ihop teologihistorien med den latinamerikanska kyrkans historia och kontinentens politiska och sociala historia. I denna typ av verk ställs författarna inför det